

CHESHIRE EAST COUNCIL

Minutes of a meeting of the **Corporate Parenting Committee**
held on Tuesday, 10th January, 2023 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, S Holland, D Jefferay and
B Puddicombe

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
Georgie Fletcher, Deputy Virtual School Headteacher
Annie Britton, Lead Participation Worker - Youth Support Service
Nicola Booth, Operations Manager – Adoption Counts
Alice Taylor, Adoption Counts
Josie Lloyd, Democratic Services Officer

56 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies were received from Cllr Bailey, Cllr Barber, Cllr Butterill and Cllr
Handley. Cllr Puddicombe attended as a substitute.

57 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

58 MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

RESOLVED:

That the minutes of the meeting held on 1 November 2022 be agreed as a
correct record.

59 UPDATE FROM SHADOW COMMITTEE (VERBAL)

A Christmas lunch event for Care Leavers had taken place on 22
December 2022 with positive feedback received. Attendees were in
support of it being an annual event.

The committee were reminded that they were welcome to attend a
meeting of the Shadow Committee and that this could be arranged through
the Corporate Parenting Committee Chair.

60 CORPORATE PARENTING COMMITTEE NAME CHANGE

The committee received the report which recommended a name change for the Corporate Parenting Committee to reflect the wishes of cared for children and care leavers who had asked for professionals to simplify the language that is used when working with them or making decisions about them.

It was noted that the term 'Corporate Parent' was a statutory term that would remain so would still be referred to in some contexts.

A report would go to the Children and Families Committee for endorsement before the Constitution would be updated to reflect the change.

RESOLVED:

That the name of the Corporate Parenting Committee is changed to the Cared for Children and Care Leaver Committee in response to feedback from care experienced children and young people.

61 ADOPTION COUNTS - ADOPTION SERVICE ANNUAL REPORT AND ADOPTION PANEL CHAIRS SIX-MONTHLY REPORT

The committee received the report which outlined the delivery of adoption services and outcomes for children.

There was a concern around court delays, some of which appeared to be due to delays in receiving medical reports. It was noted that Cheshire East was one of the highest performing local authorities for timeliness but that the team were aware of these delays and were focused on ensuring they were reduced.

A query was raised regarding funding for the educational psychology service and whether the funding would continue. The committee were advised that the team were not aware of any reason as to why it would not continue but that this could not be confirmed until agreed by the board.

It was noted that there had been a fall in adoption applications nationally and a query was raised as to whether this was expected to worsen due to the cost of living crisis. The committee were advised that this was difficult to predict but that Adoption Counts had still seen good engagement and would regularly review the situation.

RESOLVED:

That the Corporate Parenting Committee:

1. Note the contents of the Adoption Counts Adoption Service annual report, and the Adoption Panel Chairs six monthly report.
2. Provide support and challenge in respect of the reports.

62 INDEPENDENT REVIEWING OFFICERS ANNUAL REPORT 2021-22

The committee received the Independent Reviewing Officers Annual Report for the period 2021 – 2022.

A query was raised as to whether there were enough Independent Reviewing Officers (IROs). The committee were advised that the team were stretched sometimes at various points throughout the year but that the IROs were good at managing their time. It was raised that sometimes the IRO reports were not received at the Fostering Panel and the committee were advised that this would be looked into going forward.

RESOLVED:

That the report be noted.

63 CORPORATE PARENTING Q2 SCORECARD 2022/23

The committee received the Corporate Parenting scorecard for quarter 2 of 2022 – 2023.

RESOLVED:

That the report be noted.

The meeting commenced at 14:00 and concluded at 15:37
Councillor K Flavell (Chair)