

CHESHIRE EAST COUNCIL

Minutes of a meeting of the **Corporate Parenting Committee**
held on Tuesday, 14th September, 2021 at Council Chamber, Municipal
Buildings, Earle Street, Crewe CW1 2BJ

PRESENT

Councillor K Flavell (Chair)

Councillors R Bailey, J Barber, M Beanland, J Buckley, C Bulman, P Butterill,
S Holland, D Jefferay, L Wardlaw

ALSO PRESENT

Kerry Birtles – Director of Children’s Social Care
Annemarie Parker – Head of Service: Cared for Children and Care Leavers
Gill Betton – Head of Service: Children’s Development and Partnerships
Keith Martin – Head of Service: Children with Disabilities and Fostering
Laura Rogerson – Head of Service: Inclusion
Steve Nevitt – Service Manager for Care Leavers
Sarah Probert - Mockingbird Team Manager
Sam Ankers - Team Manager for Care Leavers
Emma Lawton – Youth Justice Service
Sarah Sturmeay, Pure Insight CEO and Founder
Sue Pilkington – NHS Cheshire CCG
Josie Lloyd – Democratic Services Officer

1 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors J Saunders, G
Hayes, D Marren and S Handley. Councillors M Beanland and L Wardlaw
attended as substitutes.

2 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

3 MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

RESOLVED –

That the minutes of the meeting held on 30 March 2021 be approved as a
correct record.

4 CORPORATE PARENTING PROGRESS REPORT AND SCORECARD Q1

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

A question was raised regarding the scorecard figures for the average number of days between entering care and moving in with adoptive family and the average number of days between placement order and match with adoptive family, both of which were higher than the national average. It was noted that this was an area which was significantly impacted by Covid-19 and it was expected that this would recover. It was also noted that the national average was pre-Covid and, while comparative figures had not yet been collated, it was expected that a similar position would be seen nationally.

A further question was raised regarding the participation and engagement survey and what was being done to address the concerns of the children and young people who did not rate their experiences positively. A further report would come back to the next committee meeting and future reports would include further detail. It was noted that the majority of responses were positive; however, for a small number of children, their responses suggest there is more work to do.

RESOLVED –

That the report be noted.

5 CORPORATE PARENTING COMMITTEE ANNUAL REPORT 2020-21

The committee received the Corporate Parenting Committee Annual Report which detailed the progress and achievements over 2020-21 against the five pledges the Council has made to cared for children and care leavers in the Corporate Parenting Strategy, as well as the Terms of Reference for the Committee and the priorities for 2021-22.

It was noted that My Voice (our Children in Care Council) has sessions taking place most weeks. Members of the committee were invited to visit and noted that this could be arranged in advance through Annemarie Parker.

A question was raised as to the number of care leavers who the service are in contact with as the report states this is the case for the 'vast majority'. It was noted that this is a fluid number but that future reports will include percentages.

A further question was raised regarding the completion rate of Personal Education Plans (PEPs) to a good or better standard being at over 85%

and what could be done to reach 100%. Assurances were given that there are robust tracking systems in place and that work will be done to link directly with social workers and schools to ensure PEPs are not missing. It was noted that the 15% without completed PEPs is largely due to missing information, rather than poor quality, and that work is being done to rectify this.

RESOLVED –

1. That the committee endorse the Corporate Parenting Committee Annual Report 2020-21 as set out at Appendix 1 in the report.
2. That future reports detail the percentage of care leavers who are remaining in touch with the service.

6 PREPARATION FOR ADULTHOOD ANNUAL REPORT AND SERVICE PLAN

The committee received a report outlining the impact of the work being done to prepare young people for adulthood.

It was noted that the care leavers service has continued to grow and that the number of care leavers being supported by Cheshire East has risen from 337 to around 400 since the report was written.

The committee noted that the temporary £20 Universal Credit uplift arising from the pandemic was due to end and that this will affect care leavers within the borough. Assurances were given that the impact of this will be looked at on an individual basis.

A question was raised regarding challenges with cared for children and young people accessing dental appointments and whether feeling a lack of control could be a contributing factor. It was agreed that this would be taken away and potential factors impacting access to dental care would be looked into further.

RESOLVED –

1. That the report be noted.
2. That Kerry Birtles take away the question regarding barriers to accessing dental care for health colleagues to look into.

7 PROPOSAL TO DEVELOP A NEW CORPORATE PARENTING STRATEGY

The committee received a report setting out the proposed approach to the development of a new Corporate Parenting Strategy for Cheshire East to improve outcomes for cared for children and care leavers.

RESOLVED –

1. That the committee endorse the proposed approach to the development of a new Corporate Parenting Strategy as set out in the report.
2. That the committee endorse the existing plan for 2021.

8 CHESHIRE EAST MOCKINGBIRD FAMILY MODEL

The committee received a report providing a summary of the Fostering Service's implementation of the Mockingbird Family Model. It was agreed that this was a positive piece of work and it was noted that the next step would be to replicate this model in the north of the borough.

A concern was raised about the reports presented at today's meeting not including any rural implications. It was agreed that Kerry would look into ensuring this is considered for all future reports to the committee.

RESOLVED –

1. That the committee note the report.
2. That Kerry Birtles look into rural implications for future reports.

9 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.

10 YOUTH JUSTICE SERVICE PRESENTATION ON SUPPORT TO CARED FOR CHILDREN

The committee agreed to defer this item due to technical issues.

RESOLVED –

That the item be deferred to the next meeting.

11 PURE INSIGHT REPORT

The committee received a report on the delivery of services provided by Pure Insight to Cheshire East care leavers.

RESOLVED –

That the report be noted.

The meeting commenced at 16:00 and concluded at 18:10

Councillor K Flavell