

**CORPORATE PARENTING PANEL  
20 JANUARY 2011**

**PRESENT: COUNCILLOR H R JOHNSON (CHAIRMAN)**

Councillors Miss A M Jenkyns, J D Hough, R A Shore and S F Williams.

Councillor A P Williams (Executive Support Councillor for Children's Services including Adult Education) was also in attendance.

External Members: Jean Burbidge (Lincolnshire Community Health Services), Theresa Doughty (Chairman of V4C the Children in Care Council), Mrs S North (Senior Officer from another Directorate (Development)) and Andrew Smith (Barnardo's).

Officers: Theresa Buhryn (Performance Development and Reviewing Manager), Chris Fowler (Head of the Virtual School for Children in Public Care), Cheryl Hall (Democratic Services Officer), Colin Hopkirk (Principal Participation Officer), Tracy Johnson (Scrutiny Officer), John Roberts (Service Manager – Regulated Services), Janice Spencer (Head of Regulated Services) and Sue Westcott (Assistant Director for Children's Services).

39. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Mrs M J Overton and Dawn Berry, Mrs M Graham-Williams and Mr T Normandale.

An Apology for absence was also received from Councillor Mrs P A Bradwell (Executive Councillor for Children's Services including Adult Education).

40. DECLARATION OF MEMBERS' INTERESTS

No declarations of Members' interests were declared at this stage of the meeting.

41. MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING OF THE CORPORATE PARENTING PANEL HELD ON 12 NOVEMBER 2010

RESOLVED

That the minutes of the meeting held on 12 November 2010 be agreed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman, subject to the inclusion of Councillor R A Shore's apology for absence.

42. BRIEF MINUTES OF THE V4C, THE LOOKED AFTER CHILDREN COUNCIL HELD ON 17 NOVEMBER 2010, FOR INFORMATION

RESOLVED

That the minutes of the meeting of the V4C, The Looked After Children Council held on 17 November 2010, be noted.

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43. LINCOLNSHIRE LEAVING CARE SERVICE

Consideration was given to a report by Andrew Smith (Barnardo's), which provided the Panel with additional information in relation to the Lincolnshire Leaving Care Service. Barnardo's was working with Lincolnshire County Council to manage the increase in the number of young people leaving care.

Detailed information was included within the report, covering the following areas: -

- Service Delivery;
- Statutory obligations;
- Current situation.

Members were provided with an opportunity to ask questions, where the following points were noted: -

- There were 16.8 full-time equivalent direct workers, which resulted in each member of staff working intensively with an average of 18 young people;
- Suitable accommodation was defined within regulations, however this definition was due to be expanded in April 2011;
- There were two measures of performance: a local indicator which covered all young people receiving substantial involvement from the Leaving Care Service; and a national indicator focussed purely on young people aged 19;
- Reference was made to the project led by Barnardo's to work with V4C and the University of Lincoln on a survey of young people leaving care. Several concerns were raised by Members of the Panel in relation to this project and it was suggested that a meeting should be established between the Chairman and Vice-Chairman of the Panel, the Chairman of V4C, Colin Hopkirk and Andrew Smith, to address these issues;

NOTE: At this stage of the proceedings (10.20 a.m.) the meeting adjourned and subsequently reconvened at 10.30 a.m. Andrew Smith (Barnardo's) left the meeting during this time.

- That information in relation to the level of 'Not in Education or Employment Training' (NEET) for looked after children, be presented to the Panel, at a future meeting;
- What was Barnardo's level of responsibility for the outcomes for looked after children;
- The Council's Children and Young People Scrutiny Committee had considered a report in relation to Barnardo's contract. It was suggested that a report outlining the way forward with this contract should be presented to a future meeting of the Panel.

**RESOLVED**

That the above comments be passed onto Andrew Smith, for information.

**44. A DEDICATED WEBSITE FOR LOOKED AFTER CHILDREN**

Consideration was given to a report by Colin Hopkirk (Principal Participation Officer), which provided the Panel with an update on the progress of creating a dedicated website for looked after children.

The Principal Participation Officer informed the Panel that he had researched possible options for websites for looked after children, ranging from a simple page of information on the main local authority website to well developed sites such as 'A Voice 4 Us' used in Cambridgeshire and 'The Jitty' in Leicestershire. A suggestion was made by the Panel to contact Cambridgeshire County Council to establish whether Lincolnshire could adopt this website, providing that it could be adapted to meet Lincolnshire's requirements.

A discussion took place regarding the moderation of the website and it was suggested that V4C the Children in Care Council, could be responsible for this function.

**RESOLVED**

- (1) That the Principal Participation Officer be requested to investigate the possibility of adopting a model used by other local authorities;
- (2) That a further update be provided to the Committee at a future meeting.

**45. INDEPENDENT REVIEWING OFFICERS**

Consideration was given to a report by Theresa Buhryn (Performance Development and Reviewing Manager), which provided the Panel with further information on Independent Reviewing Officers.

Detailed information was provided within the report, which covered the following areas: -

- The role of an Independent Reviewing Officer;
- The number of looked after children in Lincolnshire;
- The Independent Reviewing Officers Team;
- Statutory timescales for Reviews;
- C63 Performance Indicator;
- The Review process;
- Quality Assurance;
- Overview of last 6 months quality assurance issues;
- Summary;
- Good practice.

The Panel was informed that a group of looked after children were consulted on the review process at the One Million Take Over Day, which took place during 2010. Members suggested that a form of consultation should take place each year to ensure that the looked after children remained happy with this process.

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In answer to a question, the Panel was informed that a list of those schools which had worked well with looked after children could be created and this could be used to improve other schools.

**RESOLVED**

That the report be noted.

**46. RESPIRE CARE TIME LIMITED SUB-GROUP**

Consideration was given to a verbal update by Janice Spencer (Head of Regulated Services), which provided the Panel with an update on the progress to establish the Respite Care Time Limited Sub-Group.

Councillors Miss A M Jenkyns, H R Johnson, A P Williams and S F Williams volunteered to sit on the Sub-Group. The Panel was informed that Mrs M Graham-Williams had previously indicated that she wished to sit on the Sub-Group.

**RESOLVED**

That the Head of Regulated Services be requested to make the necessary arrangements for the first meeting of the Sub-Group.

**47. VISITING MEMBERS – LOG OF QUARTERLY VISITS APRIL 2010 – MARCH 2011**

Consideration was given to a report by Janice Spencer (Head of Regulated Services), which provided the Panel with an update on the Visiting Members' Log of Quarterly Visits for 2010-11.

Members were informed that Councillor P A Skinner had been appointed to the vacancy at Haven Cottage. As Councillor M W Gilbert had also expressed an interest in this vacancy, the Panel suggested that there was no reason why both Councillors could not act as visiting members for Haven Cottage. Further to this discussion, Councillor R A Shore expressed an interest in becoming an additional visiting member for 33 Northholme.

The Panel agreed that the 'Guidance Notes for Visiting Members' should be re-circulated to all of the visiting members, for information. Members also reiterated the importance of completing the 'Visiting Member Report'. It was suggested that the Head of Regulated Services should send an email to all visiting members to that effect.

Ashleigh in Market Rasen officially closed on 19 January 2011, and Members were reassured that the transfer of children to new placements, which took place on 18 December 2010, went smoothly and all of the children had settled in well at their new homes.

**RESOLVED**

That the report be noted.

**48. OFSTED INSPECTION SUMMARY REPORT RESIDENTIAL HOMES  
2010/2011**

Consideration was given to a report by John Roberts (Service Manager – Regulated Services), which provided the Panel with an overview of the overall outcome of inspections at the four mainstream homes, for the last twelve months. Each home was inspected twice a year by Ofsted, against the Every Child Matters agenda. The overall combined average for these homes was ‘good’.

The Panel was informed that during early 2010, Albion Street received ‘inadequate’ following an inspection. This was due to a recording error and Ofsted perceived this as a safeguarding issue. Lincolnshire County Council appealed this decision as this home had previously received ‘outstanding’, but the decision was upheld. Albion Street had since received an inspection and was informed that in any other circumstance it would have received ‘outstanding’ but as it previously received ‘inadequate’, Ofsted had to deem the home as ‘good’. Members were advised that this was due to Ofsted’s regulations as ‘outstanding’ could not be awarded if the home had received ‘inadequate’ during its last inspection. The Panel requested that it received a list of actions following the inspection.

The Panel suggested that ‘Improvement Plans’ should be created for each home to work towards achieving ‘outstanding’. The Assistant Director for Children’s Services agreed to take this suggestion forward.

**RESOLVED**

That ‘Improvement Plans’ be devised for each of the residential homes.

**49. INTERIM ANNUAL REPORT FOR ADOPTION**

Copies of the ‘Interim Annual Report for Adoption’ report written by Janice Spencer (Head of Regulated Services) were circulated to Members of the Panel, for information.

**RESOLVED**

That the ‘Interim Annual Report for Adoption’ be accepted.

**50. ANNUAL REPORT ON PRIVATE FOSTERING - MARCH 2009 – MARCH  
2010 AND STATEMENT OF PURPOSE**

Copies of the ‘Annual Report on Private Fostering – March 2009 – March 2010 and Statement of Purpose’ written by Janice Spencer (Head of Regulated Services) were circulated to Members of the Panel, for information.

The Panel expressed its concern in relation to the performance figures for the completion of visits, as detailed on page seven of the report. Members were informed that this was due to a glitch with the process and this had since been resolved.

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RESOLVED

That the 'Annual Report on Private Fostering – March 2009 – March 2010 and Statement of Purpose' be accepted.

51. CAREERS ADVICE TO LOOKED AFTER CHILDREN AND EDUCATION CHAMPIONS

A report by Chris Fowler (Head of the Virtual School for Children in Public Care) which provided the Panel with further information in relation to the current and proposed future arrangements for careers advice to looked after children. Members were informed that the 'education champions' element of the report would be presented to the Panel at a future meeting.

Following consideration of the report, the Panel was provided with an opportunity to ask questions, where the following points were noted: -

- A Member of the Panel informed Officers that he was aware of a very gifted looked after child and sought advice on financial support to send this child to a specialist university. It was suggested that this issue should be discussed further outside of the meeting with the Head of Regulated Services;
- Training for foster carers was important in this area to enable them to support their foster child through this process. Members were informed that this was covered in the preparation training for foster carers, however there was a need for dedicated training;
- Members of staff in residential homes were also in receipt of ongoing training to ensure they could fully support looked after children.

RESOLVED

That the recommendation, as outlined in the report, to the Children's Services Departmental Management Team be supported.

52. CORPORATE PARENTING PANEL WORK PROGRAMME 2011

Consideration was given to a report by Tracy Johnson (Scrutiny Officer), which provided the Panel with an opportunity to consider its own work programme for the coming year.

RESOLVED

That the Work Programme be approved subject to the inclusion of any amendments made at the meeting.

53. FUTURE MEETING DATES

At the meeting of the Panel held on 12 November 2010, it was agreed that the frequency of the meetings would be reduced from bi-monthly to quarterly and that wherever possible, the meetings should be arranged to ensure that the Children in Care Council representative could attend.

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Further to this, consideration was given to a list of potential future meeting dates, where the Panel agreed that meetings would be held on the following dates: -

7 April 2011 at 10.00 a.m. – Committee Room 3;  
21 July 2011 at 10.00 a.m. – Committee Room 3;  
20 October 2011 at 10.00 a.m. – Committee Room 3.

**RESOLVED**

That future meetings of the Corporate Parenting Panel be held on the above dates.

The meeting closed at 12.30 p.m.