

CHESHIRE EAST COUNCIL

Minutes of a meeting of the **Corporate Parenting Committee**
held on Tuesday, 22nd January, 2019 at Committee Suite 2/3 - Westfields,
Middlewich Road, Sandbach, CW11 1HZ

PRESENT

Councillor J Saunders (Chairman)

Councillors S Gardiner, G Hayes, O Hunter, A Kolker and M Warren

Officers in attendance

Sam Ankers, Care Leaver Manager

Gill Betton, Head of Service: Children's Development and Partnerships

Dave Leadbetter, Head of Children's Commissioning

Keith Martin, Head of Service: Cared for Children & Care Leavers

Shan McParland, Designated Nurse Cared for Children & Care Leavers

Mark Palethorpe, Acting Executive Director of People

Jacque Sims, Director of Children's Social Care

Kayleigh Wilshaw, Service Manager: Cared for Children and Care Leavers

Julie Zientek, Democratic Services Officer

31 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors P Butterill, B Dooley, L Durham and D Flude.

32 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

33 MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

RESOLVED – That the minutes of the meeting held on 13 November 2018 be approved as a correct record.

34 CORPORATE PARENTING UPDATE FROM ELECTED MEMBERS

The Chairman reported the following:

There was nothing to report from the Health and Wellbeing Workstream Group, which was due to meet shortly.

At its meeting on 13 December 2018, Council had endorsed the five pledges identified in the Corporate Parenting Strategy as the ways in which Cheshire East would act and behave towards those children in its care and those transitioning to adulthood.

35 THE HEALTH OF CARED FOR CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE ANNUAL REPORT: 2017- 18

The Committee received the above report, which outlined the delivery of health services to children in the care of Cheshire East Council during the period 1 April 2017 to 31 March 2018. The report reviewed performance indicators, clinical work undertaken by the Wirral Community NHS Trust Cared for Children Health Team, service improvements and plans for further development.

Members requested further information to be provided at the next meeting regarding the Strengths and Difficulties Questionnaire (SDQ) and the SDQ scores.

Following comments from Members regarding the statistics with respect to substance misuse, it was reported that in the future more qualitative reports would be requested from health teams. In addition, Members would be provided with more information on the interventions offered to young people who were reported to have a substance misuse problem.

RESOLVED - That the report be noted.

36 INPUT FROM CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE

A young person attended the meeting, together with Sam Ankers, Care Leaver Manager, and described his involvement in a tender for new children's homes. He and another young person had met with three providers and had agreed with the decision of the officer panel with respect to the stand-out provider.

37 SUFFICIENCY STATEMENT FOR CARED FOR CHILDREN 2018-20

Local Authorities are required to publish an annual Sufficiency Statement for children in care, which sets out their provision for cared for children, children on the edge of care or custody and care leavers.

Cheshire East's Corporate Parenting Strategy and the Children and Young People's Plan set out the principles by which agencies and services in Cheshire East ensure that children in care have the same opportunities as their peers to enable them to fulfil their potential and make a good start in adult life. It sets out the achievements so far, shared priorities for children and young people in care, and the actions to be taken to make a positive difference to their lives. One of these is around striving to ensure that every child and young person will have the opportunity to live in a good, safe home locally – this is central to the sufficiency statement.

The Sufficiency Statement sets out how Cheshire East had met the standards of excellence set out in the 1989 Children's Act and detailed achievements from 2017 and plans for 2018-2019.

In many respects, the sufficiency duty was being met and considerable improvements had been made over the previous 12 months to the whole system that worked to deliver excellent outcomes for children in care through good quality / value for money placements that were close to home.

The action plan is monitored on a quarterly basis to ensure that the improvement journey continues. Actions include children's home commissioning, and fostering recruitment and retention.

In response to questions from Members, it was confirmed that:

- The average weekly cost of Cheshire East foster carers was £490, compared with just below £800 for IFAs (Independent Fostering Agencies). The cost of internal residential provision was roughly in line with the North West average, while the cost of provision for leaving care in Cheshire East was lower than the North West leaving care framework.
- Only a small percentage of young people were moved outside Cheshire East, but they did not necessarily have to change school.
- It was ensured that cared for children attended good or outstanding schools.

RESOLVED - That the Sufficiency Statement be noted.

38 CORPORATE PARENTING SCORECARD QUARTER 2

Consideration was given to the Scorecard for the second quarter of 2018/19.

In response to a question from a Member, it was confirmed that, although there was a reported increase in the number of children that moved homes in the quarter, this could be due in part to respite being reported as placement moves. More information would be provided at a future meeting.

RESOLVED - That the report be noted.

39 LOCAL SAFEGUARDING CHILDREN BOARD ANNUAL REPORT 2017-18

The Committee considered the Local Safeguarding Children's Board Annual Report for 2017/2018, which covered 1 April 2017 to 31 March 2018 and highlighted the activity, progress and challenges faced by Cheshire East Safeguarding Children Board. There was a particular focus on the journey of the child, the refresh of both the Neglect and Early Help Strategies, Fact 22 (Project Crewe) and the impact this initiative had had on engagement with families, improvements in relation to number of

families being supported through early help and the reduction in size of caseloads for social workers in one of the more challenging localities in Cheshire East. The report also set out the achievements made in 2017 - 18 and the areas where improvements continued to be made.

Members were informed that this would be the last report of the Local Safeguarding Children's Board, which was to become the Children's Safeguarding Partnership.

Members of the Committee were assured that there would still be engagement with schools and children's social care.

RESOLVED - That the report be noted.

40 CORPORATE PARENTING UPDATE REPORT

The Committee received an update on national and local developments in relation to cared for children and young people and care leavers.

A resume of the following was given:

Councillors' Commitment to Corporate Parenting
Participation of Cared for Children and Care Leavers
Investing in Children Award
Star Awards Celebration – Debrief and Next Steps
Cheshire East Apprenticeship Opportunities
Sufficiency Statement for Cared for Children, 2018-20
Cheshire East Local Safeguarding Children Board Annual Report
Permanency Forum
Specialist Support
The National Protocol on Reducing Unnecessary Criminalisation of Looked After Children and Care Leavers
The Health of Cared for Children and Young People in 2017-18
The Annual Report from the National Implementation Adviser for Care Leavers
Corporate Parenting Forward Plan

RESOLVED - That the update be noted.

41 FUTURE COMMITTEE MEETING DATES

RESOLVED

(a) That the next meeting take place at 4pm on Tuesday 19 March 2019.

(b) That the meeting scheduled for Tuesday 23 April 2019 be cancelled.

- (c) That approval be given for meetings in the next municipal year as follows:

Tuesday 18 June 2019
Tuesday 16 July 2019
Tuesday 17 September 2019
Tuesday 12 November 2019
Tuesday 21 January 2020
Tuesday 17 March 2020
Tuesday 19 May 2020

All meetings would begin at 4pm.

The meeting commenced at 4.00 pm and concluded at 6.20 pm

Councillor J Saunders (Chairman)