

Corporate Parenting Committee

Agenda

Date: Tuesday, 3rd July, 2018
Time: 4.00 pm
Venue: Committee Suite 1,2 & 3, Westfields, Middlewich Road,
Sandbach CW11 1HZ

The agenda is divided into 2 parts. Part 1 is taken in the presence of the public and press. Part 2 items will be considered in the absence of the public and press for the reasons indicated on the agenda and in the report.

It should be noted that Part 1 items of Cheshire East Council decision making and Overview and Scrutiny meetings are audio recorded and the recordings will be uploaded to the Council's website.

PART 1 – MATTERS TO BE CONSIDERED WITH THE PUBLIC AND PRESS PRESENT

1. **Appointment of Chairman**

To appoint a Chairman of the Committee for the Municipal Year 2018/19.

2. **Appointment of Vice-Chairman**

To appoint a Vice-Chairman of the Committee for the Municipal Year 2018/19.

3. **Apologies for Absence**

4. **Declarations of Interest**

To provide an opportunity for Members and Officers to declare any disclosable pecuniary and non-pecuniary interests in any item on the agenda.

5. **Minutes of Previous meeting** (Pages 3 - 8)

To approve the minutes of the meeting held on 9 May 2018 as a correct record.

Contact: Cherry Foreman
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6. **Participation and Engagement** (Pages 9 - 18)

1. There will be a presentation to update the Committee on participation and engagement.
2. Input from Children and Young People.
3. To consider the Advocacy and Independent Visitors Report.

7. **Corporate Parenting Annual Report 2017/18** (Pages 19 - 42)

To consider the draft annual report for 2017/18.

8. **Corporate Parenting Frontline Visits** (Pages 43 - 52)

To consider this report, the guidance and an update on the Disclosure and Barring Service.

9. **Corporate Parenting Update** (Pages 53 - 62)

To consider an update on national and local developments in relation to cared for children and young people and care leavers.

CHESHIRE EAST COUNCIL

Minutes of a meeting of the **Corporate Parenting Committee**
held on Wednesday, 9th May, 2018 at Committee Suite 1,2 & 3, Westfields,
Middlewich Road, Sandbach CW11 1HZ

PRESENT

Councillor G Merry (Chairman)
Councillor D Flude (Vice-Chairman)

Councillors P Butterill, M Deakin, B Dooley, L Durham, S Edgar (for Cllr O Hunter), S Gardiner, M Grant, A Kolker and M Warren

Councillor in attendance

Councillor J Saunders, Portfolio Holder for Children and Families

Officers in attendance

Gill Betton, Head of Service: Children's Development and Partnerships
Kerry Birtles, Head of Service: Cared for Children & Care Leavers
Diane Grist, Service Manager Fostering and SGO Support
Nigel Moorhouse, Director of Children's Social Care
Steve Nevitt, Group Manager Resources
Julie Zientek, Democratic Services Officer

48 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors L Smetham (due to Council business) and O Hunter.

49 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

50 MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

RESOLVED – That the minutes of the meeting held on 20 March 2018 be approved as a correct record.

51 INPUT FROM CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE

The Head of Cared for Children and Care Leavers reported that there was no formal update as no young people had attended a meeting the previous week. The 'pen pictures' of Corporate Parenting Committee members would be shared with young people later in the week.

RESOLVED – That the update be noted.

52 STAFFING AND INFRASTRUCTURE

The Committee considered the Children's Social Care Recruitment and Retention Strategy 2018 - 2020.

In addition to the information contained in the report and in response to questions from Committee members, officers stated the following:

- Signs of Safety, which had been adopted as the operational model in November 2017, had been very good for recruitment and retention.
- Caseloads were calculated on the basis of the number of individual cases and not per family unit.
- The Council's legal teams had the capacity to support social workers.
- No one case management system was the best, but Liquid Logic offered a good balance between records and practice.
- Following criticism of an agency social worker in a court judgement in March 2017, systems had been reviewed and practice strengthened.
- Staff feedback, including exit interviews, was reported to the Staffing Committee.
- Recruitment payments only applied to Crewe, as it was more difficult to recruit to Crewe than Macclesfield.
- There were strong links with local universities, a lot of work had been done on the ASYE programme for newly qualified social workers, more student placements were being offered than previously, and students in partner universities were offered a route into Cheshire East, based in Crewe.
- Some recently-recruited staff did not have English as their first language. This reflected the areas in which they worked.
- Quite a few enquires were received from people looking for a career change, and Cheshire East was to start offering the one year conversion programme 'Step Up to Social Work'.

The Director of Children's Social Care presented Quarter 3 staffing data and highlighted key points.

- The Cheshire East Consultation Service (ChECS) was fully staffed.
- The Children in Need and Child Protection Team – Macclesfield had no agency staff, although they were occasionally used to cover maternity leave.

- The Children in Need and Child Protection Team – Crewe had a number of agency staff and some vacancies. There were more vacancies in Quarter 4, and more family support workers were being used to support social workers. Some staff had recently been assaulted and personal safety training was being offered.
- Permanence and Through Care had recently had some staff turnover and there were some vacancies.
- Vacancies in the Fostering Team had been filled by internal moves and external recruitment.
- Independent Safeguarding Chairs were fully staffed in December, which was very positive.
- The Vacancy Rate was 7.3% in December 2017.
- The desirable ratio of experienced to newly qualified staff had not yet been achieved.
- The rate of Staff Turnover was 18.2%, which was higher than desired.
- Staff Sickness was quite low.

In addition to the information contained in the presentation and in response to questions from Committee members, officers stated the following:

- There was a higher than normal number of family support worker vacancies as it was a non statutory role which enabled people to gain experience before deciding what to do.

RESOLVED – That the report be noted.

53 CORPORATE PARENTING SCORECARD Q3

The Committee considered the scorecard for the third quarter of 2017/18, which covered the following six measures of performance:

- General
- Involve Me
- Provide Me With a Good Safe Home
- Keep Me Healthy
- Help Me Achieve
- Support Me to Move into Adult Life

The scorecard compared the current quarter with the two previous quarters and year end and indicated the quarterly direction of travel.

The Head of Cared for Children and Care Leavers highlighted the following key points:

- The population of cared for children had increased slightly with respect to quarter 2, but the rate of increase was slowing down. This was due to fewer admissions and children not remaining in care longer than necessary.
- The position with regard to initial health assessments had considerably improved.
- There had been real improvements in care leavers accessing education, employment and training.

In addition to the information contained in the report and in response to questions from Committee members, officers stated the following:

- A small number of care leavers accessed Higher Education. Independence plans and ambitious foster carers encouraged them to be the best they can be. The Council was a guarantor of accommodation, so they could return to their foster carers during the vacations if they wished.
- The number of pregnant care leavers may increase, as a result of reforms which identified a larger cohort.

RESOLVED – That the content be noted.

54 **CORPORATE PARENTING UPDATE**

The Committee received an update on national and local developments in relation to cared for children and young people and care leavers.

A resume of the following national developments was given:

- Extended Personal Adviser duty Implementation Grant (New Burdens)
- DfE commissioned foster care review

Local developments included:

- Update on Development of the Corporate Parenting Strategy
- Local Area SEND Inspection
- Approval for new special school in Crewe
- Voice for Children Contract
- Re-commission of supported lodgings

- Cared for Children and Care Leavers Service
- Family Nurse Partnership
- Changes to Pupil Premium Plus
- School places for children looked after by other local authorities
- Participation with Children and Young People
- Cheshire East Care Leavers Facebook Account
- Independent Visitors Needed

With respect to the Corporate Parenting Strategy, the Head of Cared for Children and Care Leavers outlined the proposed Member training and induction, as follows:

- A booklet was being produced.
- All new members were to receive a short induction session on corporate parenting.
- There would be 2 training sessions per year (July and January). This would be mandatory for Corporate Parenting Committee Members and encouraged for all Members.
- The training would cover:
 - Corporate parenting responsibilities
 - Experiences of cared for children and care leavers
 - Profile and outcomes of children
 - Participation of children and young people
 - Support to care leavers
- Following training, a rota of frontline visits would be produced annually. Visits would include the care leavers service and residential care.

In response to a question from a Committee member, it was confirmed that DBS checks were not portable.

With respect to the Local Area SEND Inspection, it was reported that the Inspectors' letter had been received and that the contents would be disseminated the following day.

RESOLVED

1. That the updates be noted.
2. That a plan regarding the publication of the 'pen pictures' of Corporate Parenting Committee members and other information on the Cheshire East Care Leavers Facebook Account be considered at a future meeting of the Committee.
3. That it be noted that work is continuing on the recruitment of additional Independent Visitors.

The meeting commenced at 4.00 pm and concluded at 5.15 pm
Councillor G Merry (Chairman)



Advocacy and Independent Visitor Report

January 2017 – December 2017

Amanda Bennett
Area Manager, Lancashire, Cheshire & Merseyside,
The Children's Society



WHAT DO WE DO – ADVOCACY?

The Children's Society delivers the Children's Rights and Advocacy Service for Cheshire East. This report seeks to provide an overview of the work undertaken from January to December 2017. We are in the 4th year of delivery and have continued to develop and grow the service over the term of the contract to respond to the changing needs of Children & Young People and the Local Authority.

ISSUE BASED ADVOCACY

Criteria:

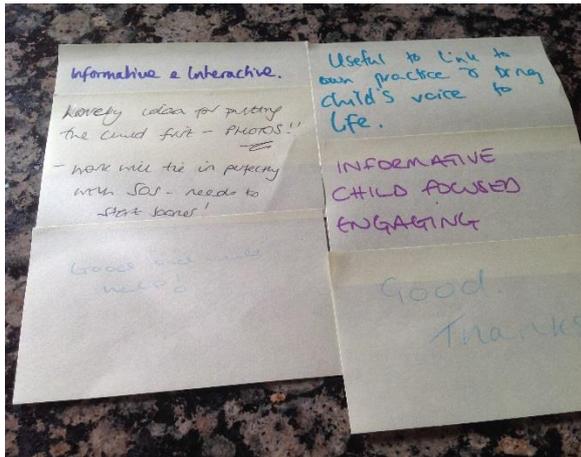
- Children and young people in care
0 -21 years inclusive
- Children moving on from care to adult life and who are entitled to a service under Children (Leaving Care) Act 2000
- Children and young people subject to a child protection plan
- Young homeless people aged 16/17
- Children and young people making a complaint about a social work service
- Disabled children and young people 0 -18 years irrespective of whether they have a current service plan
- Disabled young people after their 18th birthday receiving transition services
- Children and young people seeking asylum

CHILD PROTECTION ADVOCACY

Between October and December 2017 automatic referrals for Child Protection stopped being made. This was part of a clearly articulated plan by the LSCB and CEC to place greater emphasis on Social Workers providing that advocacy and support for young people. The introduction of Signs of Safety supported this decision and brought it all together. There are still some CP cases referred where it isn't appropriate for Social Workers to do the advocacy themselves but these are reduced in number due to the positive impact of Signs of Safety and other training delivered to Social Workers by The Children's Society.

There has been a decrease in referrals for Issue Based Advocacy compared with the previous 12 months. Work will begin to undertake a deep dive exercise in collaboration with Cheshire East Council to understand why.

The Children's Society Advocates use innovative and creative ways of illustrating the child or young person's wishes and feelings during Child Protection Conferences, they do this with visual representations in the form of Story Boards. This gives all concerned a better understanding of the experiences, wishes and feelings of the individual child.



WHAT DO OTHER PEOPLE SAY ABOUT US?

“In March 2017 an audit was carried out by Cheshire East which suggested that the advocacy service is effective in ensuring the voice of the child is represented within conference. The ability of the advocates to do this relates to their independence; they are more likely to be trusted by children and by parents who then consciously or unconsciously give their child permission to speak. It is also connected to how the child’s views and lived experience are presented within the conference by the advocate

Pictorial representations were felt by the auditors to be the most powerful and effective way that advocates shared the views of the child, more effective at times than the child attending conference did.”

Susanne Leece March 2017

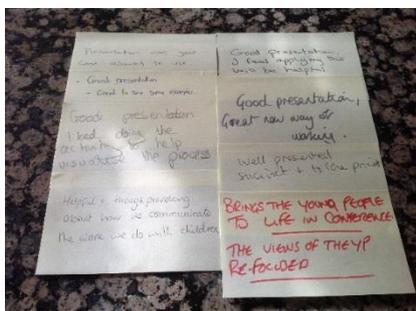
The CP IRO Chairs have been very positive about the involvement of the Advocates in the Child Protection Process and they consider the Advocates are getting increasingly skilled in the role. (Shirley Jordan CP IRO Chair)

It was useful to link my own practice to the visual representation work and bring the child’s voice to life!

SHARING WHAT WE KNOW WORKS

As part of the planned withdrawal from the CP Advocacy contract and the introduction of Signs of Safety it became ever more important for Social Workers to play a more active role in advocating for Children and Young People in Child Protection proceedings. The Children’s Society’s Service Manager and Advocates were asked to share their learning with Social Workers in Macclesfield and Crewe. Social Workers and Advocates use the Story Boards as an effective way of demonstrating the wishes and feelings of a child.

The training for Social Workers was very well received and positive feedback given to The Children’s Society Team. They will



continue to provide support for Social Workers as this way of working gets embedded.

CHILD PROTECTION ANIMATION

In 2017 The Children's Society supported Cheshire East Council in the creation of a short film to explain to Children & Young People what happens in Child Protection Conferences. The Children's Society's Advocates supported the Children and Young People to participate in the creation of the film. The film is now available on the Cheshire East Website to help support Children and Young People in understanding what happens at these often very formal and sometimes frightening meetings.

I really enjoyed being involved in this process. I felt that the Cheshire East staff really listened to what the young people were saying to them and really tried hard to make it a positive experience.

Christine Holt, Advocate



The video can be found on YouTube by following this link:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Q1Lgh2n11Gk>

HOW DO OUR ADVOCATES WORK?

The advocates use a "toolkit" of equipment when working with children and young people in order to represent their views. Work is always child and young person led. Where a child or young person had disabilities or specific needs in relation to communication, the advocate works to enable the child's wishes and feelings to be represented.

OUR ADVOCACY NUMBERS

Child Protection Advocacy Referrals

| | |
|---------------------------------|------------|
| Number of CP Advocacy Referrals | 54 |
| Number of individual children | 105 |
| Neglect | 58 |
| Emotional Abuse | 24 |
| Physical Abuse | 15 |
| Sexual Abuse | 6 |
| CSE Plans | 2 |

Issues Based Advocacy Referrals

| | |
|---|-----------|
| Number of Issues Based Advocacy Referrals | 60 |
| Children in Care | 34 |
| Disabilities | 13 |
| Care Leavers | 13 |
| Private Foster Care | 0 |

WHAT DO OUR NUMBERS TELL US?

The number of CP Advocacy referrals has inevitably reduced throughout the year as the plan to withdraw from this service and empower Social Workers to advocate for young people themselves became a reality. It is reassuring to see that some referrals for CP Advocacy work have continued albeit greatly reduced. This can give us confidence that Social Workers are clear about when a child or young person may need the independence of an advocate and are making appropriate referrals. It also tells us that IRO's, Social Workers, Children and Families value the service offered by The Children's Society and through good collaborative working we have arrived at a position where the roles are clearly defined and everyone knows what to expect.

We have had a steady decrease in the number of Issue Based Advocacy Referrals during the last 12 months and we are yet to understand why. The Team have done a great deal to raise awareness and encourage referrals. The Children's Society will work with Cheshire East Council to undertake a deep dive exercise to try to understand this change which bucks the national trend.

Our Independent Visitor Service continues to offer great opportunities to volunteers and children placed in care alike. It is a constant challenge to recruit the right types of volunteers to meet a young person's needs but this is something we dedicate a lot of time and energy to. We do at times have a waiting list of either volunteers or children however, we now collaborate with our

colleagues in Lancashire to broaden our scope where possible.

WHAT DO YOUNG PEOPLE SAY TO US?

M asked advocate "Where is my sister living, "I'm worried she has nowhere to live and scared if she was homeless."

Hani has multiple disabilities. His mum tells us Hani often says his Advocate is his 'superhero'!

"You are my voice in meetings, you make sure that my opinions are listened to, I trust you!"

"Thank you so much, you have been brilliant. I don't know what we would have done without you"

'Jamie spoke about some confusion and said he would benefit from some life story work and that he would most like for you to do this'

THE MAC PROJECT



Central England
Law Centre



The MAC Project focuses on the rights of women and girls who are or have been in the care system themselves and who are now pregnant or have children.

TCS advocates in Cheshire did some legal training with this project in the summer of 2017.

The training and support we received has been invaluable in supporting Cheshire East Care leavers who are at risk of having their children removed.

We use a legal rights based approach to ensure that these young woman get the best possible chance at parenting their own children with all the support that is available to them.

We are currently supporting two Cheshire East care leavers in this position. Both of which are currently engaged in care proceedings in relation to their own children. Both continue to be supported by our specially trained Advocates to ensure their voices are heard in relation to the outcome. This is understandably protracted as legal cases can take many months to conclude. Advocates have supported young women to attend court.



INDEPENDENT VISITOR SERVICE

The Children Act 1989 (schedule 2, paragraph 17) places a duty on 'the Council' to appoint an independent visitor in respect of any Cared for Children if:

- Communication between the child and parent or any person who is not a parent but has parental responsibility has been infrequent
- The child has not been visited (or has not lived with) a parent, or any person with PR for the child during the preceding 12 months.
- The child or young person agrees to an Independent Visitor being appointed.
- Where it appears to be in the child's best interests to do so.

Independent Visitors are volunteers, independent of the care system, and their role is to visit, support and befriend young people allocated to them and to take a long-term interest in their welfare and development.

The Children's Society played an important role in the development of the National Independent Visitor Standards. Locally we work hard to embed the standards into our delivery of the IV service and to encourage the Local Authorities we work with to fully understand and adopt the standards also.

The IV standards have now been developed by children and young people into a more user friendly format.

Every effort is made to match young people to an Independent Visitor as soon as possible and certainly within a month to six weeks. However on occasions where we do not have a suitable

Volunteer available the wait will be longer while we use targeted recruitment methods to attract someone suitable.

Targeted recruitment may include advertising in the local press, contacting local interest groups or support groups where a child with a disability would like a positive role model – deaf child may prefer a deaf IV.

Whilst it is always good to match a volunteer and child quickly, the most important thing is to create successful matches which will be sustainable for two to three years and it can take time to do that effectively. Throughout the process the child or young person is kept fully informed of the progress.

Independent Visitors are trained in Safeguarding, Health & Safety and Equality & Diversity. They receive monthly supervision and the relationship is closely monitored by our Volunteer Coordinators.

Significant improvements have been made to the IV service over the last 18 months, which has been both a collaborative effort with Cheshire East Council and bringing the service in line with others we run elsewhere in the North Region.

Children and Young people tell us they value the IV service greatly and the interactions are very much young person led.

Our Independent Visitor Service Numbers

| | |
|---|----------|
| Total Number of IV Referrals 2017 | 6 |
| Boys | 3 |
| Girls | 3 |
| CYP with Disabilities | 3 |
| Out of Borough | 0 |
| Placed in Foster Care | 4 |
| Placed in Residential Homes | 2 |
| Those on care orders but residing with family/parents | 0 |



WHAT DO CHILDREN & YOUNG PEOPLE TELL US

"I like living here because I have my own room"

A and his volunteer have shared great times together going to the cinema, visiting the Science and Industry Museum, bowling and eating out. They laugh a lot and A is starting to trust the volunteer.

"I love playing football with P, he is really good and we went to a proper football club to see the pitch it was exciting"

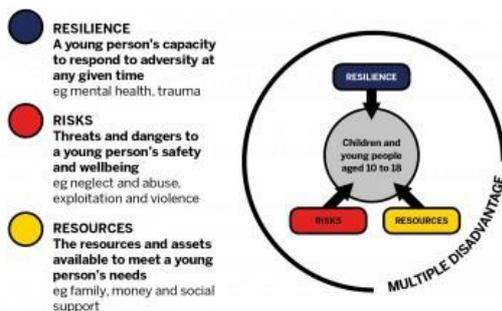
WHAT DO WE PLAN TO DO IN 2018

- Continue to grow and develop the Advocacy and Independent Visitor Service responding to emerging Best Practice, the requirements of Cheshire East Council and The Children's Society.
- Continue to listen to children and young people and share their views and advocate where needed.
- Promote the Independent Visitor Standards with colleagues, children and young people.
- Continue to work hard to recruit appropriate volunteers for the Independent Visitor Service.
- Prepare for the re-commissioning of the Service, working with Children & Young People to develop a coproduced design for our bid.
- Integrate our new Health & Wellbeing Worker to Cheshire, she will deliver Mental Health First Aid Training to children, young people and volunteers who engage with children and will carry a small early action caseload – this post has been funded through monies raised and is not a commissioned service.

NATIONAL ACTIVITY

The Children's Society is a leading Children's Charity with a national reputation for delivering services for Children & Young People and for policy and campaigns work which focusses on highlighting the issues which face children and young people in today's society and lobbying Government locally and nationally to create better life chances.

The strategy focusses around three main strands Risk, Resilience and Resources.



During 2017, The Children's Society has worked on campaigns including:

- Adolescent Neglect
- Seriously Awkward – Crumbling Futures
- Council Tax Campaign – Council Tax Relief for Care Leavers

The Children's Society operations in Cheshire are part of the Lancashire, Cheshire and Merseyside area. Other services delivered within the area include:

- Missing from Home – Return Home Interviews
- Street Safe – CSE Project

- Children's Rights and Advocacy (Lancashire)
- Safer Families – Refugees, Asylum Seeker and Migrant Project in Lancashire
- Mental Health & Well-Being Programme – Pan Cheshire. This project will start in early 2018.

In addition to the projects outlined there are also development plans to develop work around disrupting exploitation which, subject to funding, we hope to bring online during 2018 this work will initially focus on Lancashire but if sufficient evidence can be identified to support a roll out into Cheshire then plans for upscaling the programme are in place in phase 2.

CONTACT DETAILS

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Corporate Parenting Committee Annual Report 2017-18

Corporate Parenting Committee Annual Report 2017/2018

Foreword



It has been a great pleasure working with members and officer colleagues in this second year of the Corporate Parenting Committee.

The Committee is an advisory committee to the Cabinet; its purpose is to ensure that the Council effectively discharges its role as Corporate Parent for all children and young people in care and care leavers from 0 - 25 years of age and to hold

partners to account for the discharge of their responsibilities.

We have a continued improvement strategy as we scrutinise and evaluate the ways in which we look after those in our care. Throughout this work however, we are constantly mindful of the voice of the child/young person so that we can build into our plans ways in which they feel we can best help them.

The Committee receives regular updates on National Issues which may affect the way in which we consider our improvement journey. Throughout the year we have been heartened by the dedication and commitment of the officers involved, in constantly achieving improved outcomes for those for whom we care.

The role of the Corporate Parenting Committee is to oversee the corporate parenting function of Cheshire East Council and its partners. It works to ensure that the Director of Children's Services and Cabinet Member for Children and Families meet their statutory responsibility towards all children from within the Borough, particularly those from vulnerable groups. The work undertaken is also scrutinised in part by the Cheshire East Children and Families Overview and Scrutiny Committee and the Cheshire East Health and Wellbeing Board.

Gill Merry

Chair of Cheshire East Corporate Parenting Committee

The Corporate Parenting Committee

The committee is comprised of twelve cross party members with Officers in attendance, as required, to cover agenda items and assisted by Democratic Service Officers. It has met on seven occasions over 2017-18:

18th April 2017

2nd May 2017

4th July 2017

19th September 2017

14th November 2017

23rd January 2018

20th March 2018

Attendance at meetings has been excellent with many elected members holding roles in other areas of the Children and Families Directorate, including Children and Families Scrutiny, Fostering Panel, Adoption Panel and as school governors in a variety of schools across the borough.

Cheshire East Profile¹

¹ Note that some figures may not correspond with published national data due to

The following is key data relating to cared for children and care leavers:

- At the end of March 2018 there were 477 children and young people being **cared for** by the local authority. This is an **increase of 55 (13%)** from March 2017.
- This equates to 63 children for every 10,000 in the general population of Cheshire East, and is now **higher than the latest available England average of 62** but lower than the North West average of 86. This is also higher than the latest available statistical neighbour group average of 58. Based on this figure we are at the higher end of our statistical neighbour group in terms of the rate of cared for children.
- **146 individuals left care in 2017-18**, compared to 145 in 2015-16.
- Cheshire East supported **18 unaccompanied asylum seekers children** (UASC) with placements in 2017-18 which is a rise of 64% compared to last year. It is recognised that many of these young people have experienced significant adverse life events both within their countries of origin, and during their journeys to the UK. The resulting physical, emotional and mental

reporting arrangements, eg, rounding up and down.

health needs of this group of young people can be particularly complex and require specialist support services.

- The gender profile of children and young people in care is split **53% male and 47% female**, which is a larger ratio of males compared to last year at 51% and 49% respectively. 44% of the children and young people in care are between the ages of 10 and 15. There are more males than females aged 16+ in care, whereas there are slightly more females aged 4 and under.
- The **average age** of children and young people **entering care** this year has **dropped slightly to 7** compared to age 8 for the previous 3 years and has now reduced further to 6 in 2018/19.
- A total of 200 **children and young people have entered care** in 2017-18, which is up from 181 in 2016-17.
- As at the end of March 2018, **83% of all children and young people in care were living in a family situation.**
- Every effort is made to support children and young people within Cheshire East provision and currently

78% of Cheshire East fostering provision (excluding respite) is occupied.

- As at 31st March 2018 there were **45 individuals supported in either residential homes or schools.**
- As at 31st March 2018 the ethnic profile of cared for children is **predominantly white British (88%)**, with the biggest other ethnicities of white other and other mixed background. This is an almost identical profile to last year. There has been an **increase in White European** children entering care over the past two years. In 2017-18 there were 6 (5 Slovakian, 1 Polish) in 2016-17 we had 8 (6 Polish, 1 Czech, 1 Lithuanian).
- **15 children and young people were adopted** over 2017-18, which is a 42% drop from the 26 children and young people adopted in 2016-17. There are however a further 41 individuals currently in care where the plan is for adoption.

Focus Areas

Each Committee includes a focus area, where Members look in detail at an area of service that impacts on the outcomes for children and young people in care. The focus areas over the year have been:

- Provision and outcomes for care leavers
- Staffing and infrastructure, including recruitment and retention
- Participation and Engagement
- Health and Wellbeing
- Education, employment and training
- Placement sufficiency including fostering, adoption, residential care, out of borough placements

Services considered by the Committee

In continuing our improvement journey during 2017/8, measured against desired outcomes, we have considered:

- Family Court Proceedings
- Children's Social Care recruitment and retention
- Health of Cared for Children and Young People
- Service Performance Reports
- National Developments
- Cared for Children's participation
- Independent Reviewing Officer's report
- Virtual School's Annual Report
- Fostering Panel's Annual Report
- Adoption Panel's Annual Report

- Local Safeguarding Board's Annual Report
- Care Leaver's Annual Report

Family Court Proceedings

Consideration was given to a report from The Director of Children's Social Care reporting on the background and complexity, giving members an insight into the demands on social workers working from working in the Family Courts based in Liverpool, Crewe and Chester.

Children's Social Care Recruitment and Retention

In listening to the Voice of the young people, Members seek to be assured that the measures taken in recruitment and retention of social workers continue to be effective, since the constant changes to social workers proves to be both disruptive and unsettling for young people seeking for stability in their lives.

Health of Cared for Children and Young People

Many of the children and young people who come into our care have had the minimum of health care, not having visited GP's for age checks, not visiting a dentist at all, and with very little consideration given to basic dietary needs, leading to more healthy lives.

It was noted that it was important to recognise both the statutory responsibilities for this vulnerable group of children and young people and the role of agencies working together as corporate parents, in having "high aspirations" for their future. There was some concern that dates for statutory health and other checks were falling behind the time periods set. The committee looked for reassurance from Children's Services and our health partners that this matter was a high priority and performance has improved over the year.

Service Performance

The comprehensive performance scorecard is considered on a quarterly basis against the five areas of the current Corporate Parenting Strategy.

Members scrutinise and challenge officers around performance to ensure that children and young people in our care get the support that they need, when they need it. The scorecard provides trend and benchmarking data, along with targets and RAG ratings to ensure that the trends in performance are in the right direction. If not, it is expected that actions are put in place to address underperformance and progress is reported to future committees.

National Developments

Each Committee is presented with an Update Report that sets out any national developments that may impact on services for cared for children and care leavers. The Committee consider any action that may need to be taken in the light of these developments.

We seek to be fully informed on all National Issues relating to our role, benchmarking ourselves against national ratings and any other similar authorities, being very conscious that implementation of any new legislation can take time to embed across service areas.

A new adviser to support young people as they leave the care system has been appointed as part of the government's drive to improve the lives of vulnerable children. Mark Riddell, MBE, has been appointed as the National Implementation Adviser for care leavers. He visited Cheshire East in January 2018 and gave an overview of his findings. These will be incorporated into the new Corporate Parenting Strategy that will be launched in 2018-19.

Homelessness Reduction Act

The Act will come into force on 1st April 2018 and will place new duties on Local Authorities and other public bodies to

identify, support and refer households at risk of homelessness.

Local Developments

Updates on local developments have included:

- Work on the Corporate Parenting Strategy
- Proposed framework for engagement with the Corporate Parenting Committee
- Participation with children and young people
- Appointment of new Looked After Children Designated Nurse
- Visit from the National Implementation adviser for care leavers
- Updates on Ignition and Signs of Safety
- Support for teams from the Lead Practitioner.

A detailed discussion took place on work to review the Corporate Parenting Strategy and in particular the role of, and relationship with, elected members. Amongst a number of suggestions Members were invited to submit pen pictures of themselves so that cared for children and care leavers could get to know more about them as corporate parents, and to undertake frontline visits to social work teams and where appropriate to meet children and to share resources and knowledge as part of a continuing process of development.

Cared for Children's participation

During the course of the year we have been resolute in our desire to hear the voice of the children and young people in our care. Young people were keen to establish their own 'shadow committee' and we ensure that have attendance at their committee to listen to what is important to them.

It was reported that the Head of Service and the Portfolio Holder were currently attending meetings of 'My Voice', the Children in Care Council, and their representatives would be invited to come to a meeting of the Committee in the near future with a view to challenging the Committee on what they wanted.

We routinely invite them to our meetings, which we hold at a time when they are able to attend. We are particularly keen to understand how we can effectively ensure that we listen to their concerns and aspirations. Each meeting includes an input from young people, whereby they can feed in their views even if they do not wish to attend.

Consideration has been given to overall service priorities around participation for the current year, and details of the range of ways in which children and young people are engaged in decisions which affect them.

Members were particularly interested in work associated with early pregnancies, preparations to assist in the transition to independent living, the arrangements to involve children in

care outside the area and how to keep track of children who no longer wished to engage with the services provided once they are over 18 years of age.

We have been pleased to note the effectiveness of the mentor service together with the job coach, which is proving a great success with those making the transition from care.

Annual Reports

Independent Reviewing Officer: members considered the Independent Reviewing Officer's 2016/17 Annual Report and the IRO's contribution to quality assuring and improving services for cared for children and care leavers.

Virtual School's Annual Report: the Service Manager: Virtual School, gave a presentation to the Committee on the Virtual School Head teacher's 2017 Annual Report and drew attention to:

- Context and Operation
- Outcomes 2017
- Strengths of the Virtual School
- Challenges for the Virtual School
- Planned Solutions
- Future developments

In considering the report, Members of the Committee made a number of comments on the continued support for cared for children, including access to Pupil Premium.

Fostering Panel's Annual Report: this is not a statutory requirement, however, it has been customary for its production on an annual basis, outlining the work of the Panel and the challenges it faces as it seeks to approve and review foster carers.

Adoption Panel's Annual Report: this was the final report of the Cheshire East Adoption Panel, since from 1st July 2017 the panel became part of the Regional Adoption Agency, Adoption Counts. The report provides a quality assurance feedback on the standards and approach across the service as to the suitability of prospective adopters and proposed placements.

Local Safeguarding Children Board's Annual Report: The report helps us to better understand how organisations and people work together and outlines how the Board and partners can objectively and critically learn from what works well and act to improve what may not work as well as intended.

Care Leaver's Annual Report: The Committee considered the Care Leavers Annual Report 2017-18. The report provided details of the work undertaken to help care leavers to be better prepared and supported to live independently; have improved access to education employment and training; better

access to health support; access to housing when leaving care and achieve financial stability. New Statutory guidance has been published stating that all local authorities needed to implement a 21-25 Offer to care leavers.

Corporate Parenting Strategy Progress

The existing Corporate Parenting Strategy has the following five priorities, ie, the areas that children and young people told us mattered most to them:

1. Involve me
2. Provide me with a good safe home
3. Keep me healthy
4. Help me achieve
5. Support me to move into adult life

Progress against the corporate parenting strategy has been reported to the committee on an ongoing basis. A summary of progress is attached at Appendix 1.

Priorities for 2018/19

Our key priority for 2018-19 is to develop and implement the new Corporate Parenting Strategy, ensuring the 5 areas are prioritised and linked in with other council services and wider partner agencies, ie:

- Being a good corporate parent
- Achieving permanency and staying safe
- Improving health and wellbeing
- Ensuring good education, employment and training
- Preparing for Adulthood

We aim to ensure that the participation of children and young people will be central is all that we do.

Appendix 1

Corporate Parenting Strategy Progress 2017-18

Involve Me

- Children and young people are at the heart of decision making in relation to all aspects of their lives and are supported to make their views and wishes heard.
- There are a range of opportunities for children and young people to influence and shape service planning and delivery.
- All staff have the knowledge and skills to engage with children and young people and encourage, promote and support their active participation.

Participation with Children and Young People

In August 2017, responsibility for the delivery of participation with children and young people was brought 'in house' from the Children's Society to Cheshire East Youth Service. One part time worker transferred across to the Council and another Lead Worker post was subsequently filled. These roles coordinate most of the participation activity with children in care and care leavers.

In 2017-18 young people on the Children in Care Council decided to change its name to 'My Voice'. This group meets weekly in term time in Sandbach. The current focus is to increase awareness and attendance at the meetings through encouraging Social Workers and others to promote participation with their young people.

The Participation Team have been making links and engaging with Crewe YMCA, Pure Insight, Voice for Children, the Cared for and Care Leaver Team and Watermill House (P3) to develop a Care Leaver Council/Care Leaver Voice group. The team will be working with these groups to find out what is going well, what could be developed and ideas to make things better around the following priority areas:

- Better prepared and supported to live independently
- Improved access to education, employment and training
- Experiencing stability
- Feeling safe and secure
- Improved access to health and support and achieving financial stability.

To date consultations have taken place with young people around improved access to education, employment and training opportunities. Young people were positive about their relationships with some Personal Advisors and Senior Young Person's Advisors (PAs), however they feel that there is not enough feedback/support from Social Workers and potential employers when doing taster days. Also when living in the YMCA there is less incentive to get into employment because this impacts on rent benefits, making it difficult to achieve sustainability. Young people would like to see employability

hubs/training and longer drop in sessions with Senior Young Person's Advisors.

The service is responding to the issues raised by care leavers, including exploring ways in which the relationships between PAs and care leavers can be strengthened. In terms of incentives to get into employment, the service offers 'top-up' funding to ensure that the young person is no worse off than if they were on benefits. A meeting has been arranged with the individual who raised the issue to ensure that they are supported to access this fund. One of the immediate actions taken in response to care leaver feedback is that when visiting care leavers, PAs no longer take paper and record during the meeting as care leavers did not like this approach. The bigger challenges in relation to employment, housing and health are being tackled within our new corporate parenting strategy (participation with children and young people runs as a theme throughout the new strategy). The new facebook account (detailed below) is a further example of how the team are working and thinking differently about different ways to engage children and young people.

Young people have been a part of the interview panel for the new Virtual School Head. One of the Care Leaver young people is also getting involved with the Foster Care Panel as well. A great example of us as Corporate Parents helping our young people to achieve and come into the family business. Care Leavers are getting involved with the commissioning

process too as they plan to be involved in the Substance Misuse Service Tender to ensure they are involved in decision making processes for services that affect their lives.

Star Awards and November Children's Rights Month (NCRM).

NCRM is where everyone working with children and young people in Cheshire East can celebrate and raise awareness of children's rights in a variety of different ways. One of the main celebrations for cared for children and care leavers in November is the 'Star Awards'. This celebration event and awards ceremony for cared for children and young people and care leavers in Cheshire East, took place on Sunday 19 November 2017 in Crewe and every young person received an invite in the post to attend. The event in 2017-18 was co-produced with young people and were based on nominations from a range of professionals. During NCRM, a number of young people were also involved in takeover day – this included 'taking over' the roles of the Executive Director for People (DCS role) and the Director of Children's Social Care roles for the day.

New Facebook Group

A new Cheshire East Care Leavers Facebook account went live on the 1st March 2018. This is primarily for announcements, new events coming up and anything significant that the service wishes to relay to Cheshire East Care Leavers. It is hoped that this can reach a greater audience to raise awareness around apprenticeship offers,

Job fairs and anything else of significance. This is managed by the Cared for Children and Care Leavers Service on a daily basis and is for posting information out to care leavers in a format that is accesible to them.

Game Changer Conference

Young people from Cheshire East took place in the pre-event consultation for the Game Changer conference in Blackpool - the Game Changer event is a North West regional event for children in care and care leavers and is the first of its kind. Some of the young people were also involved earlier in the year in the planning of the event, that took place in Blackpool on Saturday 4th November.

The Independent Visitor Service

The Independent Visitor Service in Cheshire East is delivered by The Children's Society (TCS). TCS adhere to the new National Independent Visitor Standards, which have been developed alongside other voluntary organisations. There are 14 Standards in all and, more recently, these 14 standards have been made more child and young person friendly by children and young people involved in an Independent Visitor Service. This is expected to enable more children and young people to understand their right to an Independent Visitor.

Xmas dinner

Staff from children's services raised around £100 to provide a celebratory Christmas dinner for young people in care/care leavers.

Participation Network

The participation network has continued to support all staff working in children's services to improve participation with children and young people. The Participation Network Forum is changing its name to the 'Investing in Children and Young People Partnership' as in the collective partnership group we will be applying for the Investing in Children's Award in 2018-19. The partnership will be getting involved with the Children and Young People's Summer Conference, Care Leaver events and the Star Awards later this year e.g. facilitating sessions, ensuring that their young people are involved with planning the event.

Signs of Safety

Cheshire East launched its implementation of the 'Signs of Safety' approach as our way of working with children, young people and families in 2017. 'Signs of Safety' is widely recognised internationally as the leading approach to casework. The model enables children and young people to talk about things that go well in their family as well as things that worry them.

Provide me with a good, safe home

- Improve the availability, quality and stability of local placements
- Ensure that children and young people are fully engaged in decisions relating to their placement choice
- Ensure that only those children who have no alternative placement will reside in care

Increased Demand

The rise in demand for children’s social care services, in particular in the number of individuals being cared for by the local authority over recent years has put increasing demand on the service. As at March 2014, Cheshire East supported 333 individuals. As at March 2017, this had risen to 428 individuals – a rise of 95 (29%). At the end of March 2018 there were 477 children and young people being cared for by the local authority, an increase of 55 (13%) from March 2017.

In order to mitigate as far as possible the impact of rising numbers and costs, the following action was taken, ie, we:

- Worked hard to increase the numbers of children leaving care through adoption (whilst only 15 were adopted over 2017-18, there were a further 41 individuals in care where the plan is for adoption).
- Worked as part of a shared fostering service with Cheshire West & Chester, Warrington and Halton

Councils to improve the recruitment of internal foster carers

- Invested in project Macclesfield and Crewe to prevent the escalation of need
- Continued to improve social work practice (Signs of safety)
- Worked with the LSCB to improve the early help offer.

Foster Care

Work around developing sub-regional collaborative arrangements for fostering services took place in 2017-18. On 9th May 2017, Cabinet considered a report, which sought approval to progress the development of a shared fostering service for Cheshire East alongside Warrington, Halton and Cheshire West and Chester. The report also sought approval to explore the feasibility of a single local authority delivering the functions of the fostering service on behalf of the partnership.

In 2017-18 we have been actively driving forward the recruitment campaign for more foster carers, which in due course should allow for better matching of the children we place. We are specifically targeting the smaller ethnic communities and the LGBT community. Cheshire East maximised the fostering recruitment campaign during Foster Carer Fortnight. This included advertising digitally and PR activity via the ‘You Can Foster’ campaign. We also looked at

more advertising on Facebook, our internal communication channels and a partnership newsletter.

Work is underway in terms of providing more information via the Cheshire East Fostering Website. The aim is to provide up to date contact information, links to helpful resources and easier access to policies and procedures. Training will be offered to foster carers who are not confident using computers.

We are working to improve the support carers receive from their supervising social workers. We have over the last few months recruited several permanent members of staff to bring stability and consistency to the service.

The foster carer newsletter is now regularly being distributed on a quarterly basis and the foster carer forums have recommenced to keep foster carers up to date and give them the opportunity to air their views. The support groups also continue on a regular basis.

Residential care

Cheshire East aims to provide a more flexible range of children homes and to increase the capacity to care for more of our children within the borough, so redesigned our residential homes. A contract was awarded to BetterCare Keys, a national children home provider, to run from 1 April 2017. However, the provider has had significant challenges in

mobilising the service due to recruitment issues and the service will be re-commissioned in 2018-19.

Adoption

2017-18 saw the launch of our Regional Adoption Agency, called Adoption Counts. This is a partnership with Stockport, Trafford, Salford and Manchester Councils, which was one of the first new adoption agencies to open for business in July 2017. The aim of 'Adoption Counts' is to maximise the economies of scale and expertise so that more children are matched with adopters much sooner and locally within the geographical boundary of the agency. There is a particular focus on placing more children for adoption who; have complex needs, are part of a sibling group, and are from black and ethnic minority backgrounds. Adopters and children are also benefitting from a regional approach to post adoption support.

Cheshire East celebrated National Adoption Week in October 2017. This included a range of activity including a media campaign (billboards, posters, bus rears, digital screens and digital media adverts. There were also press adverts during adoption week in a range of newspapers, including the Macclesfield Express. Adoption was also promoted through social media, including Facebook and Twitter using the hashtags #nationaladoptionweek and #supportadoption. Cheshire East received 27 enquiries during this week (the highest weekly number to date). This included an open

evening on 18th October, which 14 households attended. There were also 9,968 visits to our website during the week, which peaked at 1,881 on 21st October.

Quality assurance

Quality assurance for the Children's Homes that Cheshire East commission or operate directly is important to ensure the best services for our cared for children. Regulation 44 visits and subsequent reports are an important part of the quality assurance framework surrounding Children's Homes and the greater the level of independence, the better. Each Children's Home is required to appoint an independent person to undertake Regulation 44 visits and to date Cheshire East Council have added support and challenge to the process via local Councillors and Voice for Children attending visits.

Ignition

The Ignition Panel has continued to ensure that children and young people are fully engaged in decisions relating to their future accommodation needs. See further detail below.

Keep me healthy

- Ensure that all Cheshire East cared for children have an initial health assessment within 20 working days of entering care, and statutory review assessment and a robust health care plan agreed (6 monthly for under- fives, annually thereafter).
- Improve the emotional health and wellbeing of cared for children, young people and care leavers
- Promote healthy lifestyles amongst all cared for children.
- Ensure effective health transition planning

Initial Health Assessments

There has been a continued focus on improving the timeliness of initial health assessments and reviews over 2017-18. As at quarter 4, there were 86% of initial health assessments requested within 48 hours of coming into care, and 78% of initial health assessments completed by paediatricians within the statutory requirement of 20 working days. This compares to 64% and 58%, respectively, as at the end of 2016-17. Close monitoring of this performance indicator is essential to ensure continued improvement and it remains a standing item for discussion at the Health Interface Group Meetings held regularly between Health and Local Authority partners.

There is further work to do with aspirations of ensuring that all children entering care are supported to have their health care needs identified and met in a timely way and this will continue to be a priority in the 2018-19 corporate parenting strategy.

Review Health Assessments (RHAs)

For children who are under 5 years of age it is a statutory requirement that a RHA should be completed twice in a 12 month period. For children and young people 5 years and above, an RHA is required once a year. Review health assessments are completed for all Cheshire East cared for children and also for children placed in the Cheshire East area by other Local Authorities. Reporting of performance with regards to timeliness of assessments continues to be monitored on a quarterly basis and discussed at the Health Interface Group meetings. A collaborative approach has resulted in a visible improvement in the timeliness of RHAs. True partnership working is yielding positive results and this will continue throughout 2018-19.

At the end of 2017-18, 79% of children who had been in care for more than 12 months had an up to date RHA. For those that were not completed within timescale, analysis of the contributing factors that led to the breach is carried out to identify the areas where further work is required.

Care Leaver's Health Passports

During 2017-18 there has been extensive work completed by the Clinical Nurse Specialist 16+ in the Cared for Children's Team to develop an effective system for ensuring that young people are leaving care at the age of 18 years with a meaningful, relevant summary of their health history. Engagement has been successful in a large proportion of

cases and has involved an innovative and constantly evolving approach to access even the most hard to reach young people. The current format of the Health Passport has been developed with the involvement of young people. Therefore there is confidence that this document is appropriate and what they want.

32 out of 52 health passports were completed during 2017-18. As this was a new process, issues regarding gaining consent from the young people were identified as causing some delay/difficulty in completing the Health Passports. For 2018-19 the 16+ Nurse Specialist has begun to request consent when completing review health assessments from 16 years of age thus increasing the opportunities to obtain the required consent in time for the health passport to be completed prior to the young person reaching 18.

Training and Supervision of Health Professionals

'Looked after children: Knowledge, skills and competences of healthcare staff' (March 2015) is an Intercollegiate Role Framework written by the 'Royal College of General Practitioners', 'Royal College of Nursing' and 'Royal College of Paediatrics and Child Health' to provide a framework of competencies required for Health Professionals who work with cared for children. Health Professionals responsible for completing Review Health Assessments are required to demonstrate competence to Level 3 of this framework. At the end of 2017-18, 91% of all Health Professionals had attended Level 3 training during that year. Also, as part of the Quality

Assurance process, training needs may be identified on an ad hoc basis and feedback to practitioners is provided by the Specialist Nurses for Cared for Children when required to ensure health assessments are of a consistently high quality that remain child focussed.

All Health Practitioners who are named professionals for cared for children received supervision from the Cared for Children Specialist Nursing Team on a 3 monthly basis. This is an opportunity to review practice and monitor outcomes of health interventions. During training and supervision cycles, identification of cared for children with SEND is essential to ensure that both the Review Health Assessment and the Education and Health Care Plans are interlinked and used to inform each other.

Unaccompanied Asylum Seekers

During 2017-18 the number of unaccompanied asylum seeking children (UASC) has increased within the Cheshire East area. It is recognised that many of these young people have experienced significant adverse life events both within their countries of origin, and during their journeys to the UK. The resulting physical, emotional and mental health needs of this group of young people can be particularly complex and specialist support services may be required. In recognition of the unique health and wellbeing needs of this group of young people, a group has been set up with membership from partner agencies, including Health. The purpose of this group is to develop effective pathways to ensure that health needs

are identified promptly, and that referrals to appropriate support services are being made. NHS England has also recognised that this is a concerning issue nationwide and is providing guidance across Regional Networks to enable services to work effectively.

Looked After Children (LAC) Designated Nurse

A new Looked After Children (LAC) Designated Nurse for Cheshire East came into post in December 2017. This role is pivotal to strategic planning, quality assurance and performance monitoring and is essential in advising on the provision of services for vulnerable cared for children and care leavers within the health economy. Key elements of this essential role are preventing further harm to these young people and ensuring that the complex needs of this transient group of vulnerable children and young people are understood across the health and social care economy.

Family Nurse Partnership

The Family Nurse Partnership helps local young parents to increase their confidence and gives them the guidance and support they need to give their baby the best start in life. Young parents are paired with a specially trained family nurse who visits them regularly, from the early stages of pregnancy until their child is two. The offer was extended in 2017-18 to first time pregnant vulnerable young people in care/care leavers up to the age of 24 (it was previously age 19).

Emotional health and wellbeing

The emotional health and well-being of our cared for children is assessed via the completion of a strengths and difficulties questionnaire (SDQ). The data highlights the need for a greater response from children social care and health. Developments to improve this service area are being discussed as part of the health and social care interface meeting and is being proactively picked up by our looked after children's nurse. This is a key priority of the new corporate parenting strategy.

Help me to achieve

- Ensure that schools are challenged and supported to help all children progress and achieve to their full potential
- Improve the way that children move between schools so that this is timely, smooth and well supported
- Increase the number of children with excellent attendance and reduce the number of days lost through exclusions
- Increase the number of young people who sustain transition from school to training and employment

Education Results

Improving outcomes for cared for children remains a priority for all staff but most especially for the Virtual School. All children have been allocated a named Advisor and additional support and tuition has been made available. There has been an improvement in the number of children who reach the expectations at the end of reception this year. This is now at

50%, 10% above the 2016 level and the highest result for Cheshire East.

Due to the number of children leaving care there were only four children who completed the Year 2 tests after 1 year in care. Of these, two were not entered for the tests, one reached the expected levels in maths and English and one did not.

2017-18 is the second year of the new curriculum and assessment and so comparisons can only be made with 2016. Although there was an increase in the percentage gaining the expected standard in three of the four areas, (reading, writing, grammar/punctuation/spelling and maths) the number reaching this in reading, writing and maths has fallen, which is disappointing for the pupils and their teachers as well as for those in the Virtual School who have been supporting them. Despite this headline, progress at individual pupil level was above national rates and that for all Cheshire east children in 9 out of 11 areas when compared with children of similar SEN levels. Strategies are already in place to improve outcomes in 2018-19, which include replacing agency tutors with an in-house teacher who will focus specifically on Year 6. These include the purchase of tablets with pre-loaded Key Stage 2 (KS2) learning and revision materials which allow usage and progress to be tracked and additional sessions for carers on how to raise aspirations and support children to prepare for and complete the tests.

Under the new scoring and reporting system for GCSEs for cared for children, 19% of children have gained Level 2 in maths and English. This is an increase of 7% from 2016 and is above the reported national figure for 2017, which was 17%. Additional tuition and support has been put in place to support pupils taking exams in 2018 and full time education places and independent special schools have been purchased for pupils who were not able to maintain a place in mainstream schools so that they can complete their education and gain qualifications.

The number of 16-18 year old care leavers who are in education, employment or training remains high, with 37 completing college courses this year. With intensive support, all but 2 completed their courses and have plans in place to move on to further education, training or employment.

The Virtual School has provided updates and training for schools so that they fully understand and implement their duties, which will include supporting previously cared for children from Sept 2018. Virtual School staff have worked with schools and challenged when children have experienced difficulties or were not making progress. Training has been well received with further request for bespoke training being made and accommodated wherever possible. Additional front line staff have been employed to mentor or provide additional

tuition for pupils and this has had a significant impact on attendance and achievement for several dis-engaged pupils.

Ten primary schools have taken part in an attachment research project which has had dramatic positive impact in pupils feeling safe and secure and ready to learn. A training video is being made to share the learning from the project and we have been asked to present the findings at a national conference in November.

A new ePEP is being developed on Liquid Logic which will improve the ease of completion, security and efficiency of the PEP (Personal Education Plan) process. A pilot has been in place since Sept 2017 with about forty schools now using the system and roll out to all planned by Aug 2019.

Forty-nine children moved schools within the school year 2016-17. Mainstream transfers were usually swift and well managed although admission to some secondary schools, particularly out of Cheshire East has been delayed with schools pointing out barriers and difficulties before agreeing a start date. The Virtual School has adopted a new policy to fund a comprehensive integration plan, which involves the school spending time getting to know the child when they start to try and avoid later issues. So far this is proving very successful. Additional front line staff, mentor and tutor have been employed within the Virtual School and have been deployed when children are between schools are not

engaging with their named school. This has proved successful in maintaining a routine for the child and helping them to make progress while not in regular lessons.

Transfers of children with SEN are more complex and are led by the SEN team who have to identify an appropriate school and then consult with them, which has a statutory time period. To try and reduce the time out of education, the Virtual School has worked with the SEN Team and implemented several new processes which include:

- Cheshire East to retain and oversee EHCPs for all children in residential care.
- Tutor to be provided while a child with an EHCP is awaiting a school place.
- Identification of names SEN officer for out of LA cared for children.
- Clear process for other LA's when finding places for Cheshire East children.

Attendance at school is closely monitored and has been made a focus of a member of the Business Support Team. Primary attendance was above the national level in 2016/17 at 96% and has increased to 97% in April 2018. Attendance at secondary school fell slightly to 93% in 2017 but has risen to 95% in 2018. Checks are made monthly and concerns are raised with schools, carers and social workers. A new joint working group called RAIC (Raising Achievement in Care) has been established and the focus of the first meeting was

improving attendance. As a result, the expectations of carers to ensure good attendance will be made clear and strategies of how to realise this will be shared.

Reducing exclusions remains a priority and in 2017 there was a decrease in the overall number of sessions lost and the number of children with one or more fixed term exclusion. These trends have continued into 2018, despite an increase in in the cared for population. Reasons for this are complex but include:

- Investigation of all exclusions.
- Intervention and additional PEP for cases of repeat exclusions.
- Supporting schools to find additional/alternative support to avoid exclusions.

There has been a significant reduction in the percentage of 16+ who are NEET (not in education, employment or training) For 16-18 year old cared leavers this has fallen from 32% in May 2017 to 12% in May 18. This is due to the actions which have been jointly planned and delivered by all LA teams working with these young people and co-ordinated by the SPEED (Sixteen Plus Education and Employment Destinations) group which include:

- Post-16 tutor employed to work with pupils not engaged

- Cheshire East setting up in house engagement programmes
- Commissioned support programme, Cygnet, to provide supported work experience
- NEET panel set up to consider 'stuck' cases and what collaborative support can be given
- Closer working with local employers groups so that they are aware of the needs of vulnerable young people and know how to help them give of their best.

Two Cheshire East care leavers were recently commended at an awards ceremony at South and West Cheshire College. Despite setbacks in their education, and through the support of our Virtual School, both of these young people have exceeded in their field. One of these young people won Health and Social Care student of the year for her hard work and determination and is now moving onto University to study mental health nursing. The other young person won the English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) student of the year, having arrived in Cheshire East in December 2016 as an unaccompanied asylum seeker through the dispersal programme.

Support me to move to adult life

- Increase the number of young people aged 18-21 who are education, employment or training
- Prepare young people for independent living, to ensure young people have suitable accommodation and are able to live independently with limited support, and experience greater stability
- Young people have the skills and knowledge them need and can protect themselves from risk

National Implementation Adviser for Care Leavers

In January 2018 Cheshire East invited Mark Riddell, the National Implementation Adviser for Care Leavers, to feedback on our arrangements to support care leavers. Feedback was provided by Mark on day two of the visit and identified that the operational model provided by the care leavers team was good and that the personal advisors were committed to improving outcomes for care leavers. However, he found that the 'corporate test' had not been met in Cheshire East. Mark Riddell recommended that the Corporate Parenting Committee reconsider the ways in which it is able to directly influence the services that are delivered to care leavers and that corporate parenting needs to become embedded throughout the organisation. Officers have listened to the feedback provided and this will be incorporated into the new Corporate Parenting Strategy for 2018-20.

Ignition

By working with all partners, we are able to provide choice for young people and a process that provides them with a voice and ownership of their accommodation and future plans. Ignition is for young people aged 15½ plus who are thinking about where and how they would like to live when they leave care (we think the earlier we can plan the better the

experience!). This is an innovative approach and was short-listed for two national awards in 2017-18. Social Care commissioners from across the North West have taken the time to come and observe Ignition in full flow and have all commented on the fantastic approach that is delivering good outcomes for our Care Leavers.

We now have a strong offer for our care leavers including taster flats, supported independent living, supported lodgings with 'hosts', dispersed properties with the offer of floating support alongside Staying Put and Staying Close arrangements, a group living house and support / acting as guarantor for individual tenancies. All of this choice would not have been possible without the successful partnerships that have developed through Ignition.

Supported Lodgings

The re-commission of supported lodgings services is complete and the contract from 1st April 2018 was awarded to Forum Housing again. Their bid was good and built on the service delivery to date that has developed well through Forum Housing's attendance at the Ignition Panel and listening to young people's views re their aspirations and planning towards independence. The new service builds in the ability for our more complex young people to possibly access a supported lodging

Supporting Care Leavers as Parents

Motherwell is a charity for women run by women, promoting positive health and wellbeing, by offering a range of educational services, holistic therapies and mental health support. The charity was recently successful in achieving a funding bid to provide a Parent Advocate Worker to support our care leaver parents. The Parent Advocate Worker will provide support to mothers who have had their children removed, to prevent the cycle taking place again via one to one support, counselling and alternative therapies.

Research Project – this will be carried out by the Head of Abuse Studies at MMU Crewe. This is a three year project which will research the correlations in childhood experiences of abuse and implications that this has on parenting. It is hoped that this research will identify which interventions are successful with families, and which are not. Additionally it will also identify if there are any gaps in services.

Positive Parenting Groups – working with the children's centres, we held our first Positive Parenting Group in July 2017 at Oak Tree Children's Centre in Crewe. 11 out of 20 pregnant and parent female care leavers indicated they would engage with the group. Going forward, the group will be split into two models across the North and South of Cheshire East.

- North Locality Positive Parent Group - this will be an informal peer support group with the plan to bring services to their group, as and when identified by the young people or identified by staff as a need, around their parenting and health issues.

- South Locality Positive Parenting Group - one day a month our south based care leaver mothers can access the children's centre and have their own group. On this day they can also access health advice and support from services already based within the centre.

Care Leaver Fathers

Research Project, Care Leaver Fathers - A research project into male care leaver fathers and their experiences and interactions with social care in relation to their own children is currently underway. This research will give the fathers a voice and the data will be used to identify any areas which the fathers feel that support is lacking. Improvements can then be implemented in the service via a training programme will be given for Personal Assistants/Social Workers. We have had a good response from fathers interested in taking part in the research project.

Direct one to one support and group support for Care Leaver Fathers via Dads Stuff - this has been assigned to all Personal Advisors to refer. Dads Stuff who can offer care leaver fathers direct one to one support, and this includes absent fathers who want to be involved in their child's life. They will support dads with their overall parenting and attend meetings in support of dads. Our dads also have the option of attending the Dads Stuff group, once they feel confident in accessing the service, or before if they are happy to. The

current group in Sandbach is a busy group and this is being extended across other areas in the authority.

Resource Folder – we have set up a resource folder covering the following topics; advocacy, domestic abuse, emotional and mental health, housing, identity, immigration, independence and ready to live alone, LGBT, money and budgeting, parenting, physical health, sexual health, sexual exploitation, substance misuse and trafficking and slavery.

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Corporate Parenting Committee

Date of Meeting: 03 July 2018

Report Title: Corporate Parenting Frontline Visits

Portfolio Holder: Jos Saunders Portfolio Holder for Children and Families

Senior Officer: Gill Betton, Head of Children's Developments and Partnerships

1. Report Summary

1.1. This report provides an update to the Corporate Parenting Committee on developments to establish corporate parenting frontline visits.

2. Recommendation/s

2.1. Corporate Parenting Committee is asked to:

2.1.1. Note the contents of the report.

2.1.2. Endorse the proposed guidance and forms attached at Appendix 1 and 2, respectively.

2.1.3. Update on their plans to obtain DBS checks.

3. Reasons for Recommendation/s

3.1. The Corporate Parenting Committee has identified corporate parenting visits to frontline services as one of the ways to strengthen the corporate parenting role.

4. Other Options Considered

4.1. Corporate parenting visits are one of the ways in which the Corporate Parenting Committee aims to strengthen the corporate parenting role, but other options are also being developed, including Member training and development and increased participation of children and young people.

5. Background

5.1 At the Corporate Parenting Committee in May Members endorsed the proposed approach to arrangements for frontline visits. Corporate Parenting Committee has agreed to establish a programme of visits to enhance their understanding of services for cared for children and care leavers. The guidance and attached form provides more information on the process and expectations.

Corporate Parenting Visit Guidance

- 5.2 The Guidance at Appendix 1 sets out the proposed areas for visits and local procedure.

Corporate Parenting Visit Form

- 5.3 The proposed visit form at Appendix 2 would be completed by Members following their visits to provide direct feedback on their findings. The form also includes a section for feedback from the Head of Service for Cared for Children and Care Leavers.

Annual Report to Committee

- 5.4 The findings from visits and the Head of Service response will be collated and presented to the Corporate Parenting Committee on an annual basis.

Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) Checks

- 5.5 A pre-requisite of the visits is that DBS checks are carried out on all members of the Corporate Parenting Committee. Members are asked to update on progress and issues relating to obtaining their DBS checks.

6. Implications of the Recommendations

6.1. Legal Implications

To carry out frontline visits, it has been identified that Members will need to have DBS checks. Arrangements are under way to get these completed.

6.2. Finance Implications

There are no direct financial implications of this report.

6.3. Equality Implications

There are no equality implications as a result of this paper.

6.4. Human Resources Implications

There are no direct financial implications of this report.

6.5. Risk Management Implications

DBS checks ensure that risks associated with adult contact with children and young people have been considered. Other risk assessments will be completed by Service Managers, as appropriate.

6.6. Rural Communities Implications

None.

6.7. Implications for Children & Young People

6.7.1. Frontline visits will enhance Committee's knowledge and understanding of the experiences of children and young people in care and care leavers. This will mean that they become better corporate parents to some of Cheshire East's most vulnerable children.

6.8. Public Health Implications

6.8.1. There are no direct implications for public health.

7. Ward Members Affected

7.1. Although the number of Cheshire East cared for children and young people is relatively small, they are a vulnerable cohort, who live across Cheshire East and in other local authority areas.

8. Consultation & Engagement

8.1. None.

9. Access to Information

9.1. None.

10. Contact Information

10.1. Any questions relating to this report should be directed to the following officer:

Name: Gill Betton
Job Title: Head of Children's Development and Partnerships
Email: gill.betton@cheshireeast.gov.uk

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Corporate Parenting Visits Guidance

Version 1, June 2018

Elected Member Corporate Parent Visits

One of the most important roles of an elected member is that of a '**corporate parent**'. When elected to represent their ward, members become responsible for every child and young person in the care of the local authority.

The role of a corporate parent is to seek the very best outcomes for these young people **as if they were their own children**. This includes a stable home environment, good education, access to health care and preparation for adulthood.

The Corporate Parenting Committee is a key body in ensuring that arrangements in place to improve outcomes for cared for children and care leavers are effective. Elected member visits to services that support this group of vulnerable children and young people is a key quality assurance role.

Local Procedure for Visits

1. Within Cheshire East it has been agreed that visits will be a combination of observation of key meetings and visits to key teams to discuss issues. The key areas of focus areas are as follows:

- **Cared for Children and Care Leavers Team (visit)**
- **Fostering and Special Guardianship Team (visit)**
- **Placement Service (visit)**
- **Residential Care (visit to care home)**
- **Fostering Panel (observation)**

• Resource Allocation Panel (observation)

2. There will two visits to each service over the year by two nominated members of the Corporate Parenting Committee. These visits will be arranged a year in advance. *NB Members must attend the corporate parenting training before attending any visits.*
3. The visits will be based on the **Signs of Safety model**, which poses the following three questions:

- What are we worried about?
- What is working well?
- What needs to happen?

4. Members are asked to consider these against the following:

Staffing

- ✓ Are there vacancies in the team? If so, are these covered by agency staff?
- ✓ Do staff have the relevant experience and skills?
- ✓ Are attendance levels good?
- ✓ Is staff morale positive?
- ✓ Do staff have the support systems they need?, eg IT, office accommodation, communication needs.

Performance

- ✓ Is the service children and young person focused?
- ✓ Are there sufficient local placements and accommodation to meet the needs of our children and young people?
- ✓ Are we keeping our children and young people safe?

- ✓ Is there sufficient educational provision to meet the needs of our children and young people?
- ✓ Do our children and young people have good access to healthcare?
- ✓ How well is the service supporting young people into adulthood?
- ✓ Any there any issues impacting on performance, eg, workloads?
- ✓ Is multi-agency engagement good?

Other

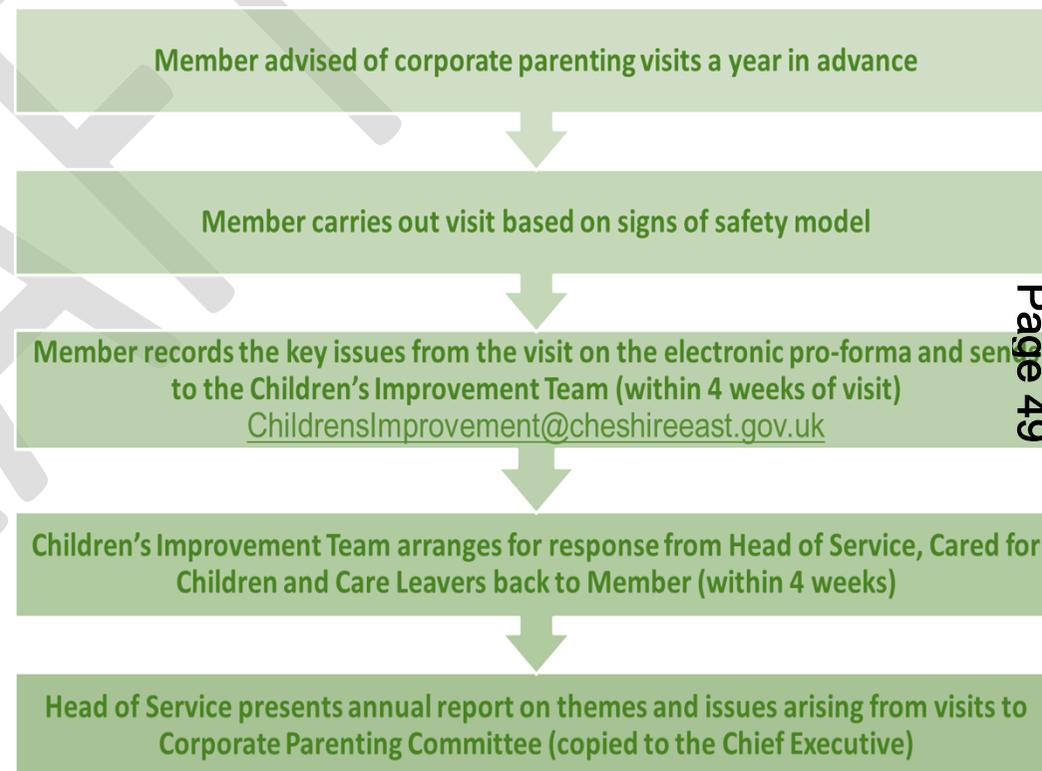
- ✓ If you speak to children and young people, do they report they are happy?
- ✓ If you have attended a Panel meeting, was this effective?
- ✓ Are there any other issues raised that impact on providing effective services to support children and young people in care and care leavers?

5. At the end of the visit, Members are also asked to use **scaling** to form an assessment of the effectiveness of the service, ie, rate on a scale of 0-10, where 10 is very effective and 0 is the service is ineffective at meeting the needs of our children and young people.

6. Elected members will record the **key issues** from the visit on the electronic proforma and send to the ChildrensImprovement@cheshireeast.gov.uk who will arrange for the **Head of Service: Cared for Children and Care Leavers** to provide a response to issues raised (within 4 weeks of receipt).

7. The themes and issues arising from visits and the service response to these will be presented to the Corporate Parenting Committee on an **annual basis** by the Head of Service (copied to the Chief Executive).

Summary of Procedure



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ELECTED MEMBER CORPORATE PARENT VISITS PROFORMA

Please read the document 'Elected member corporate parent visits guidance document' before completing this form.

| | |
|---|--|
| Names of Elected Members | |
| Date of visit | |
| Service visited | |
| Names of staff involved in visit | |

NB Only insert commentary where you have gathered information.

| | What are we worried about? | What is working well? | What needs to happen? |
|--------------------|----------------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|
| Staffing | | | |
| Performance | | | |
| Other | | | |

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Please scale the effectiveness of this service in meeting the needs of children and young people in care and care leavers (0 is not effective and 10 is highly effective). Please put a cross in the relevant box.

| | | | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|----|
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 |
| | | | | | | | | | |

| | |
|----------------------|--|
| <i>Completed By:</i> | |
| <i>Date:</i> | |

| Head of Service Feedback | |
|--------------------------|--|
| | |

| | |
|---------------|--|
| Completed By: | |
| Date: | |

Please forward this completed form to the Children's Improvement Team Inbox within 4 weeks of the visit:
ChildrensImprovement@cheshireeast.gov.uk

Any queries, please call: 01606 271603

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Corporate Parenting Committee

Date of Meeting: 03 July 2018

Report Title: Corporate Parenting Update

Portfolio Holder: Jos Saunders Portfolio Holder for Children and Families

Senior Officer: Kerry Birtles, Head of Cared for Children & Care Leavers

1. Report Summary

1.1. This report provides an update to the Corporate Parenting Committee on national and local developments in relation to cared for children and young people and care leavers.

2. Recommendation/s

2.1. Corporate Parenting Committee is asked to:

- 2.1.1. Note the contents of the report.
- 2.1.2. Comment on the proposed governance arrangements for the new corporate parenting strategy at Appendix 1
- 2.1.3. Nominate a representative for the new corporate parenting strategy group 'Being a Good Corporate Parent' (para 5.6)
- 2.1.4. Identify a rep from CPC to attend the young peoples conference on 6th August (para 5.9)
- 2.1.5. Note the provisional date for the Star Celebrations day (para 5.10)
- 2.1.6. Endorse the proposed use of pen profiles as set out at (para 5.18)
- 2.1.7. Identify a member of the Committee to become a 'Signs of Safety Champion' and attend the half day training (para 5.19)

3. Reasons for Recommendation/s

3.1. The Corporate Parenting Committee is as advisory group to the Cabinet and, as such, needs to be aware of any national or local issues that are likely to impact on cared for children and care leavers. The Corporate Parenting Committee need to be able to scrutinise and challenge performance to improve outcomes for cared for children and young people.

4. Other Options Considered

4.1. None; this is an update report.

5. Background

National Developments

Care Crisis Review

- 5.1. Applications for care proceedings in England and Wales reached record levels in 2017. This is one factor contributing to the rise in the number of children looked after in the care system, now at the highest level since 1985.
- 5.2. Family Rights Group have facilitated a seven month sector-led Review into the care crisis. The Review is supported by stakeholders within the child welfare and family justice system. The Review aimed to:
 - to examine the reasons for the rise in care proceedings and number of children in care
 - to at all times retain a focus on achieving the best outcomes for children and families
 - to take account of the current national economic, financial, legal and policy context that impacts on families and on local authority and court practice
 - to identify specific changes to local authority and court systems and national and local policies and practices that will help safely stem the increase in the number of care cases coming before the family courts and the number of children in the care system.
- 5.3. The final report has now been published has found that there are many overlapping factors contributing to the rise in care proceedings and number of children in care. This complex picture means that there is no single solution. The review sets out 20 options for change. These include immediate steps that could be taken to move away from an undue focus on processes and performance indicators, to one where practitioners are able to stay focused on securing the right outcomes for each child. The full review is available at: https://frg.org.uk/images/Care_Crisis/CCR-FINAL.pdf

Changes to apprenticeships funding

- 5.4. Care leavers can experience a range of extra barriers to making the transition to the world of work. Apprenticeships are one option to help them overcome these barriers. The government is introducing a £1,000 bursary payment to support care leavers aged 16-24 starting an apprenticeship. This will begin from 1 August 2018.

Local Developments

Corporate Parenting Strategy Developments

- 5.5. Work continues to develop the priorities and content of the new corporate parenting strategy. The proposed governance to support implementation of the new strategy is attached at Appendix 1.
- 5.6. One of the key priorities is 'Being a Good Corporate Parent'. This includes developing, implementing and monitoring the effectiveness of the corporate parenting strategy, improving participation with children and young people and strengthening the corporate parent role with elected members, staff and partner agencies. A member of the Committee is asked to contribute to this group, which will meet quarterly.

Developing the Local Offer

- 5.7. Section 1 of the Children and Social Work Act 2017 requires local authorities to have regard to seven corporate parenting principles when discharging their functions in relation to cared for children and care leavers. The local offer should set out what support all local authority departments will provide (not just Children's Services), having regard to the corporate parenting principles. The local offer should include details of the services and support that may assist care leavers in, or moving to, adulthood and independent living that the local authority provides in relation to:
- Health and wellbeing
 - Relationships
 - Education and training
 - Employment
 - Accommodation
 - Participation in society
- 5.8. A Local Offer event for officers from across the Council is planned for 12th July. The purpose of this event is to raise awareness and to increase the offer available for care for children and care leavers in Cheshire East. Attendees will be invited to make a 'pledge' of what their service can offer.

Children and Young People's Conference

- 5.9. The Children and Young People's Plan, the overarching plan for children's services partnerships is currently being reviewed and new priorities planned. Currently this includes a proposal to add a priority around being a good corporate parent to strengthen the partnership responsibility around corporate parenting and align to the corporate parenting strategy. A young people's conference is planned for 6th August, where they will help us to co-produce

the new plan. This will include cared for children and care leavers. A representative from the Committee is welcome to attend this conference.

Planning for Star Celebrations

- 5.10. Planning is now underway to plan the Star Celebrations (previously Star Awards) to recognise the achievements of all our cared for children and care leavers. This will be co-produced with young people. The event is provisionally booked for Sunday 18th November at Wychwood Park, Weston, Crewe. Members are asked to note this date.

New Tender for Children's Residential Care

- 5.11. Cheshire East aims to provide a more flexible range of children homes and to increase the capacity to care for more of our children within the borough. A contract was awarded to BetterCare Keys, a national children home provider, to run from 1 April 2017. However, the provider has had significant challenges in mobilising the service due to recruitment issues and the service will be re-commissioned in 2018-19. Plans are underway to re-tender; market testing has been completed and the tender is due to go out at the start of July.

Fostering Collaboration Update

- 5.12. Cheshire East entered into a fostering collaboration with Cheshire West, Halton and Warrington and the hub went live on the 2nd April 2018. The Hub consists of a marketing and recruitment lead and 3 full time Family Support Workers who recruit and begin the initial assessment of potential new foster carers. The emphasis within the collaboration is to optimise on the potential for new foster carers in the area covering all 4 authorities and potentially recruit experienced carers from independent fostering agencies. The interest of potential foster carers since the launch in April has been significantly higher than when we approached this individually. At one of our recent fostering open evening there were 12 potential new applicants, which is a first for Cheshire East. There were also great rewards for our children and existing foster carers, who were able to attend the Geronimo Festival at Arley Hall for free, because of a focus from the collaboration. The Board meets on a monthly basis and is striving to explore the next steps and future benefits of working together.

Re-tender for Advocacy and Independent Visitor Services

- 5.13. Advocacy and Independent Visitor services are currently commissioned to The Children's Society. This tender is due for renewal from December 2018, so plans are in place towards achieving a new service from December 2018. This will include looking at innovative/different ways to deliver these services. This includes increasing the number and availability of Independent Visitors. Members are asked to consider ways in which they can increase the number of Independent Visitors in Cheshire East.

SEND Written Statement of Action

- 5.14. Following publication of the special educational needs or disabilities (SEND) Inspection report of the local area in May 2018, the Council and the two Clinical Commissioning Groups (CCGs) are expected to submit a written statement of action (WSOA) on how we will address the following areas for improvement:
- the timeliness, process and quality of education, health and care plans
 - the lack of an effective pathway for children and young people with autism and unreasonable waiting times.
- 5.15. Consultation is currently underway on a draft WSoA before this is signed off by the Health and Wellbeing Board in July.

Corporate Parent Pen Pictures

- 5.16. Elected member and officers throughout Cheshire East have been providing details about themselves in the form of a 'pen picture' over the past few months. Our children and young people have spoken with enthusiasm about the benefits of knowing who their corporate parents are and a little about them. Colleagues within the Participation Service have spoken about what we are doing in Cheshire East to other areas and they are keen to adopt a similar approach in their own authorities. This tells us that this approach is useful to children and young people and in shaping the service.
- 5.17. The feedback from Members at last committee in relation to how officers intended to use the pen pictures with our young people, raised concerns about the visibility or potential misuse. The Corporate Parenting Operational Group have reflected upon the feedback from members and recognise that the sharing of personal information can be a challenge. However, on balance, and in consideration of the fact that we as the local authority know all that there is to know about our young people, it is felt that the pen pictures need to continue on their journey in sharing with our young people who their corporate Parents are.
- 5.18. We propose to invite members of the Corporate Parenting Committee to review the content of their pen pictures to ensure that they are happy with the information they are sharing before we add these to the Facebook page for our care leavers and as part of the information we provide to cared for children when they enter care.

Signs of Safety Training

- 5.19. Further dates for Signs of Safety Training have now been rolled out. The flyer is set out at Appendix 2 for information. The Committee is asked to identify a member of the Committee to become a 'Signs of Safety Champion' and attend the half day training in September.

6. Implications of the Recommendations

6.1. Legal Implications

Legal advice will be sought, as appropriate, upon all relevant emerging issues.

6.2. Finance Implications

There are no direct financial implications of this report.

6.3. Equality Implications

There are no equality implications as a result of this paper.

6.4. Human Resources Implications

There are no direct financial implications of this report

6.5. Risk Management Implications

Cared for children and care leavers are a vulnerable group that are at risk of a number of factors – poor education and training, health, safeguarding and transition into adulthood.

6.6. Rural Communities Implications

None.

6.7. Implications for Children & Young People

- 6.7.1. The contents of this report have implications for cared for children and care leavers, who are some of Cheshire East's most vulnerable children.

6.8. Public Health Implications

- 6.8.1. There are no direct implications for public health.

7. Ward Members Affected

- 7.1. Although the number of Cheshire East cared for children and young people is relatively small, they are a vulnerable cohort, who live across Cheshire East and in other local authority areas.

8. Consultation & Engagement

- 8.1. None.

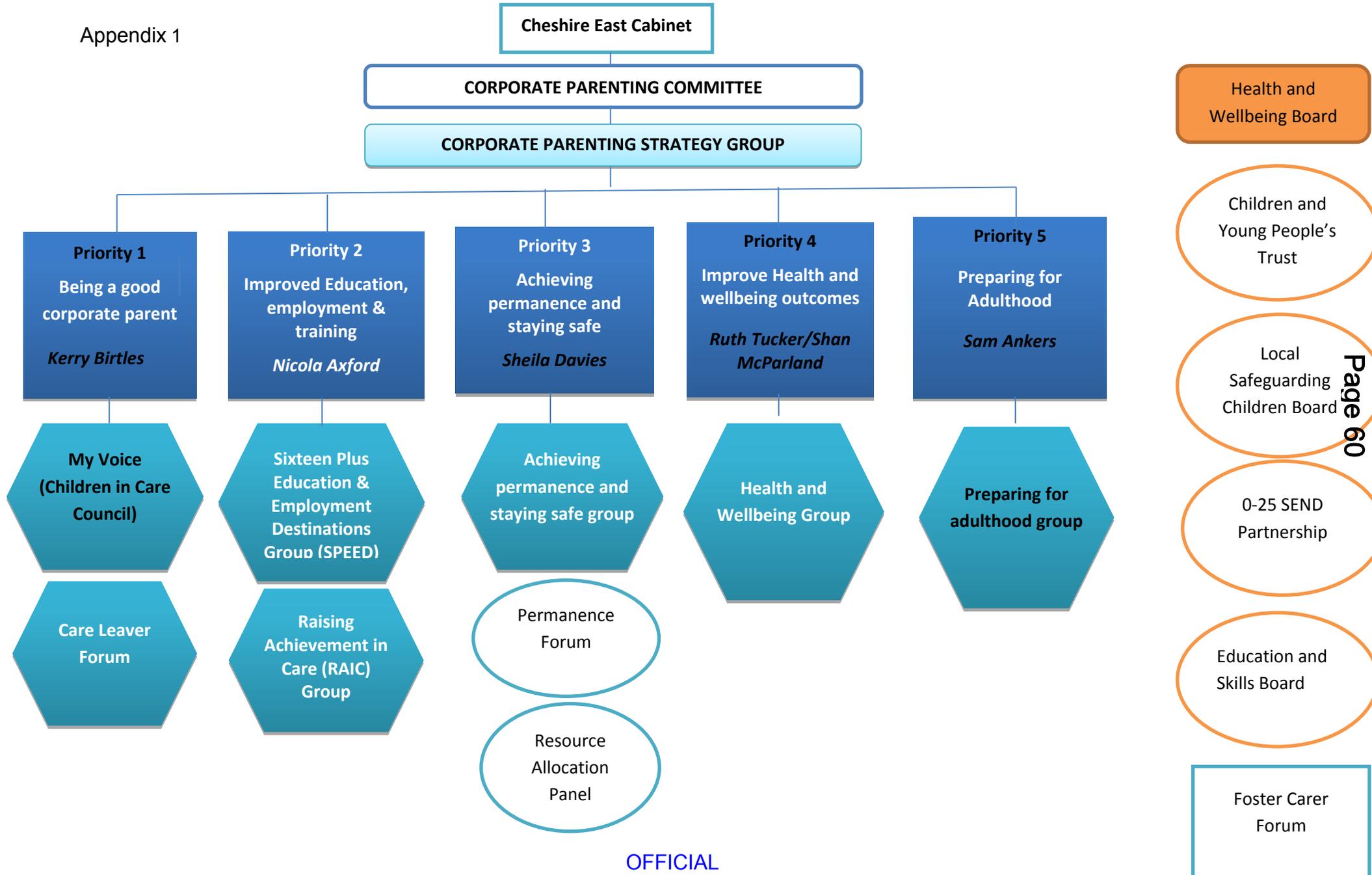
9. Access to Information

- 9.1. None.

10. Contact Information

10.1. Any questions relating to this report should be directed to the following officer:

Name: Kerry Birtles
Job Title: Head of Cared for Children & Care Leavers
Email: kerry.birtles@cheshireeast.gov.uk



Appendix 2



Signs of Safety Training Dates

The three different options for Signs of Safety training, dates and how to book are included below.

2 Day Training

Who is it aimed at? Practitioners who work directly with families, and their line managers

What does it cover? What Signs of Safety is, how to use it in practice, and tools for working together with children, young people and families. The two day covers similar content to the half day but goes into more detail on using the practice and includes practising applying the approach to live cases.

Dates:

- **27th and 28th June**, 9.30-4.30, Crewe
- **16th and 17th July**, 9.30-4.30, Crewe
- **24th and 25th July**, 9.30-4.30, Wilmslow
- **13th and 14th August**, 9.30-4.30, Crewe
- **12th and 13th September**, 9.30-4.30, Crewe
- **19th and 20th September**, 9.30-4.30, Macclesfield
- **27th and 28th September**, 9.30-4.30, Macclesfield
- **4th and 5th October**, 9.30-4.30, Macclesfield
- **16th and 17th October**, 9.30-4.30, Wilmslow
- **12th and 13th November**, 9.30-4.30, Macclesfield
- **19th and 20th November**, 9.30-4.30, Wilmslow
- **28th and 29th November**, 9.30-4.30, Macclesfield
- **4th and 5th December**, 9.30-4.30, Wilmslow
- **12th and 13th December**, 9.30-4.30, Macclesfield

To book your place: please complete this booking form

https://form.cheshireeast.gov.uk/service/LSCB_Training_Booking_2018_19

Any queries please contact LSCBTrainingAdministrator@cheshireeast.gov.uk

Half Day Training

Who is it aimed at? Anyone who works with families and needs to know about Signs of Safety and what it involves.

What does it cover? What Signs of Safety is, how to use it in practice, and tools for working together with children, young people and families. The half day course is a concise version of the 2 day course.

Dates:

- **21st September**, 9.30-1.00, Westfields Sandbach
- **25th September**, 9.30-1.00, Macclesfield Old Town Hall

To book your place: Please email SignsofSafety@cheshireeast.gov.uk with the date you would like to book onto.

Any queries please contact the email address above or contact Rebekka Wilson at 01270 685962.

E-learning

Who is it aimed at? Anyone who needs to know about Signs of Safety and what it involves.

What does it cover? An introduction to Signs of Safety; what it is, what the approach involves, and the key tools.

To access the e-learning please click the links below:

For partners including schools:

<http://cheshireeast.learningpool.com/totara/dashboard/index.php?id=5>

For Cheshire East Council staff:

<http://cheshireeast.learningpool.com/course/view.php?id=388>

Want to know more?

For more information on Signs of Safety please see our [LSCB website](#) and the official Signs of Safety website www.SignsofSafety.net

Contact us at:

SignsofSafety@cheshireeast.gov.uk