

Corporate Parenting Committee

Agenda

Date: Tuesday, 19th March, 2019
Time: 4.00 pm
Venue: Committee Suite 2/3 - Westfields, Middlewich Road, Sandbach, CW11 1HZ

The agenda is divided into 2 parts. Part 1 is taken in the presence of the public and press. Part 2 items will be considered in the absence of the public and press for the reasons indicated on the agenda and in the report.

PART 1 – MATTERS TO BE CONSIDERED WITH THE PUBLIC AND PRESS PRESENT

1. **Apologies for Absence**

2. **Declarations of Interest**

To provide an opportunity for Members and Officers to declare any disclosable pecuniary and non-pecuniary interests in any item on the agenda.

3. **Minutes of Previous meeting** (Pages 3 - 8)

To approve the minutes of the meeting held on 22 January 2019.

4. **Corporate Parenting Update from Elected Members**

To receive a verbal update from members of the Committee.

5. **Care Leavers Annual Report 2018-19** (Pages 9 - 22)

To consider the Care Leavers Annual Report 2018-19.

6. **Input from Children and Young People**

To receive input from children and young people.

Contact: Julie Zientek
Tel: 01270 686466
E-Mail: julie.zientek@cheshireeast.gov.uk

7. **Strengths and Difficulties Questionnaire and Scores in Cheshire East**

To receive a presentation.

8. **Corporate Parenting Update Report** (Pages 23 - 28)

To consider the update report.

THERE ARE NO PART 2 ITEMS

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
Jacquie 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)

This page is intentionally left blank

Care Leavers Annual Report

Date: April 2018 – March 2019

Completed By: Sam Ankers – Team Manager (Care Leavers)

Introduction

Cheshire East has 234 Care Leavers (end Feb 2019) open to the team. This is an increase of 33 young people since last years report. Of those 105 are eligible (16/17yr olds) that remain cared for and 2 are relevant meaning they are 16/17yr olds but have left care. There are 127 young people who are 'Former Relevant (18+).

We also have a statutory duty to support young people aged 21-25yrs if in full-time higher & further education. Presently we support 10 young people over the age of 21yrs in this area.

In April 2018 further statutory duties were placed on Local Authorities from the Children & Social Work Act 2017 to expand their offer of support to 21-25yr olds who are not in education but want and require support. This support may be a one off intervention such as helping them contact the benefits office or it may require a series of interventions and the re-allocation of a worker to help them through a crisis. In the past 12 months 37 young people have had some form of intervention and currently we have 14 young people who have remained or been re-opened to the service.



Cole and the leaders of the Council with their pledges to Cared for young people and Care Leavers

Personal Advisors continue to be dedicated and go above and beyond statutory requirements for Cheshire East Care-Leavers. We have good compliance rates on Care-Leavers having meaningful face to face contact with their worker. Of the 234 care-leavers open to our service only 3 are currently not being seen by their worker. Their whereabouts

are known and the workers continue to make efforts to engage each young person. Case loads are on average around 21 young people for each worker this is lower than regional neighbours and allows the workers to dedicate significant time for each young person.

Key Headlines

Since the team's last report in March 2018 the service has worked tirelessly and tenaciously to support and improve the outcomes of care-leavers. In the past 12 months we have:

- Developed and published a joint working protocol with the Department of Work & Pensions. This is to make it smoother for care-leavers to access benefits and receive individualised support from the job centres.
- Published our Local Offer to Care-Leavers in October 2018.
- Held a Pledge event which was run by 6 care-leavers to develop pledges from corporate parents to include in the local offer.
- Welcomed back Mark Riddell (DfE's National Care Leaver Implementation Advisor) – Mark was pleased with the authorities improvement in regards to corporate parenting and felt the Care Leavers service was functioning at Good or Outstanding in regards to Ofsted's scale of judgements.
- Ran two tenancy readiness courses across the borough.
- Set up a weekly refugee and asylum seeker support and activity group in Crewe.
- Increased our Ignition training properties from 4 to 6.
- Developed a bespoke job for a care-leaver in the participation team.
- Changed our housing allocations policy to give Care Leavers more of a voice in terms of their banding.
- Had two care-leavers attend a National Leaving Care Benchmarking Event in Birmingham.
- Had three Care-leavers attend our takeover day where they got to experience being a Personal Advisor for the day.
- Ignition Panel continues to grow, since the last report 35 young people have attended or been discussed. Ignition Panel has been shortlisted for a participation award at the LGC (Local Government Chronicle) awards.
- The Care Leavers football team were semi-finalists in the 2018 North West Leaving Care Football Tournament.

For the remainder of the report I will split the service's development and progress in relation to the governments 5 key outcomes which form part of the national care-leavers 'keep on caring' strategy.

1. Better Prepared and supported to live Independently / Engagement and Participation

Independence packs

Our independence packs are aimed to assess or identify areas a young person needs to work on. They also support a young persons housing applications when completed.

We re-designed our Independence Packs in 2018 to jazz them up and be more meaningful for teenagers since they voiced they felt they looked childish. We have also developed a Platinum Independence Pack to go along our Gold, Silver and Bronze packs. The platinum pack is aimed at young people who are now in their own tenancies and building on their already high level of independent skills.

Since last year 18 Independence packs have been recorded as being completed. The actual number of completed packs in the year will be higher. This is due to how we record completed packs, we are looking at improving our recording by putting the data directly into Liquid Logic from now on.

Tenancy Readiness Course

The tenancy readiness course is now a well established course. Taking place two to three times a year across the borough. It is a 4 week course to educate young people about the realities of living independently and giving them an overview of tenancy expectations.

In the past 12 months there has been two courses run. One in Macclesfield and one in Crewe. 12 young people successfully completed the course.

One of these young people has gone on to obtain his own tenancy.

Mentoring

Cheshire East has seen the value of young people accessing mentors. Mentors can offer a different relationship and longer lasting than professional relationships. The charity Pure Insight has been commissioned to recruit, train and deliver mentors for Cheshire East Care-Leavers. They successful do this in Stockport and initially successfully set up with National Lottery funding. The mentors commit to a two year relationship but it is hoped that some of these become life long.

Currently there are 33 young people receiving support from Pure Insight with 20 of them matched to a mentor and receiving 1:1 support.

Participation / Activities

Since the last report the in-house Participation Team is well established following the local authority no longer tendering this work area out. The team is working closely with the Care-Leavers Service. They have offered a bespoke job for one of care-leavers to work in their team as a care-leaver voice and to help develop surveys and be involved in the design and delivery of the annual cared for celebration awards.



Josh and his Personal Advisor at the Pledge Event.

A group of 6 care-leavers have been involved in developing the Care-Leaver local offer. They have frequently given up their time to grill heads of services and to also meet and speak to Mark Riddell on his visits to Cheshire East. Due to continued participation of Cheshire East Care Leavers in the development of the service the team is likely to be awarded an 'Investing in Children Award'.

Two Care Leavers were part of the interviewing panel for the new Childrens Home contract. Their input and opinion was really valuable and made up 25% of the total marks for the providers interview score. It was reassuring to know that the care-leavers opinion of the best provider was the same as the senior managers who were also on the panel.

Our Facebook Page now has over 50 members and means we can interact with care-leavers outside of the borough and with ones who feel uncomfortable in attending groups.

Current and former Unaccompanied Asylum Seeking Children (UASCs).

Cheshire East continues to see an increase in the amount of UASCs it supports.

The service employs a specialist UASC support worker on a fixed term contract to ensure their needs are being met. The Local Authority is supporting them with their asylum claim and supporting them in accessing education. 87% of our current and former UASC's are engaged in education, employment or training.

Currently we support 39 current and former UASC's (as of 6th March 2019). Last year we were supporting 31.

10 UASC's have come into care within the past year. The UASC's usually arrive illegally and

clandestinely via the M6 corridor. We have not received any UASC's from the National transfer scheme in the past year.

From the 39 UASC's we have 12 that reside within the Cheshire East area. Usually once a young person is granted leave to remain they then choose to move to more culturally appropriate areas such as London and Stoke.

Due to increasing numbers and to try and create more of a community for our UASC's within Cheshire East we have set up a fortnightly support group in partnership with the YMCA in Crewe. The group has been running since November 2018 and brings together all our UASC's in the area for food, music and games but also brings in support workers should the young people have any worries and questions.



Playing pool at our fortnightly UASC evening.

Foster Carers

On 13th September 2018, Sam Ankers and Greg Stuart delivered specific training around independence, pathway planning and 'staying put' to 14 Cheshire East Foster Carers. The training was well received and can now form part of the foster carers training calendar.



Foster Carers at the training event on 13th September 2018

2. Experiencing stability and feeling safe and secure / 3. Achieving Financial Stability

Ignition Panel

The panel continues to grow and grow. The panel is has now been shortlisted for two prestigious national awards and local authorities across the North West are eager to observe and understand the concept.

The concept is simple, in that the panel empowers young people to make their own decisions in regards to their future accommodation. Decisions made with them rather than without them and all providers taking a corporate parent approach to the housing needs of young people.

Since the last report 35 young people have either presented or been discussed at the panel and all have left with some form of plan.

Placement sufficiency

There are a number of properties available for 16/17yr old care-leavers. These include:

- 6 YMCA ring fenced flats through Ignition panel.
- 2 x 2 bedroom Ignition flats.
- 5 ring fenced beds at Watermill House, Macclesfield.
- West Street – 4 beds secured in Crewe for our UASC's.

Although accommodation is good for cared for young people there is a lack of supported accommodation available via the single Point of Access (SPA) for 18+ young people with complex needs.

Housing & Cheshire Home Choice

In Cheshire East care-leavers are granted band B status when bidding for properties on



Cheshire East Home Choice. This means that they are given a priority. If a care-leaver had some recent criminal offence, anti-social behaviour or rent arrears on a previous property they would become band D for 12 months. Band D means that this young person is unlikely to get a housing offer for those 12 months.

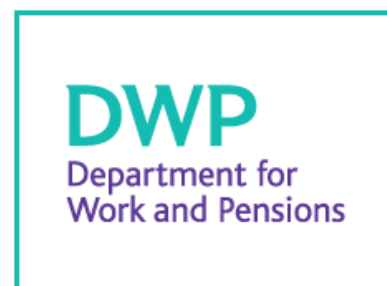
The team was unhappy with this broad stroke approach and so housing has agreed to look at each case individually and allow the young person to have the right to reply on the issues. It is hoped that the young person will agree to an action plan to increase their banding or they may appeal and challenge the decision immediately. We have had one young person so far meet and have his banding changed. This young man is now happy and has his own flat rather than living in temporary unsuitable accommodation

24yr old Tyler outside his new flat in Macclesfield

Universal Credit / Department of work & Pensions (DWP)

In July 2018 the team and the DWP developed and published a joint working protocol. The DWP agreed to have a dedicated single point of access (SPOC) for each job centre to have knowledge of care-leavers. Care-Leavers can begin starting their claims early and have access to APA (Advance Payment Arrangements).

There has been some recent guidance that stipulates job centres should not sanction care-leavers until they have spoken to their Personal Advisor to see if there are any extenuating reasons not too. Unfortunately this is not in our joint working protocol so it has been requested to be updated.



Universal Credit requires a person to wait 5 weeks for their first payment. They can claim for an advance but then they are deducted a significant amount of money each month. Cheshire East continues to financially support each care-leaver for the 5 weeks until their claim is active as we do not want our young people to suffer hardship and be in debt. This is an aspirational approach by the local authority and not replicated by many.

Due to our supportive approach we have seen less workers in destitution and less sanctions being made by the DWP.

3. Improved Access to education and Training

EET Champion Role

Last year the team had additional funds from the Innovation Bid and we were able to employ a full-time worker specifically to work with NEET (not in education employment training) young people. This funding has now ceased however we were able to employ the person in post to one of our Senior Personal Advisor positions. This specialist advisor was able to address NEET issues quickly and find young people work experience, traineeships almost instantly.

This worker now has a small caseload so is unable to dedicate as much individual time to the NEET cohort as he previously did. To address this gap the virtual school, youth support service and care leavers service have made an application to the European Support Fund for salary costs for specialist workers to work with NEET young people across the borough. We are awaiting the outcome of this bid application.

EET figures / NCP Panel

Our current figure of 16-21yr old care-leavers engaged in education, employment or training is 63.2% (end Feb 2019). This is an improvement of around 10% since our last full Ofsted inspection in 2015 however a drop since last year.

The increase in figures over the last 12 months can be attributed to no longer having a full time EET worker within the team but also we have become better at recording changes in EET status's in a timely manner. So today our records are more accurate.

We now hold a monthly NEET Challenge Panel which is attended by the Care Leaving Service; the youth support service and the Virtual School. EET status's are checked and young people are 'rag' rated in regards to how long they have not been in employment, education or training. Workers are then given advice in regards to opportunities available and options available for their young person. The aim is to move NEET young people into a positive activity and ultimately employment or training by various routes.

Apprenticeships

We have 12 young people who are on apprenticeships. None of these apprenticeships are within the Local Authority. There has been the offer of x 3 ring fenced apprenticeships within the youth support service and the Business Intelligence Team however we have yet to match any care-leaver to these opportunities.

This time last year we only had 6 young people engaged in an apprenticeship. This is a 100% increase since last year. This follows trends of more young people looking into apprenticeships but is also attributed to the options in our area.

University

Cheshire East continues to be aspirational for our care-leavers and supports them to fulfil their potential. Currently we have 11 young people at University; one young person is studying a Masters in Criminology and will soon undertake a work based placement within our own legal team.

At this time last year we had 13 young people at University the decrease this year is due to two care-leavers graduating.

Cygnnet

Our commissioned Cygnnet program with M-Ploy continues to be successful and gets those young people who are not ready for an apprenticeship or full-time work to a level where they may be able too. It offers supported work placements for period of 6 months in a chosen field of interest.

Since April 2018 we have had 14 young people involved in the Cygnnet Program. Young people have mentioned the program *“has given me the confidence to look for full time work”*

4. Improved access to health & support

Emotional Well-being

We have identified that there are over 50 young people in the service who suffer from some form of emotional health issue which affects their day-to-day living.

Predominately this is stress and anxiety. Having unresolved emotional health difficulties has a knock on effect for all aspects of a young persons life and can be a catalyst to homelessness, unemployment, drug use, debt and poor social relationships.

Unfortunately lots of services in the community are not proactive in engaging care-leavers. There are also long waiting lists for services provided by IAPT and Talking therapies. CAMHS support cease at 19yrs of age and not all young people transition directly into adult mental health services

To address the gap the Care-Leavers service has a specialist emotional well-being worker who works two days per week solely supporting our care-leavers.

Since April 2018 she has had 34 referrals to work with young people. The worker uses the NHS's five ways to wellbeing (be active, connect, keep learning, give to others and be mindful) in her work. Interventions can be one off but she has worked with some care-leavers for over 12 months. She attempts to encourage young people to make small changes, creating new habits focusing on wellbeing and also look at techniques to reduce anxiety, improve mood and improve their sleep pattern.

The team is also supported by an externally funded full time worker from the charity Pure Insight. This worker works with higher need care-leavers and has access to trauma counselling.

So far:

- 43 young people have been referred to the service for support
- 18 young people are currently receiving a weekly 1:1 service from the psychological wellbeing worker. This includes emotional regulation techniques, psych-education about specific diagnosis such as anxiety, depression, PTSD, BPD
- 4 young people are receiving weekly counselling
- 3 young people have completed counselling with the service.

Parents Group

The Care Leaver Parents group has been running for a couple of years now. It was started as some care-leavers felt uncomfortable in generic family centre groups. It was also felt that they would benefit from peer support.

We have run 7 cared for children and care leavers parents groups since April 2018. We have had 8 parents and 9 children attend these groups within that time, though numbers vary on a monthly basis.



Sexual Health Training

On 31st May 2018 eight Personal Advisors were trained in sexual health and C-Cards. This means that they can then offer sexual health advice and support with testing for sexually transmitted infections. This is a great move forward as some young people are reluctant to access the local health centres so testing can now be completed at their home.

Pregnancy and Parenting

We currently have 23 mothers in our service that we support and 3 young women who are currently pregnant.

Unfortunately due to the parenting received by some of our care-leavers they are not yet ready or equipped to be parents which means they can receive support from our early help services or child in need/child protection services. On some occasions their children need to be removed and placed with new families.

Currently there are 8 children of our mothers who are receiving some form of intervention from our partners in Cheshire East's Early help, child in need & child protection services. We have identified that we need to improve communication between our colleagues and an agreement has been made that our service will be invited to all safeguarding meetings in relation to the children of our care-leavers. It is hoped that earlier interventions and better communication will mean that less families are separated and care-leavers have support to become successful parents. This is also an aim of our Care-Leaver parent group.

We have 3 identified care-leaver fathers in our service. Support is available to them via the 'Dad's stuff'. This is a service run by two male Family Support Workers in the early help service who will support dads to groups to help them with the practicalities of being a dad (learning how to make a bottle, change a nappy etc) and also offer the dads emotional support. So far one of our fathers has received support from 'Dad's Stuff' in the past year.

Substance Misuse

We are aware that substance and alcohol use is an issue for 16-25yr olds. We have identified 30 young people who either recreationally or problematically engage in substance and alcohol use. 3 are receiving specialist support from a drug or alcohol worker however many are accessing emotional health support as they use drugs and alcohol to self-medicate.

Predominately it is cannabis that is being used. Personal Advisors complete direct work with their young people around drug and alcohol use and if required can refer for specialist support from CGL (Change, Live Grow).

CGL are now also offering drop in sessions at the YMCA in Crewe and Watermill House in Macclesfield where many of our young people reside. It is hoped that with education and harm reduction young people can then make informed choices around their substance and alcohol use.

Challenges for the next year

The challenge for the service over the next year will be the continued increase in returners (21-25yr olds) to the service, which we have a statutory duty to support (Children & Social Work Act 2017). We may also continue to see a rise in UASC's which is a national issue. Increasing numbers of cared for children and care-leavers mean increasing demands on resources and staff. Due to the nature of these cases it is difficult to predict what the numbers will be.

There are many complex young people in our service that would benefit from Adult Social Work support and some require specialist accommodation. We work with adult services to understand whether our young people meet the eligibility criteria for care and support under the Care Act 2014 and where young people are eligible we work on transitioning these young people straight into adult teams. However there young people who are not eligible for support from adult services and we work hard to link these to universal and targeted services. There are also supported accommodation providers who are housing these young people with complex needs.

A further challenge will be the current unknown impact that will follow Brexit and how we will continue to support EU Nationals who we have responsibility for. We already have difficulties in obtaining citizenship or settled status for some of Care-Leavers and Brexit may make this situation even more complex.

This page is intentionally left blank

Version Number: 1

Corporate Parenting Committee

Date of Meeting: 19 March 2019

Report Title: Corporate Parenting Update

Portfolio Holder: Jos Saunders Portfolio Holder for Children and Families

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

1. Report Summary

- 1.1. This report provides an update to the Corporate Parenting Committee on national and local developments in relation to cared for children and young people and care leavers.

2. Recommendation/s

- 2.1. Corporate Parenting Committee is asked to:

2.1.1. Note the contents of the report.

3. Reasons for Recommendation/s

- 3.1. The Corporate Parenting Committee is as advisory group to the Cabinet and, as such, needs to be aware of any national or local issues that are likely to impact on cared for children and care leavers. The Corporate Parenting Committee need to be able to scrutinise and challenge performance to improve outcomes for cared for children and young people.

4. Other Options Considered

- 4.1. None; this is an update report.

5. Background

- 5.1. This update report aligns with the priorities of the Corporate Parenting Strategy.

6. Update on Impact of the Children and Families Act 2017

- 6.1. The duties contained within the Children and Families Act 2017 continue to be embedded within services across the Peoples Directorate. The Act itself is made up of three parts, which relate to Children, Social Workers in England and general changes to existing pieces of legislation. There are 64 Sections

to the Act, which are contained within 4 Chapters. Chapter 1 introduces 11 sections that have a specific impact for cared for children and care leavers.

- 6.2. Section 1 relates to the principles of corporate parenting which we have met through the Full Council commitment to our 'Pledges' for cared for children and care leavers.
- 6.3. Sections 2 and 3 require us to publish a 'local offer' of support to care leavers, which we have done and to appoint Personal Advisors to care leavers up to the age of 25 when this is requested, which we are also doing. To date we have 14 care leavers between the age of 21 and 25 with Personal Advisors allocated and a total of 37 who have received this support over the past 12 months.
- 6.4. Section 4 requires us to provide advice and information concerning cared for children and care leavers to parents and designated teachers in maintained schools and academies, which we are doing through our Virtual School.
- 6.5. Sections 5, 6 and 7 place duties on governing bodies of maintained schools, proprietors of academies and amends duties contained within the Children and Young Persons Act 2008 to ensure that Designated Teachers are in place for cared for pupils. Designated Teachers are in place in all schools that are attended by pupils from Cheshire East, whether that is within the authority or not. We have also run designated lead training, which has been attended by teachers, members of governing bodies and safeguarding leads of these schools and have future training planned.
- 6.6. Section 8 extends the definition of permanence provisions to include 'kinship care, adoption and other types of long term care'. This is all now built into individual care plans for cared for children, or children subject to family court proceedings and is monitored through our fortnightly permanency forums, which are held within both the Cared For and Care Leavers Service and the Child Protection/Child in Need Service.
- 6.7. Section 9 amends part of the Adoption and Children Act 2002 to require courts and adoption agencies to consider the relationship between prospective adopters and children if the child is already placed with them. This is undertaken through the assessment work completed by our regional adoption agency 'Adoption Counts'.
- 6.8. Sections 10 and 11 amend previous Acts in both England and Wales, which now allows us to place children and young people into secure accommodation within Scotland. Whilst this is in place within our legal planning process, this has not had to be enacted over the past 12 month.

7. Being a Good Corporate Parent

Member Training

- 7.1. The majority of elected members have completed corporate parenting training. The feedback that was been received from elected members in relation to the training to date is being used to develop the on-going induction and training plan. The Head of Service, Service Manager for Cared for Children and Care Leavers and Councillor Merry are developing the new members training, alongside 'My Voice'. The new training will be co-produced and co-delivered with young people after the elections. It is proposed that there will be on-going training throughout the year (themed), alongside an induction booklet.

Star Celebrations

- 7.2. The star celebration planning group continues to meet each month since the last event in November 2018 and has already made significant strides in the planning of next years event, which will take place on 17th November 2019 at Congleton Town Hall.
- 7.3. The theme for next years event will be Pirates and Princesses. I am excited to report that the Crewe Lyceum Theatre have asked if they can become part of the planning group and they have offered to lend us scenery and props for the event.

8. Education, Employment and Employment Outcomes

National Apprenticeship Week

- 8.1. National Apprenticeship Week took place between 4th - 8th March. Cheshire East promoted the week through highlighting apprenticeship opportunities across the borough. As part of the promotion, the Council also challenged local employers to provide apprenticeship opportunities for some of our cared for children.

North West Guide around Exclusions

- 8.2. Increased exclusions in secondary schools are a regional issue in the North West and colleagues for the region have been coming together to produce a guide for schools.

9. Achieving Permanence and Keeping Children Safe

Children's Residential Homes Commission

The Council has awarded a contract to two providers of Children's Residential Homes, Safe Places and Horizon Care to establish four new children's homes across the borough. Work is underway to gain Ofsted registration to have these homes ready in the next 4 - 6 months. This includes a 'care hub model' to provide a joined up approach to support young people moving on positively to permanent homes or to rehabilitate them back to their families.

10. Health and Wellbeing Outcomes

Strengths and Difficulties Questionnaire

- 10.1. At the January Corporate Parenting Committee Members requested further information around the strengths and difficulties questionnaire and scores in Cheshire East. Information will be presented to the March Committee for discussion.

Welcome Pack for unaccompanied asylum seeking children (UASC)

- 10.2. Work to establish a clear process to be followed when a UASC is brought into care is progressing well. A Welcome Pack has been produced. Consultation is underway to provide this in a more attractive and young person friendly format. Further discussion is also taking place regarding which languages it will be produced in.

11. Preparing for Adulthood

Care Leavers Annual Report

- 11.1. The Care Leavers Annual Report will be presented to the March Committee.

12. Implications of the Recommendations

12.1. Legal Implications

Legal advice will be sought, as appropriate, upon all relevant emerging issues.

12.2. Finance Implications

There are no direct financial implications of this report.

12.3. Equality Implications

There are no equality implications as a result of this paper.

12.4. Human Resources Implications

There are no direct financial implications of this report.

12.5. Risk Management Implications

Cared for children and care leavers are a vulnerable group that are at risk of a number of factors – poor education and training, health, safeguarding and transition into adulthood.

12.6. Rural Communities Implications

None.

12.7. Implications for Children & Young People

12.7.1. The contents of this report have implications for cared for children and care leavers, who are some of Cheshire East's most vulnerable children.

12.8. Public Health Implications

12.8.1. There are no direct implications for public health.

13. Ward Members Affected

13.1. Although the number of Cheshire East cared for children and young people is relatively small, they are a vulnerable cohort, who live across Cheshire East and in other local authority areas.

14. Consultation & Engagement

14.1. None.

15. Access to Information

15.1. None.

16. Contact Information

16.1. Any questions relating to this report should be directed to the following officer:

Name: Keith Martin
Job Title: Head of Cared for Children & Care Leavers
Email: Keith.martin@cheshireeast.gov.uk

This page is intentionally left blank