

**CORPORATE PARENTING SUB
 GROUP
 14 JUNE 2018**

PRESENT: COUNCILLOR D BRAILSFORD (CHAIRMAN)

Lincolnshire County Council: Councillors Clio Perraton-Williams (Vice-Chairman), S R Parkin, R L Foulkes and M A Whittington

Added Members: Jean Burbidge (Lincolnshire Community Health Services), Polly Coombes (Foster Carer) and Ann Wright (Foster Carer)

Officers in attendance:-

Andrea Brown (Democratic Services Officer), Andrew Garbutt (Participation and Engagement Team), John Harris (Children's Service Manager - Regulated - North and Fostering), Tracy Johnson (Senior Scrutiny Officer), Carolyn Knight (Quality and Standards Manager), Sarah Lane (Virtual School Team Manager), Andrew Morris (Corporate Parenting Manager) and Yvonne Shearwood (Children's Service Manager - Regulated (South and Adoption))

1 ELECTION OF CHAIRMAN

RESOLVED

That Councillor D Brailsford be elected as Chairman of the Corporate Parenting Sub-Group for 2018/19.

COUNCILLOR D BRAILSFORD IN THE CHAIR

2 ELECTION OF VICE-CHAIRMAN

RESOLVED

That Councillor C L Perraton-Williams be elected as Vice-Chairman of the Corporate Parenting Sub-Group for 2018/19.

3 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE/REPLACEMENT MEMBERS

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor R H Trollope-Bellew.

There were no replacement Members in attendance.

It was also noted that apologies for absence had been received from Janice Spencer (Assistant Director – Children's (Safeguarding)) and was represented by Yvonne Shearwood (Children's Services Manager: Regulated (South and Adoption)).

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4 DECLARATIONS OF MEMBERS' INTEREST

Councillor M A Whittington advised that he had an adopted son aged 22 and, although he was not receiving services available up to the age of 25, he was eligible to.

The Chairman welcomed Councillor Whittington to his first meeting of the sub-group.

There were no other declarations of Members' interests at this point of the proceedings.

5 MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE CORPORATE PARENTING SUB-GROUP HELD ON 15 MARCH 2018

RESOLVED

That the minutes of the meeting of the Corporate Parenting Sub-Group held on 15 March 2018 be approved and signed by the Chairman as a correct record.

6 EXTENSION OF CARE LEAVERS OFFER TO 25

The Sub-Group received a report from Andrew Morris (Corporate Parenting Manager) which provided an overview of the impact of the new Act for Care Leavers.

The requirement to offer a Personal Advisor Service to young people Leaving Care was to change and the offer was to be extended from age 21 to the age of 25. Children's Services must, if requested by a young person, undertake an assessment of need; develop and keep under review a Pathway Plan; and provide information, advice and guidance and support proportionate to need.

In April 2018, the offer of Leaving Care Duties was extended to the age of 25 although, locally, it was unknown how many Care Leavers would take up the offer of support to the age of 25 or the number of Care Leavers who would return to the County and access the offer of Leaving Care Support.

Guidance from the Department for Education (DfE) received on 1 April 2018, made it clear that Local Authorities and their partners must:-

1. Ensure that service areas are configured and capable of delivering an Information Advice and Guidance Service for those over 21;
2. Extend the offer of a Personal Advisor support up to the age of 25;
3. Offer Leaving Care Service to those young people under 21 and leaving care support to those under the age of 25;
4. Respond if any young person contacts for support; and
5. For Care Leavers aged 21 or over – undertake an assessment of needs and develop, and keep under review, a pathway plan.

This also meant that Local Authorities did not have to provide the same level of support to care leavers aged 21 to 25 as it did for those aged 18 to 21 although there was a duty to assess need and offer Information, Advice and Guidance to all Care Leavers.

In order to meet the new obligations, LCC had extended the Leaving Care Service commissioned through Barnardo's in addition to committing an £120k additional funding every year for the next two years in order to enhance service capacity.

Due to this additional resource, when a young person approached the age of 21, Personal Advisors would discuss whether they would like to continue to receive support beyond the age of 21.

The Corporate Parenting Manager was also working with all partners, including District Councils, Public Health, health and voluntary sectors to develop a local Core Offer.

Since the report was published, it was reported that one young person, aged 23, who had found it difficult to secure employment was now being helped to write job applications and prepare for interviews. The service was also liaising with potential employers to explain the support required to the young person during this process. Members were advised that this young person, since receiving this support, had gone from not being successfully shortlisted for positions to being invited for interviews.

The Sub-Group was advised that the aspiration was that young people who leave the Leaving Care Service could continue to use services whenever needed.

Members were invited to ask questions, during which the following points were noted:-

- There was expected to be an increase in service users which may bring an additional cost pressure. The service provided would have to be made clear to young people to avoid confusion. It was envisaged that the number of individual support and duty support officers would need to be increased as the service was actively promoted;
- It was confirmed that all District Councils were committed to the service and found that the compliance and concept had grown considerably. One District Council had approved the rollout of Council Tax exemption via a non-key decision and officers were encouraging the others to do the same, if possible;
- It was asked if there would be a single point of contact within District Councils for Corporate parenting. This would be raised with Chief Executives and Leaders of each district council to request that a single point of contact be allocated. It was agreed that the culture in this area needed to be changed;
- When asked if there was a forecast of the number of care leavers between 21 and 25, it was explained that there could be in the region of 700. It was acknowledged that there would be a challenge trying to contact all as some may have moved but work had been carried out to identify the last known address of all care leavers. Neutral and anonymised letters had been sent to all of these addresses;

- It was confirmed that this service would be provided to LAC in Lincolnshire even if they had moved out-of-county. The legislation was nationwide therefore young people out of the area would receive information from councils and services in their area also;
- Barnardo's was to deliver the extended service and had appointed all the staff;
- Members were referred to the webpages in relation to Leaving Care. A full explanation of the full offer was included and could be found at <https://lincolnshire.fsd.org.uk/kb5/lincs/fsd/family.page?familychannel=1800>.

RESOLVED

1. That the report be noted; and
2. That the growth of the offer to Care Leavers be supported.

7 V4C THE LOOKED AFTER CHILDREN COUNCIL QUARTERLY REPORT (MARCH - MAY 2018) AND MEMBER FEEDBACK FROM VISITS TO V4C MEETINGS IN THE PREVIOUS QUARTER

The Sub-Group gave consideration to a report from the V4C. In guiding the Sub-Group through the report, the Participation Officer made reference to the Quadrant updates; Foster Focus; Care Pledge; the Big Conversation 16; FAB! 2018; and future meetings. Details of the information could be found within the report.

It was thought that the date of the Big Conversation 17 may have been changed from 22 October 2018. This would be clarified and Members notified.

Meeting venues in East Lindsey remained problematic and it was suggested that Fantasy Island might be engaged as this may encourage more young people to attend. The suggestion was welcomed although stressed that it would need to be clear to all those attending there would be business to conduct before social activities took place.

Councillor S R Dodds also suggested that the Scouting Association in East Lindsey might wish to assist and would make enquiries on behalf of V4C.

During discussion, the following points were noted:-

- In relation to Caring2Learn, it was thought that the majority of designated teachers were unaware of V4C and that this needed to be rectified;
- It was suggested that the designated teacher may not be the correct person to deal with the child but must be aware of which teacher would be;
- Children were often more comfortable using pastoral services but they must also be made aware of who the designated teachers were;
- It was reported that the proportion of designated teachers was predominantly greater in primary schools;
- Foster Carer members confirmed that they were invited to input into decisions which would affect them; and
- It was confirmed that Pupil Premium Plus, allocated for Looked After Children, was an initial payment grant which had to be logged against the child.

Members were referred to information available for V4C on the county council website – www.lincolnshire.gov.uk/v4c

RESOLVED

That the V4C update for June 2018 be noted.

8 INDEPENDENT REVIEWING SERVICE ANNUAL REPORT

Consideration was given to a report by Carolyn Knight, Quality and Standards Manager, which provided an overview of the Looked After Children everyday care arrangements.

The Annual IRO report provided evidence relating to the IRO Services in Lincolnshire as required by statutory guidance. Due to the core business of the team also including child protection, short breaks and Regulation 44, the report also contained information relating to those areas where appropriate.

Members were invited to ask questions, during which the following points were noted:-

- Meetings with CAFCASS colleagues had continued on a six monthly basis and had resulted in the existing protocol being reviewed;
- IT issues within the Council needed to be resolved to ensure that information could be shared, securely, between relevant teams. LAC workflow issues had been identified and currently being reworked following the Ofsted inspection;
- Preparation for the inspection had allowed officers time to identify challenges faced around the Mosaic system;
- It was explained that participation in Reviews was not just attendance. A lot of young people would not attend reviews but evidence should be provided that the views of the child have been considered.

RESOLVED

That the report be noted.

9 COMPLIMENTS, COMMENTS & COMPLAINTS RECEIVED FROM LOOKED AFTER CHILDREN

Consideration was given to a report by Simone Haywood, Customer Relations and Complaints Manager, which provided an overview of Looked After Children Complaints.

Yvonne Shearwood, Children's Service Manager – Regulated (South and Adoption), introduced the report and highlighted that there had been one compliment received during the period and only one complaint from a young person in Lincolnshire County Council care.

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RESOLVED

That the Compliments, Comments & Complaints received from Looked After Children for the period 1 April 2017 to 31 March 2018 be noted.

10 PERFORMANCE - QUARTER 4 FULL REPORT

Consideration was given to a report by Janice Spencer, Assistant Director – Safeguarding, which invited Members to review performance indicators in relation to Looked After Children.

Yvonne Shearwood, Children's Services Manager – Regulated (South and Adoption), introduced the report and explained that performance had been good. Members were referred to "Participation of LAC in Reviews" which reported that this indicator had not been met. It was explained that this was, in fact, a data error which had now been rectified.

During discussion, the following point was noted:-

- It was confirmed that the conversion of fire houses in Grantham to support Care Leavers was a pilot which was due to continue until the end of March 2019. Work was ongoing to consider how this could be rolled out beyond that date and in other areas in addition to Grantham. Members asked if it would be possible to visit the accommodation and were invited to contact the Children's Services Manager – Regulated (South and Adoption) to arrange this.

RESOLVED

That the Quarter 4 performance report be noted.

11 CORPORATE PARENTING SUB-GROUP WORK PROGRAMME 2018/19

Consideration was given to a report from Tracy Johnson, Senior Scrutiny Officer, which invited the Corporate Parenting Sub-Group to discuss and agree its work programme for 2018.

Appendix A to the report detailed the Corporate Parenting Sub-Group Work Programme for 2018.

It was asked that the Lead Contributor for the Annual Report and Statement of Purpose for Private Fostering, scheduled for consideration on 20 September 2018, be amended from Lizette Watts to John Harris (Children's Services Manager – Regulated (North and Fostering)).

RESOLVED

That the Work Programme as detailed at Appendix A, subject to the amendment noted above, be agreed.

12 DATES OF MEETINGS

Future meetings dates of the Corporate Parenting Sub-Group were confirmed as follows:-

Thursday 14 March 2019 10.00am
Thursday 13 June 2019 10.00am
Thursday 19 September 2019 10.00am
Thursday 5 December 2019 10.00am

Electronic appointments would be sent to Members in due course.

RESOLVED

That the future meeting dates of the Sub-Group be noted.

13 INFORMATION ITEM - VIRTUAL MEETING OF THE CORPORATE PARENTING SUB-GROUP OUTCOME

RESOLVED

That the information item regarding the Virtual Meeting of the Corporate Parenting Sub-Group be received.

The meeting closed at 12.13 pm

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