

CHESHIRE EAST COUNCIL

Minutes of a meeting of the **Corporate Parenting Committee**
held on Tuesday, 7th March, 2017 in Committee Suite 1,2 & 3, Westfields,
Middlewich Road, Sandbach CW11 1HZ

PRESENT

Councillor G Hayes (Chairman)
Councillor G Merry (Vice-Chairman)

Councillors

P Butterill, B Dooley, S Edgar, D Flude, M Grant, J Saunders, L Smetham and
M Warren.

Officers in attendance:

Gill Betton – Head of Children's Development and Partnerships
Elise Cox – Service Co-ordinator Children, Families and Adults
Tom Dooks – Team Manager Youth and Engagement Services
Pete Lambert – Head of Cared for Children
Anji Reynolds – Service Manager, Permanence and Through Care Team
Cherry Foreman – Democratic Services Officer

34 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

There were no apologies for absence.

35 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

36 MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

RESOLVED

That the minutes of the meeting held on 24 January 2017 be approved as
a correct record.

37 UPDATE ON RESPONSE FROM COMMITTEE TO CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE'S INPUT IN JANUARY

RESOLVED

That an update be made to the next meeting as it had not been possible to
have a meeting with the Shadow Board since the last meeting of the
Committee.

38 PROVISION AND OUTCOMES FOR CARE LEAVERS

The Committee considered the care provision and key outcomes for service leavers. In July 2016 the Government had published their strategy, 'Keep on Caring' Supporting People from Care to Independence, which set out its vision in 5 key outcomes for care leavers, these being

1. Better prepared and supported to live independently
2. Improved access to education, employment and training
3. Experiencing stability and feeling safe and secure
4. Improved access to health support
5. Achieving financial stability

The report gave a resume of the history and development of the Care Leavers Service in Cheshire East in recent years, and of the work streams and champion roles which had been introduced to support these outcomes. In addition it was reported there had been a drive to improve the quality of both the pathway plans and tools used with care leavers, a new Plan having gone live in January this year.

As part of the wider position presentations had been given to the Fostering Forum and to the Skills to Fostering training programme, aimed at helping all those involved with cared for children to think about independent living and the skills needed for moving on. Personal Advisors were now allocated to an eligible child on turning 16, or no later than ahead of their first pathway plan review.

With regard to the five key outcomes specific details were given of what was being done for each along with an assessment of how successful these had been to date; it was intended to carry out a review of the service plan and to refocus in 2017/18 and for there to be a survey this year to obtain feedback from all the care leavers being worked with.

Members received clarification concerning the suitability of some properties for care leavers especially in the Crewe area, the position concerning the age at which housing benefit was awarded, and assistance for unaccompanied asylum seekers over 16 years of age. Concern was expressed about the number of young people in care who had their own children taken into care, although it was recognised this was not out of line with other areas.

RESOLVED

That the report be noted.

39 CORPORATE PARENTING COMMITTEE UPDATE

The Committee received information on national developments in respect of changes to the apprenticeship levy and the new Children and Social Work Bill, and on the following local developments:

- Arrangements for carrying out inspections of Children's Homes (Reg 44)
- Unaccompanied asylum seeking children
- Corporate parenting training for elected members
- The foster carer survey 2016 and action plan
- Foster carer fortnight
- Post 16 tutor
- Corporate parenting annual report
- Signs of safety innovation bid

In considering the content of the Annual Report it was agreed that the subjects suggested, set out in para 5.19, be included, with the addition of

- reference to reports produced by the service such as those on the current agenda on the Provision and Outcomes for Care Leavers, and the Service Improvement Plan for Children's Social Care,
- the 'deep dives' of specific topics made by the Committee during the year,
- a section to highlight what had been achieved and remained to be done in the coming year.

RESOLVED

1. That the report be noted.
2. That approval be given to the content of the Annual Report set out in para 5.19 with the addition of the points identified above.
3. The aims and learning outcomes of the corporate training for elected members, set out in para 5.6 of the report, be endorsed.

40 SERVICE IMPROVEMENT PLAN, CHILDREN'S SOCIAL CARE

Consideration was given to the Service Improvement Plan for Children's Social Care. Following discussions with children, young people, parents and carers on what they most wanted the Plan focussed on the four key things thought to make the most difference:

1. We always put children and young people first.
2. We understand what impact the situation is having on the child or young person.
3. We take action to make positive changes a reality.
4. We work with families to achieve long lasting change. Children and young people get the right service for them at the right time.

The Committee was told how the delivery of services would be changing this year. The report set out the approach which included ensuring our professionals have the right support and tools in place to enable them to conduct high quality work, an aligning of the audit and quality assurance process with the Signs of Safety approach, master classes for all social work staff, and a campaign for a change across the partnerships involved so as to develop a shared culture and ambition for children and young people in Cheshire East. It was intended that progress be reviewed by senior managers on a quarterly basis.

Particular interest was expressed in the way in which the health partners could be held to account and to the role played by the Local Safeguarding Children Board, and the Cheshire East the Health and Wellbeing Board. With reference to the Children and Adolescent Mental Health Service (CAMHS) it was agreed that be added the Committee Work Programme as a subject for a 'deep dive'.

RESOLVED

That the report be noted and that a deep dive on CAMHS be added to the Work Programme for the Committee.

41 EXCLUSION OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC

That the press and public be excluded from the meeting during consideration of the following item pursuant to Section 100(A)4 of the Local Government Act 1972 on the grounds that it involves 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.

42 REPORT ON CARED FOR CHILDREN AND CARE LEAVERS - VULNERABLE GROUPS

Consideration was given to this report. It was requested that in future reports a comparison of year on year data be included so as to assist in identifying any areas that might need to be focussed on. It was also suggested that the scorecard be reassessed at the end of the year to ensure it provided the necessary information.

RESOLVED

That the report be noted.

The meeting commenced at 5.00 pm and concluded at 6.45 pm

Councillor G Hayes (Chairman)