

CHESHIRE EAST COUNCIL

Minutes of a meeting of the **Corporate Parenting Committee**
held on Tuesday, 21st January, 2020 at Committee Suite 1,2 & 3, Westfields,
Middlewich Road, Sandbach CW11 1HZ

PRESENT

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

Councillors J Barber, J Buckley, C Bulman, S Edgar, S Holland, A Moran (for Cllr Butterill) and M Warren

Officers in attendance

Gill Betton, Head of Service: Children's Development and Partnerships
Kerry Birtles, Head of Service: Cared for Children and Care Leavers
Sue Pilkington, Designated Nurse Safeguarding Children
Jacquie Sims, Director of Children's Social Care
Kayleigh Wilshaw, Service Manager: Cared for Children and Care Leavers
Julie Zientek, Democratic Services Officer

38 APPOINTMENT OF CHAIRMAN

RESOLVED – That Councillor K Flavell be appointed Chairman.

39 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor P Butterill.

40 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

41 MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

RESOLVED – That the minutes of the meeting held on 12 November 2019 be approved as a correct record.

42 CORPORATE PARENTING UPDATE FROM ELECTED MEMBERS

Councillors J Buckley, C Bulman and K Flavell reported that they had attended the STAR celebration day at Tatton Park, which had recognised and celebrated the achievements of cared for children and care leavers.

Officers' contact details were to be shared with Members, to facilitate the completion of DBS checks.

Some pen profiles and options for engagement forms had been completed. Paper copies were circulated to Members, who were asked to complete any outstanding information and send it back as soon as possible. Pen profiles would be put into the correct format by the unit coordinators and sent to Members for final approval prior to being shared with young people. Officers were to collate the options for engagement responses and they would ensure that everyone had the opportunity to engage in different areas.

43 INPUT FROM CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE

Around 300 children, young people and their carers had attended the STAR celebration day at Tatton Park, and the feedback had all been positive.

The Head of Service: Cared for Children and Care Leavers reported that she had recently attended 'My Voice', the Children in Care Council. They had discussed the outcome of the Ofsted inspection, and the young people had stated that their biggest wish was to be involved in their care plans. They had also discussed the document produced by TACT, which recognised that the language of the care system sometimes created stigma and barriers for understanding, and suggested alternative terminology.

44 THE HEALTH OF CARED FOR CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE ANNUAL REPORT 2018-19 (DEEP DIVE ON PLEDGE 4 - IMPROVE HEALTH AND WELLBEING)

The Committee considered the above report, which outlined the delivery of health services to children in the care of Cheshire East Council during the period 1 April 2018 to 31 March 2019. The report reviewed performance indicators, clinical work undertaken by the Wirral Community Health and Care NHS Foundation Trust Cared for Children Health Team, service improvements and plans for further development.

During the discussion and in response to points raised by the Committee it was reported that:

- The reported drop in the percentage of Cheshire East cared for children who had visited a dentist was partly attributable to the way in which the data was recorded. A more accurate method of reporting was being explored.
- It was recognised that the figures for the completion of Review Health Assessments for Cheshire East cared for children placed out of area were unacceptably low in the second half of 2017-2018 and the first half of 2018-19. However, there was a significant improvement during Quarters 3 and 4, and work was continuing to continue this improvement.

- Young people were engaging with the Care Leavers Health Passports, but the current A4 paper format was not popular. It was intended to review the health passport document during 2019-2020, to ensure that it remained relevant and useful.
- With respect to emotional wellbeing, there were long waiting lists for talking therapies. To address immediate need, personal advisors could refer young people to a part-time emotional wellbeing personal advisor and a full time emotional wellbeing practitioner from Pure Insight.
- Most requests for Initial Health Assessments were submitted within the statutory target of 48 hours, and all requests were sent within 6 days. A review of the arrangements for Initial Health Assessments was a priority for 2019-2020, to ensure that all children entering care had their health care needs identified and met in a timely way.

RESOLVED - That the report be noted.

45 OUTCOME OF CHESHIRE EAST OFSTED INSPECTION OF LOCAL AUTHORITY CHILDREN'S SERVICES (ILACS)

The Committee considered a report and received a presentation regarding the outcome of the Ofsted inspection of Cheshire East Council's children's social care services, which had been undertaken between 11 and 29 November 2019. The report and presentation also outlined the proposed actions to ensure that improvements were made in the areas for development identified in the Ofsted report.

In response to points raised by Committee Members it was reported that:

- With respect to the delays in pre-proceedings, there was to be a joint evaluation with legal services by February 2020.
- The time taken to identify risks and take children into care when risks were chronic rather than acute, and they were not at risk of immediate harm, could be days or a number of weeks.
- Local authorities had a responsibility to ensure the safety of children who were home educated, and they were visited annually.
- The full action plan would be considered by the Children and Families Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

RESOLVED - That the report be noted.

46 CORPORATE PARENTING UPDATE AND SCORECARD

The Committee considered a report regarding national and local developments in relation to cared for children and young people and care

leavers. The report aligned with the pledges of the Corporate Parenting Strategy.

The report also provided an update on performance measures in quarter 2 of 2019-20, and detailed areas of concern and what was being done to address them.

During the discussion it was reported that the average number of days between placement order and match with adoptive family was marked red because it had increased. The number of adopters had decreased but it was now increasing. Family finding was undertaken by the regional adoption agency, which worked very hard.

RESOLVED - That the report be noted.

The meeting commenced at 4.00 pm and concluded at 5.30 pm

Councillor K Flavell (Chairman)