

CHESHIRE EAST COUNCIL

Minutes of a meeting of the **Corporate Parenting Committee**
held on Tuesday, 2nd November, 2021 in the Committee Suite 1,2 & 3,
Westfields, Middlewich Road, Sandbach CW11 1HZ

PRESENT

Councillor K Flavell (Chair)
Councillor J Saunders (Vice-Chair)

Councillors M Asquith, J Buckley, C Bulman, P Butterill, S Holland, D Jefferay
and D Marren

ALSO PRESENT

Annemarie Parker – Head of Service: Cared for Children and Care Leavers
Keith Martin – Head of Service: Children with Disabilities and Fostering
Laura Rogerson – Head of Service: Inclusion
Emma Lawton – Youth Justice Service
Nicola Booth – Adoption Counts
Jenny Foulkes – Children’s Society
Josie Lloyd – Democratic Services Officer

12 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors R Bailey, J Barber, S Handley and G Hayes. Councillor J Buckley, already in attendance, acted as a substitute voting member for this meeting.

13 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

14 MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

RESOLVED –

That the minutes of the meeting held on 14 September 2021 be agreed as a correct record.

15 CORPORATE PARENTING PROGRESS REPORT

The committee received the report which advised how the service was delivering the priorities for cared for children and care leavers as set out in the Corporate Parenting Strategy.

It was noted that the care leavers survey closed last week and that the data from this should be shared at the next meeting.

A question was raised, regarding paragraph 5.6, as to the vaccination figures. It was noted that the vaccination programme had only recently been rolled out in schools but it was agreed that the data would be shared with the committee when available.

A further question was raised regarding paragraph 5.6 and what consideration was given to the wishes of the child when establishing consent for the vaccine. It was noted that this was considered on an individual basis and rationale was being recorded.

A concern was raised regarding staff who were unvaccinated and why this was not a requirement of agency staff. The committee were advised that Cheshire East staff were encouraged to have the vaccine and it was not thought that having the vaccine can be made a requirement for agency staff. It was noted that there was a shortage of care staff nationally. It was agreed that Annemarie Parker would take away a request to check whether having the vaccine can be legally made a requirement when recruiting. Assurances were given that there were risk assessments on children's files where a risk would be posed due to unvaccinated staff.

A question was raised regarding the reporting of NEET figures and it was requested that in future the cohort referred to would be stated alongside the figures in the report.

A further question was raised regarding paragraph 8.5 which referred to the 41% of cared for children who do not live in Cheshire East and whether this was due to a lack of suitable foster carers. It was agreed that a breakdown would be brought back to the committee.

RESOLVED –

1. That the report be noted.
2. That the results of the care leavers survey would be shared at the next meeting.
3. That data on vaccination in cared for children be shared with the committee.
4. That Annemarie Parker take away a request to check whether having the vaccine can be made a prerequisite when recruiting staff.
5. That future reporting on NEET figures show which cohort they refer to.
6. That a breakdown be brought to the committee of the 41% of cared for children living outside the borough.

16 CHILDREN'S RIGHTS ANNUAL REPORT 2020-21

The committee received the report which advised how the Children's Society has delivered the service over the past year, providing an overview of the work undertaken from 1 April 2020 to 31 March 2021.

It was noted that referrals into the service were low although Cheshire East was higher than the national average. A question was raised regarding the target figure for referrals and it was agreed that Annemarie would look into this and share with the committee. An additional question was raised regarding the reason for the lack of referrals and it was agreed that Annemarie would take this away as an area to work towards understanding.

RESOLVED –

1. That the report be noted.
2. That Annemarie look into the target figure for referrals into the service and share with the committee.
3. That Annemarie take away the request to work towards understanding the reason for the low number of referrals.

17 EXCLUSION OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC

RESOLVED – That the press and public be excluded from the meeting during consideration of the following items pursuant to Section 100(A)4 of the Local Government Act 1972 on the grounds that they involve the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in Paragraphs 1 and 2 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A to the Local Government Act 1972 and public interest would not be served in publishing the information.

18 VIRTUAL SCHOOL HEADTEACHER'S ANNUAL REPORT 2020-21

The committee received the Virtual School Headteacher's Annual Report for 2020-21.

RESOLVED –

That the report be noted and endorsed.

19 YOUTH JUSTICE SERVICE PRESENTATION

The committee received a presentation on the Youth Justice Service.

RESOLVED –

That the presentation be noted.

20 ADOPTION COUNTS ADOPTION SERVICE ANNUAL REPORT AND ADOPTION PANEL CHAIRS' SIX MONTHLY REPORT

The committee received the Adoption Counts Adoption Service Annual Report and the Adoption Panel Chairs' Six-Monthly Report.

RESOLVED –

That the report be noted.

The meeting commenced at 16:00 and concluded at 18:30

Councillor K Flavell (Chair)