

# CHESHIRE EAST COUNCIL

Minutes of a meeting of the **Corporate Parenting Committee**  
held on Thursday, 27th January, 2022 in the Council Chamber, Municipal  
Buildings, Earle Street, Crewe CW1 2BJ

## PRESENT

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

Councillors M Asquith, R Bailey, J Buckley, C Bulman, S Handley, S Holland,  
D Jefferay and D Marren

## ALSO PRESENT

Deborah Woodcock, Executive Director of Children's Services  
Kerry Birtles, Director of Children's Social Care  
Annemarie Parker, Head of Service: Cared for Children and Care Leavers  
Laura Rogerson, Head of Service: Inclusion (joined virtually via Microsoft  
Teams)  
Gill Betton, Head of Service: Children's Developments & Partnerships (joined  
virtually via Microsoft Teams)  
Nabeel Chaudhry, Head of Service: Safeguarding (joined virtually via  
Microsoft Teams)  
Nick Crick, Interim Head of Service: Fostering (joined virtually via Microsoft  
Teams)  
Shan McParland, Designated Nurse Looked After Children (joined virtually via  
Microsoft Teams)  
Josie Lloyd, Democratic Services Officer

## 21 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Barber, Councillor Butterill  
and Councillor Hayes.

## 22 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

## 23 MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

### RESOLVED:

That the minutes of the meeting held on 2 November 2021 be agreed as a  
correct record, subject to an amendment to the resolution for the Corporate  
Parenting Progress Report to state that Annemarie Parker would take away a  
request to look into making vaccination a prerequisite of employment, rather than  
a requirement.

## **24 CORPORATE PARENTING PROGRESS REPORT**

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

A query was raised as to the average length of a court delay. It was noted that this varies but that Annemarie Parker, Head of Cared for Children and Care Leavers, would provide the committee with data on this.

A concern was raised regarding the employer event of 18 November 2021, attended by the Virtual School and Care Leavers Service, where Cheshire East employer attendance was lower than that of neighbouring authorities. It was agreed that the service area would look further into promoting events such as this. A follow up event was due to take place in December 2022.

The committee noted the positive figure of 18 young people, aged 18 – 24, currently at university and a request was made for comparative data on the national average to be provided.

A further request was made that future reports to committee include comparative data with other local authorities or within Cheshire East over time to provide context to the figures included within reports.

A concern was raised regarding young people who had taken out contracts for technology, such as mobile phones, during the temporary Universal Credit uplift. The committee were advised that there is work undertaken with young people around independence, part of which includes budgeting and financial commitments around contracts. For those young people who may be struggling financially as a result of contracts, it was agreed that the Director of Children's Social Care would look into whether further support was required.

### **RESOLVED:**

That the report be noted.

## **25 HEALTH OF CARE FOR CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE ANNUAL REPORT, 2020-2021**

The committee received the report which outlined the delivery of health services to children in the care of Cheshire East Council during the period from 1 April 2020 to 31 March 2021.

A query was raised regarding table 2 in the report which showed a comparison of initial health assessments completed within 20 days across each quarter. It was requested that future reports also include information on the assessments which were completed beyond this target and how long they took to complete.

A further query was raised about receiving up to date figures on children in care in the borough. It was noted that the timing of the Children and Families scorecard did not always align with the dates of the Corporate Parenting meetings and it was agreed that consideration would be given by the service area to how current data could be brought to each Corporate Parenting Committee meeting as a standing item.

**RESOLVED:**

That the report be noted.

**26 INDEPENDENT REVIEWING OFFICERS ANNUAL REPORT, 2020-2021**

The committee received the report which provided an overview of the activity of the team of Independent Reviewing Officers who reviewed the care plans of cared for children in the last business year from April 2020 to March 2021.

A concern was raised regarding the number of recorded consultation forms which appeared to be low. The committee were advised that, although the number of response forms received was low, additional feedback was received through the reviews directly. The team were also looking at other means of obtaining this feedback, including meeting with providers for a mobile phone app. It was requested that the next report includes reference to all feedback received rather than just the returned forms.

**RESOLVED:**

That the report be noted.

**27 CHESHIRE EAST FOSTERING PANEL AND FOSTERING SERVICE ANNUAL REPORTS**

The committee received the reports which evidenced the impact of services and foster carers on outcomes for children.

The committee discussed the issue of recruitment and retention of foster carers which the service area was actively working on. A suggestion was raised for potential foster carers to be invited to events with the mockingbird constellation to meet existing foster carers in an informal environment.

The committee thanked the Fostering Panel for their work.

**RESOLVED:**

That the report be noted.

**28 CHANGES TO TIME OF THE CORPORATE PARENTING COMMITTEE AND REVIEW OF THE TERMS OF REFERENCE**

The committee received the report which proposed that, from the new municipal year, the committee start time would be within business hours. The committee requested that the start times alternate between 10am and 2pm.

**RESOLVED:**

That the committee:

1. Approve that the Corporate Parenting Committee is held within usual business hours from April 2022 onwards.
2. Review and endorse the terms of reference.

The meeting commenced at 16.00 and concluded at 17.50

Councillor K Flavell (Chair)