

**CORPORATE PARENTING SUB
GROUP
21 SEPTEMBER 2017**

PRESENT: COUNCILLOR D BRAILSFORD (CHAIRMAN)

Lincolnshire County Council: Councillors Mrs K Cook, S R Dodds, R L Foulkes and Mrs C L Perraton-Williams (Vice-Chairman).

Added Members: Jean Burbidge (Lincolnshire Community Health Services), Katerina Hardy (Children in Care Council) and Ann Wright (Foster Carer).

Officers in attendance:-

Dave Clarke (Secure Unit Principal), Annie Fletcher (Children's Services Manager, Barnardo's), Cheryl Hall (Democratic Services Officer), Melody Harrison (Independent Chair/Regulation 43 Visitor), John Herbert (Youth Development Practice Supervisor), Tracy Johnson (Senior Scrutiny Officer), Jo Kavanagh (Interim Assistant Director, Early Help), Carolyn Knight (Quality and Standards Manager), Sarah Lane (Virtual School Team Manager), Kerry Mitchell (Assistant Director Barnardo's (Lincolnshire)), Andrew Morris (Corporate Parenting Manager), Yvonne Shearwood (Children's Service Manager - Regulated (South and Adoption)) and Janice Spencer (Assistant Director Safeguarding).

12 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE/REPLACEMENT MEMBERS

The Chairman welcomed everyone to the meeting.

Apologies for absence were received from Michelle Andrews (Service Manager, Early Years and Childcare Support), Councillor Mrs W Bowkett, Kieran Barnes (Virtual Head Teacher), Amy-Louise Butler (Lincolnshire Partnership NHS Trust), Polly Coombes (Foster Carer), John Harris (Children's Service Manager – Regulated – North and Fostering) and Ildiko Kiss (Regulation 43 Visitor).

13 DECLARATIONS OF MEMBERS' INTEREST

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

14 MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE CORPORATE PARENTING SUB-GROUP HELD ON 6 JULY 2017

RESOLVED

That the minutes of the meeting held on 6 July 2017 be approved and signed by the Chairman as a correct record.

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15 RESIDENTIAL SERVICES IN LINCOLNSHIRE

The Sub-Group received a presentation from Dave Clarke (Principal, Lincolnshire Secure Unit), which provided an overview of the residential services in Lincolnshire.

The presentation slides covered the following areas: -

- Lincolnshire Secure Unit;
- Three Residential Homes;
- Three Children with Disabilities Homes (*The Beacon; Haven Cottage; and Strut House*);
- Audit / Inspection Processes.

The Sub-Group was provided with an opportunity to ask questions, where the following points were noted: -

- It was noted that there was a significantly higher number of boys in secure units compared to the number of girls. The differences in the services offered to girls were discussed;
- It was confirmed that all inspections carried out by Ofsted were unannounced. Further to this, it was noted that the three Children with Disability Homes were all found to be either 'outstanding' or 'good';
- It was noted that a new unit would be built within the Sleaford area of the County;
- It was confirmed that recruitment at the secure unit in Lincolnshire had not been a problem, unlike other services across the County;
- The transitional arrangements for children leaving the secure unit were discussed. Further to this, it was highlighted that each child in each of the Children with Disability Homes had a plan in place, which covered transitional arrangements;
- The educational arrangements within the secure unit were discussed, where it was highlighted that each child had their educational ability assessed so that their education could be tailored to their assessed educational age.

RESOLVED

That the presentation slides be emailed to Members of the Corporate Parenting Sub-Group.

16 V4C (VOICES 4 CHOICES) - QUARTERLY REPORT (JUNE - AUGUST 2017)

Consideration was given to a report by John Herbert (Youth Development Supervisor), which provided an update on the work of the V4C (Voice for Choices), Lincolnshire's Children in Care Council.

The presentation of the Children in Care Council advised that Members of V4C had delivered a fun-filled workshop to Children's Services staff who had attended the

Professional Judgement Conference on Wednesday, 2 August 2017 at Bishop Grosseteste University. V4C Members worked together to plan and prepare the session; and make decisions on the message that they would like to share with professionals about working with Looked After Children. The Sub-Group was advised that the workshop was enjoyable for all who had attended.

It was noted that all young people in care had been sent a pack containing information on V4C. The future meeting dates of V4C were detailed on page 30 of the agenda pack, and Members of the Sub-Group were advised that they were welcome to attend any of the meetings. It was advised that the majority of meeting dates were either held on a Saturday or during half terms to make them more accessible for young people.

It was noted that Big Conversation 14 was due to be held in October 2017 half term and details of the event were detailed on page 29 of the agenda pack.

RESOLVED

- (1) That support be given to Big Conversation 14.
- (2) That the Senior Scrutiny Officer be requested to email Members of the Corporate Parenting Sub-Group; Children and Young People Scrutiny Committee; and visiting members seeking volunteers to attend Big Conversation 14 and V4C Meetings.

17 ROLE OF VISITING MEMBERS

The Sub-Group received a presentation from Janice Spencer (Assistant Director of Children's Safeguarding), which provided an overview of the Elected and Visiting Members Roles and Responsibilities.

The presentation slides covered the following areas: -

- What is Safeguarding;
- Role of the Lead Member;
- Role of the Elected Members;
- The role of Visiting Members;
- Requirements;
- Visit frequency.

The Sub-Group was provided with an opportunity to ask questions, where the following points were noted: -

- It was reiterated that elected members had a leading role in ensuring that Lincolnshire County Council acted effectively to safeguard children and young people and to take positive action to ensure the best possible outcomes for children and young people. It was highlighted that should a member of the public raise a safeguarding concern with an elected member, this should be referred to an officer immediately so the appropriate steps could be followed;

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- Visiting members were outside the line management of a home and the residents could meet visiting members privately; visiting members had the welfare of residents as their paramount concern. All visiting members were required to have an enhanced DBS. The process for obtaining a DBS was discussed;
- The regulations required the visiting members, after undertaking a visit, to prepare a report on the conduct of the homes and to send a copy of that report to the Senior Scrutiny Officer. Reports were shared with the Assistant Director of Children's Services and the Children's Services Manager. Visiting members would receive a written response to their report and all visits were logged and reported to the Corporate Parenting Sub Group at each meeting.

RESOLVED

That the presentation slides be emailed to Members of the Corporate Parenting Sub-Group.

18 INDEPENDENT VISITING SERVICE

The Sub-Group received a presentation from Carolyn Knight (Quality and Standards Manager), which provided an overview of the Independent Visiting Service (Regulation 44).

The presentation slides covered the following areas: -

- Children's Homes Regulations 2015, Part 6 - Monitoring and Reviewing Children's Homes (Regulation 43);
- Regulation 44 Report;
- Collaboration with the elected members.

An example of a Regulation 44 Report was circulated at the meeting to enable Members of the Sub-Group to gain an understanding on the process of the Independent Visiting Service. It was noted that the Regulation 44 report should address nine standards: quality and purpose of care; children's views, wishes and feeling; education; enjoyment and achievement; health and wellbeing; positive relationship; protection of children; leadership and management; and care planning.

The Sub-Group was provided with an opportunity to ask questions, where the following points were noted: -

- The independent person's report could recommend actions that the registered person may take in relation to the home and timescales within which the registered person must consider whether or not to take those actions; and
- Looked after Children were encouraged to participate in the National Citizen Service, which was a 2-4 week programme, which aims to develop skills that employers increasingly value: confidence, leadership and independence. Looked after Children were also encouraged to access other community resources.

RESOLVED

That the presentation slides be emailed to Members of the Corporate Parenting Sub-Group.

19 BARNARDO'S LEAVING CARE SERVICE

The Sub-Group received a presentation from Kerry Mitchell (Assistant Director of Barnardo's) and Annie Fletcher (Children's Services Manager, Barnardo's), which provided an overview of the Barnardo's Lincolnshire Leaving Care Service.

The presentation slides covered the following areas: -

- Organisational chart;
- Profile of care leavers;
- Planning Transition to Adulthood for Care Leavers;
- Multi-Agency Pathway Planning;
- Dimensions of the Pathway Plan;
- Employment, Education and Training Target 65% and Activity;
- Work Preparation Programme Outcomes;
- Apprenticeship Scheme;
- Suitably Accommodated Target 80%; and
- Types of Accommodation.

The Sub-Group was provided with an opportunity to ask questions, where the following points were noted: -

- The Sub-Group sought clarification on the types of accommodation and how this information was coded. For example, it was advised that 'No fixed abode' could mean that the young person was staying with friends but not consistently at any one address;
- The Showmen's Guild of Great Britain was suggested as a useful contact, should the service need to locate a young person who formed part of a fair;
- The importance of planning a transition to adulthood for care leavers was discussed and the ways in which this was undertaken were discussed. It was recognised that the pathway plan of each young person would develop in response to their needs;
- The Care Leavers Apprenticeship Scheme had now been in place for a period of 10 years, with 42 young people completing their apprenticeships. The Sub-Group expressed their disappointment at the change nationally in the entry requirements for apprenticeship schemes, which had introduced a requirement for Maths and English GCSEs A*-C. To help address this issue, Barnardo's was working with young people in providing educational support to help them achieve the required qualifications;
- The way in which care leavers were allocated to apprenticeships was discussed;

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- The benefits of work experience placements were highlighted to the Sub-Group, where it was recognised that these were a good way of gaining work experience, prior to starting an apprenticeship.

RESOLVED

That the presentation slides be emailed to Members of the Corporate Parenting Sub-Group.

20 VISITING MEMBERS QUARTERLY REPORT

An updated version of the visiting members' log of quarterly visits to Children's Homes April 2017 to March 2018 was received and comments made during consideration of this log included the following: -

- the visit to the Beacon, Grantham was scheduled to take place 22 September 2017; and
- the visit to 33 Northolme, Gainsborough was scheduled to take place during the week commencing 25 September 2017.

The Senior Scrutiny Officer was requested to remind all visiting members to complete their quarter two visits by the end of September 2017. Visits for quarter three could be carried out from October 2017 onwards.

RESOLVED

That the Senior Scrutiny Officer be requested to remind all visiting members to complete their quarter two visits by the end of September 2017.

21 PERFORMANCE - QUARTER 1 EXCEPTIONS REPORT (APRIL - JUNE 2017)

Consideration was given to the performance indicators relevant to the work of the Corporate Parenting Sub-Group, and some of the points raised during discussion of the information contained within the report included the following: -

- There had been a rise in the number of Looked after Children per 10,000 under 18s over the last two quarters. The senior management team was undertaking a number of strategies to understand the cause of the increase. Further to this, it was noted that Lincolnshire remained below the national average;
- The performance for the percentage of Looked after Children cases which were reviewed within required timescales was lower than expected, which was mainly owing to the change to a workflow system which had introduced a significant shift in the working practice around Look after Children. A significant amount of work was being undertaken to ensure that performance would be accurately reflected in quarter two's performance report;

- The percentage of Looked after Children with an up to date dental check – there continued to be a number of young people who declined to engage with dental health services. Workers were continuing to encourage those young people to engage with this service;
- The percentage of Looked after Children with an up to date routine immunisations – the percentage was lower than expected owing to a number of challenges with the new workflow system. Managers were taking robust action to ensure that it was regularly reviewed and any issues were addressed.

The Sub-Group explored the issues with the implementation of the new workflow system and received assurances that the Managers were taking action to address any identified issues.

RESOLVED

That the performance information presented be noted.

22 CORPORATE PARENTING SUB-GROUP WORK PROGRAMME 2017/18

Consideration was given to a report by Tracy Johnson (Senior Scrutiny officer), which invited the Corporate Parenting Sub-Group to discuss and agree its work programme for 2017.

It was suggested that a letter of thanks be sent to Katerina Hardy (Children in Care Council) recognising her contribution at the meeting and inviting her to attend future meetings of the Sub-Group.

RESOLVED

- (1) That the Corporate Parenting Sub-Group's work programme for 2017 be approved.
- (2) That a letter of thanks be sent to Katerina Hardy (Children in Care Council) recognising her contribution at the meeting and inviting her to attend future meetings of the Sub-Group.

23 FUTURE MEETING DATES

RESOLVED

That future meetings of the Corporate Parenting Sub-Group be held on the following dates and times: -

- 15 March 2018 at 10.00 am;
- 14 June 2018 at 10.00 am;
- 20 September 2018 at 10.00 am; and
- 6 December 2018 at 10.00 am.

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The meeting closed at 12.35 pm.

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