



**CORPORATE PARENTING PANEL  
8 SEPTEMBER 2016**

**PRESENT: COUNCILLOR D BRAILSFORD (CHAIRMAN)**

**Lincolnshire County Council:** Councillors J D Hough (Vice-Chairman), P J O'Connor, L Wootten and Mrs H N J Powell

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

Officers in attendance:-

Kieran Barnes (Head of Virtual School, Looked After Children), Annie Fletcher (Children's Services Manager, Barnardos), John Harris (Service Manager Regulated North and Fostering), John Herbert (Youth Development Hub Manager), Tracy Johnson (Senior Scrutiny Officer), Tara Jones (Service Manager Regulated South and Adoption), Kerry Mitchell, Janice Spencer (Assistant Director Safeguarding) and Rachel Wilson (Democratic Services Officer)

15 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE/REPLACEMENT MEMBERS

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors A G Hagues and R A H McAuley.

Apologies for absence were also received from Polly Coombes (Foster Carer), and Mary-Beth Pepperdine (Children in Care Council).

The Chief Executive reported that, under Local Government (Committee and Political Groups) Regulations 1990, Councillor Mrs H N J Powell had been appointed to the Corporate Parenting Panel to replace Councillor R A H McAuley for this meeting only.

16 DECLARATION OF MEMBERS' INTERESTS

There were no declarations of interest at this point in the meeting.

17 MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 9 JUNE 2016

RESOLVED

That the minutes of the meeting held on 9 June 2016 be signed by the Chairman as a correct record.

18 BARNARDO'S LEAVING CARE SERVICE ANNUAL REPORT 2015/16

Consideration was given to the Barnardo's Leaving Care Service Annual Report 2015/16. The Panel was guided through the report, with particular focus on the following sections:

- The profile of young people accessing Lincolnshire Leaving Care Service at 31 March 2016
- Education, Employment and Training
- The Care Leaver Apprenticeship Scheme (CLAS) Co-ordinator
- Accommodation
- Health
- Community Nurse for Care Leavers
- Participation
- Future planning

Members of the Panel were provided with the opportunity to ask questions to the officers present in relation to the information contained within the report and some of the points raised during discussion of the annual report included the following:

- Clarification was sought regarding the 6 young people who were categorised as 'do not want to work'. The Panel was advised that this would refer to those who lived with a partner who worked or who claimed benefit on their behalf. It was noted that there were very few young people who were not doing anything.
- In terms of the Care Leavers Apprenticeship Scheme it was felt that 12 placements was a number that could be supported, and compared well to previous years. It was noted that these were bespoke apprenticeships and the majority of young people stayed on at the end of the placement.
- It was reported that there were 37 young people in Staying Put arrangements. LCC had been part of the original pilot for this scheme which started 5 years ago. The authority had received £200,000 to launch the scheme. It was noted that it was a joint decision between the young person and the foster carer.
- Work was ongoing to determine how to give the same opportunities to those in residential care as those in foster care, in relation to accommodation.
- There were 54 referrals for supported lodgings in 2015, of these 35 were matched. It was noted that an issue was that there was not enough accommodation in the right areas. It was queried what happened to those that were not matched, and the Panel was advised that there were a number of reasons, such as the young person may have decided it wasn't the right option for them, some may have gone back home or some would have gone to The Gateway.
- It was confirmed that staff did work to find jobs or develop the skills of those young people who were so severely affected they were unable to seek work. It was noted that some care leavers supported other care leavers, and there were also other activities such as drama available. At this time there was not a craft stream.
- It was requested whether further information could be provided about the 24 care leavers who were not able to seek work.

- It was queried whether there were any lessons which could be learned from the Community Nurse for Care Leavers, and it was commented that it had highlighted the need to gather health information as children go through care. It was noted that this post was recognised in the CQC inspection but the post was no longer in the same form due to budget pressures.
- It was reported that Barnardo's would be reviewing its health audit to determine where the gaps were.
- It was queried how young people in custody were supported with their education and training, and the Panel was advised that they would always be encouraged to engage with any education or training available. When in custody, the care leavers would receive support and be visited every few weeks.
- Members raised concerns about the practice in some prisons of withdrawing people from education as punishment for bad behaviour. It was emphasised to members that this only applied to over 18's, and it was not the case in all prisons. It was suggested whether members and officers should be challenging this as it was felt that access to education was essential, particularly for those young people who had ended up in prison.
- It was noted that LCC was currently looking at prison provision in Lincolnshire and it was suggested whether Barnardo's would like to feed into this work.
- Feedback from those young people engaged with the CAMHS service had been positive. However, an initial issue was that some of the young people in Peterborough were not recognised as being part of the service, but this issue had now been resolved.
- It was commented that some excellent work had been done, and there were high aspirations. It was also noted that the level of support given to care leavers was exceptional, and the Panel was advised that these levels of support were not mirrored in other local authorities. Officers wished to acknowledge the work done by Barnardo's.

## RESOLVED

That the report be noted.

19 VISITING MEMBERS QUARTERLY REPORT

The Panel received the log of quarterly visits to Children's Homes for April 2016 – March 2017.

Some of the points raised during discussion of this report included the following:

- It was noted that the report for Northolme had been received, but the responses had yet to be compiled.
- Good feedback had been received from visiting members.
- The staff and young people appreciated the visits.
- In relation to Strut House, there was a need to have a discussion in relation to whether Cllr M Jones continued as the visiting member due to his other commitments as the Police and Crime Commissioner for Lincolnshire. The Chairman advised that he would discuss this with Cllr Jones.

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- It was noted that Strut House now had a new Ofsted inspector, and an inspection was expected soon.

## RESOLVED

That the Visiting Members log of quarterly visits be noted.

20 PERFORMANCE - QUARTER 1 EXCEPTIONS REPORT

The Corporate Parenting Panel received the exceptions report for key performance indicators (KPI's) relevant to the work of the Panel. It was reported that there were five KPI's which were underreporting, however, it was noted that Stability of Placements was not one of them. The Panel was advised the targets were aspirational and were set very high.

The following was noted in relation to each of the indicators:

## Fostering/adoption of LAC aged 10 to &lt;16 years old

- This was going in the right direction.
- The data did not include those children that were back at home.
- Officers were confident that children were in the right place at the right time.
- The number of children being placed out of county had increased.
- There were 35 young people in out of county residential placements. There had been an increase in young people with sexual offences which mean they could not be fostered in a normal family environment.
- There was a focus on early intervention and prevention work.

## Participation of LAC in reviews

- The reported figure is a 'glitch' due to wrong information being communicated to the Independent Reviewing Officer (IRO). The issue had now been addressed.

## Percentage of Looked After Children with an up to date health check

- There were three 'refusers' in this cohort.
- The Panel was advised that there was no real difference between boys and girls.
- If 95% could be achieved then the figures would be within tolerance.

## Percentage of Looked After Children with up to date routine immunisations:

- Officers were confident that 95% would be achieved by the end of the year.

## Percentage of Looked After Children with an up to date dental check

- There was disappointment with this performance, as it was lower than the previous year.
- Data cleansing was taking place which should improve the figures
- It was also reported that there was some confusion with babies and social workers not recording the date of the check. However, there was confidence that this performance would improve.

RESOLVED

That the performance information presented be noted.

21 V4C THE LOOKED AFTER CHILDREN COUNCIL QUARTERLY MINUTES

The Corporate Parenting Panel received the minutes of the V4C South meeting and V4C Executive. Some of the main points highlighted during the meetings were reported to the Panel and included the following:

- It was suggested that the V4C change to having quadrant groups which would meet every couple of months.
- The V4C Executive group would meet on the same day as 'Big Conversation' events.
- The projects which came forward from these meetings would go forward to the quadrant groups to work on and would become more responsive.
- The first meetings of the new quadrant groups would be held in the new year. They were hoping to work closely with social workers and senior practitioners.
- A lot of work had been done by the V4C Executive group over the summer months.
- The V4C activities would continue as they were increasing in popularity.
- The groups seemed to be working very well but there was a desire to increase the numbers taking part.
- There was an intention to change the way the FAB awards worked, and it was proposed to change the date to July 2017. This was to enable more physical/outdoor activities to be included as they were enjoyed by the young people. It had been arranged with the Showground to have use of the ring to enable an increased amount of outdoor activity to take place.
- Officers wanted the young people to be more involved in the running of the event and professional training in events management was being offered, which would be accredited. So far there had been a limited response, and Members of the Panel were asked to highlight this opportunity to any Looked After Children they worked with.
- It was noted that within the minutes of one of the meetings was a suggestion for a trip to Alton Towers, which had not been able to take place due to cost issues, and it was suggested that the young people make contact with sites such as Alton Towers themselves to discuss concessions, as they may get a different response to that given to an officer of a local authority.
- The new work plan for the Participation Team was circulated.
- The next meetings of the V4C Executive were 20 September and 18 October 2016, and the next Big Conversation was 24 October 2016.
- It was noted that the young people did appreciate that interest was being taken by councillors, and were planning to provide a list of topics that the young people would like to discuss throughout the year.

RESOLVED

That the minutes of the V4C meetings be noted.

**22 ADOPTION SERVICE ANNUAL REPORT AND STATEMENT OF PURPOSE**

The Corporate Parenting Panel received the Adoption Service Annual Report and Statement of Purpose. It was noted that approval was required for the Adoption Service Annual report and Statement of Purpose from the Executive Councillor responsible for Children's Services, to authorise publication on the Lincolnshire County Council website.

Members of the Panel were provided with the opportunity to ask questions to the officers present in relation to the information contained within the report, and some of the points raised during discussion included the following:

- In relation to the Statement of Purpose, it was noted that the main changes were around staffing, and the document itself did not really change much from year to year.
- The national decline in the number of decisions for adoption made by courts and councils was highlighted.
- There would be more consideration of kinship carers following changes to the Special Guardianship regulations. A test around meeting a child's lifetime needs came into force in July 2016.
- There was confidence that relationships with the new judges were being developed.
- There was now a surplus of adopters for babies, and so the focus now was on older children and sibling groups.
- Lincolnshire adoption services continued to be high performing, and the excellent performance had been acknowledged by the Secretary of State.
- There had been a drop in adoption orders from the previous year, but an increase in the number of special guardianship orders.

**RESOLVED**

That the Corporate Parenting Panel recommends the approval of the Adoption Service Annual Report and Statement of Purpose.

**23 FOSTERING SERVICE ANNUAL REPORT AND STATEMENT OF PURPOSE**

The Corporate Parenting Panel received the Fostering Service Annual Report and Statement of Purpose. It was noted that approval was required for the Fostering Service Annual Report and Statement of Purpose from the Executive Councillor responsible for Children's Services.

Members of the Panel were provided with the opportunity to ask questions to the officers present in relation to the information contained within the report, and some of the points raised during discussion included the following:

- The number of foster carers was dropping, however, Lincolnshire remained competitive and had a dedicated recruitment team.

- It was felt that there had not been the government focus on fostering in recent years, but this could change in the future.
- The involvement of foster carers in preparation courses had been vital.
- It was suggested that there was a need for support for new foster carers from other foster carers to compare experiences. It was also suggested that training for birth children would be helpful.
- Members were advised that there were social events throughout the year, with 2 summer BBQ's and 2 Christmas parties.
- It was commented that this was a very impressive report.
- Recruitment would continue and it was hoped to enhance the offer to foster carers.
- An initial session on education with the virtual school was available to help improve educational achievement.
- There was a change in the narrative to a supportive education and a learning placement.
- There were a large number of courses available to foster carers, but it was a time commitment. It was noted that there was a good programme of e-learning available. It was suggested whether anything in relation to the virtual school could be included in the e-learning programme.

## RESOLVED

That the Corporate Parenting Panel recommends the approval of the Fostering Service Annual Report and Statement of Purpose.

24 QUARTER 1 FOSTERING REPORT 2016/17

The Corporate Parenting Panel received the Quarter 1 Fostering Report for 2016/17. Comments made during discussion of this report included the following:

- Links with Lincoln City Football Club had been made to offer foster carers a 50% reduction in prices of tickets and free entry for accompanying looked after children. A successful beauty package day had also been held, with plans to arrange a second one.
- There was concern about those foster carers that gave up as they had not received support at the right time.
- It was queried whether there was 'hotline' number that new foster carers could call if they needed to talk to someone, and members were advised that there was an emergency social worker available at all times.
- It was commented that there was an issue in relation to what information was available to the person that a foster carer was speaking to, as a foster carer would assume that the other person had all the relevant information available to them, but this was not always the case and time would have to be spent explaining the situation. It was hoped that this issue would be resolved following the implementation of the Mosaic case management system.

## RESOLVED

That the report be noted.

25 VIRTUAL SCHOOL UPDATE

The Corporate Parenting Panel received an update on the work of the Virtual School, and the following was noted:

- A number of events had taken place between June and August – Red Stem Day at RAF Scampton; Lincoln University two day Children in Care (CiC) Event; National Citizenship Event.
- 29 year 11 CiC participated in the National Citizenship award over summer, which involved team building outdoor adventure activities; a residential part to allow young people to gain skills in a particular area of interest such as art/design/business etc.; a non-residential part which provided a chance for young people to come with ideas for a project which was then presented to a panel. There was very positive feedback from young people and foster carers.
- 98% compliance with EPEP both statutory and non-statutory over the summer term.
- There had been major changes to assessment in years 2 and 6 in a move away from teacher assessment to formal exams/tests. There were also major changes at GCSE level whereby old measures of 5 A-C including English and Maths would no longer be used. 2015 - 2016 would be a transition year at GCSE.
- From September 2016, assessment would be based on 'attainment 8' and 'Progress 8' at GCSE with the old A\* - G measure replaced by numbers on a scale of 1 – 8 and progress rather than attainment measured at GCSE on a scale based upon expected progress from KS2. Subjects such as English and maths would have a double weighting. The Virtual School would continue to focus on progress in English and maths at GCSE.
- In terms of student progress at EYFS, current data (which was unvalidated at the time of the meeting) showed a good level of development for 2016 of 42%, an increase from 32% in 2016 and 18% in 2014. The gap for LAC nationally had closed compared with 2015 data.
- Student progress at key stage 1 (again data was unvalidated at this time) showed Year 1 Phonics at 63%, which again had increased from the previous two years. Lincolnshire was 10% above nationally based on 2015 data.
- Year two assessments had changed and were no longer teacher assessed. Outcomes were broadly in line with predictions in writing at 48% (40% prediction), maths 44% (prediction 48%) and reading, writing and maths 36% (prediction 36%). There was no data on progress currently available and no comparisons either.
- Officers were currently awaiting progress measures from the KS2 cohort from the DfE. It was expected that this data would be available at the end of September 2016.
- In relation to KS4, 51 students were entered for examinations. Of these 9 (18%) were predicted by schools to achieve A – C grades in English and maths. The actual percentage was 14% which was broadly in line with the prediction. Progress in English was in line with predictions at 35%, and increase from 20% in 2015. Progress in maths was also in line with predictions and with 2015. This data would bring Lincolnshire back in line with the national average.

- 76% of students (31) at KS4 were identified as having a learning need with 57% of that number having an Education Health Care Plan (EHCP). Of those with an EHCP, 11 were not entered for GCSE as a consequence of the severity of their learning difficulties. 9 of the 11 made expected progress through teacher assessments.
- The combined progress measure was 51% for English and 52% for Maths.

Concerns were raised by members regarding what expected progress was and how schools collect this information for looked after children. Members were advised that a higher proportion of LAC were now making expected progress.

It was queried where the funding for the event at Scampton came from, and members were advised that this was a free event hosted by RAF Scampton. It was also noted that the University event was free to attend as well.

RESOLVED

That the update be noted.

26     CORPORATE PARENTING PANEL WORK PROGRAMME 2016/17

Consideration was given to the Work Programme, and the Panel was reminded that the next meeting would be taking place on 15 December 2016. The Senior Scrutiny Officer would circulate the dates for the forthcoming V4C meetings and Big Conversation in October.

RESOLVED

That the work programme, as presented, be agreed.

27     PROPOSED FUTURE MEETING DATES FOR THE CORPORATE PARENTING PANEL FOR 2017

RESOLVED

The Corporate Parenting Panel agreed the following dates for meetings in 2017:

- Thursday, 16 March 2017 at 10.00am
- Thursday, 15 June 2017 at 10.00am
- Thursday, 21 September 2017 at 10.00am
- Thursday, 7 December 2017 at 10.00am

The meeting closed at 12.45 pm

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