

Contact Officer: Leigh Webb

KIRKLEES COUNCIL

CORPORATE PARENTING BOARD

Tuesday 3rd November 2020

Present: Councillor Viv Kendrick (Chair)
Councillor John Lawson
Councillor Carole Pattison
Councillor Richard Smith
Councillor Andrew Marchington (Ex officio)
Julie Bragg, Head of Corporate Parenting
Tom Brailsford, Service Director (Resource, Improvement and Partnerships)
Stewart Horn, Head of Joint Commissioning - Children and Families
Barry Lockwood, Kirklees Fostering Network
Janet Tolley, Virtual School Head Teacher

In attendance: Anna Gledhill, Service Manager Quality Assurance & Social Work Practice Lead
Mel Tiernan, Team Manager – Kirklees Looked After Children Independent Service

Apologies: Councillor Karen Allison
Gill Addy
Colleen Kenworthy
Sara Miles
Jo-Anne Sanders
Ophelia Rix
Christine Carmichael

1 Membership of the Board/Apologies

The Chair welcomed Board Members. Apologies had been received from Councillor Karen Allison, Gill Addy, Sara Miles, Ophelia Rix, Jo-Anne Sanders, Coleen Kenworthy and Christine Carmichael.

2 Minutes of previous meeting

That the minutes of the last meeting, held on 30 September 2020 be approved as a correct record.

3 Interests

No interests were declared.

4 Admission of the Public

It was agreed that all agenda items would be held in public session.

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5 Deputations/Petitions

No deputations or petitions were received.

6 Public Question Time

No questions from the public were received.

7 Children's Services Highlight Report

The Board considered a report giving key highlights on Performance Monitoring data for the Children's Service up to October 2020 presented by Julie Bragg, Head of Corporate Parenting.

The report outlined performance data relating to children entering care, children in care and placement stability, looked after children reviews, visiting and missing.

It was reported that there had been an increasing trend in the number and rate of children in care from 64.0 (641 children) in Oct 19 to 68.6 (687 children) in Sep 20, albeit with a small reduction in Sep 20. The current 12-month average for Kirklees is 67.3 (674 children), above our 31 March 2019 published rate of 62.0 and the England 2019 rate of 65.0, but below our Statistical Neighbours 2019 rate of 91.6.

In response to a question from Barry Lockwood concerning dentistry, Stewart Horn gave an undertaking to look at the possibility of potentially commissioning dental services through the Clinical Commissioning Group

RESOLVED – That the report be noted.

8 Virtual School Headteacher Report 2019-20

Janet Tolley, Virtual School Head Teacher submitted a report briefing the Panel on how the Virtual School has been working during the Covid-19 pandemic

Moving forward, it was reported that the key aims and priorities of the Virtual School were as follows:

- Ensuring all children and young people in care are in an education provision that is right for them
- Ensuring all children and young people in care have a high-quality PEP, completed within timescales, that meets their needs

RESOLVED - That the report be noted.

9 Kirklees Looked After Children (Children's Rights Team) Annual Report

The Board considered an Annual Report from the Looked After Children (Children's Rights Team) setting out details of the services delivered by the Children's Rights Team during the period of 01 April 2019 to 31 March 2020.

The report included statistics showing how many children and young people have had involvement with the Children's Rights team during the reporting period; these continues to evidence an increase year on year.

RESOLVED –

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The Board noted the Annual Report.

10 **Kirklees Looked After Children Service (Children's Rights Team) Six Monthly Update Report**

The Board considered six monthly update report on the services delivered by the Kirklees Looked After Children (Children's Rights Team).

The report covered all functions undertaken by the Children's Right's team in the period between 01 April 2020 and 30 September 2020. The report highlighted the challenges /opportunities and good practice which the service has navigated due to the unprecedented Covid-19 pandemic. This included how service delivery has continued using modern technology and the positive / negatives of this for children and young people.

It was reported that the priorities for the next six months will be to:

- Develop the virtual offer for the Children in Care Council and the Care Leavers Forum groups, with a view to reinstating in person meetings when it is safe to do so.
- Explore establishing a virtual Children in Care Council and the Care Leavers Forum group for children and young people who live outside of the Kirklees district
- Work with the Child Protection and Review Unit to develop how the voice of the child is captured within the Child Protection process.
- Update literature (My Review pack) which is given to children and young people when they first come into care.
- Re-introduce the 'Rate My Review' card for children and young people to support them to provide feedback about their Looked After reviews; to assist with developing child friendly review meetings.
- To develop the current service offer to enable an Advocate to be with a child or young person when they are attending a virtual review.

RESOLVED – That the report be noted.

11 **Independent Visitor Scheme 6 Monthly Report (01 April 2020 - 30 September 2020)**

A report was submitted informing the Corporate Parenting Board about the work of the Independent Visitors Scheme during the first six months of the financial year 2019 to 2020 (April to September 2019) and plans for development of the scheme.

It was reported that At the end of September 2020, there were 34 young people who had an Independent Visitor. 23 were living in Kirklees and 11 were living in a host local authority area. There were 14 young people waiting to be matched with an Independent Visitor, of these 8 were living in host Local Authority areas.

During the past six months the Covid-19 Pandemic has affected the ability of Independent Visitor's to engage with young people as previously; however virtual methods have been utilised, together with other methods, such as volunteers sending, cards and letters, books, craft activities etc to young people.

During discussion of this item, Board Members suggested that a blended approach to meetings, offering remote or safely held in person meetings was a good way of meeting preferences.

RESOLVED -

1. The Board noted the Annual report on the Statement of Purpose for Registered Children's Homes and thanked Tom Brailsford and Laura Caunce for their contributions.
2. That an updated Statement of Purpose be submitted to a future meeting as a result of the upcoming changes referred to above.

12 Children's Services Annual Complaints Report

The Board considered a report setting out compliments and complaints regarding children's social care during the period 01 April 2019 to 31 March 2020.

With regard to compliments it was reported that there had been a 50% increase in the number of compliments registered compared to the previous year. Most compliments received were regarding the Assessment and Intervention service, which received over a 100% increase from the number of compliments received last year. However, it was reported that it is difficult to accurately determine the actual number of compliments received about Children's Social Care, because many compliments are received directly by front line staff and managers, and these are not always forwarded to the Complaints Unit for registration.

With regard to complaints, of the 328 contacts the Complaints Unit received in 2019/2020, 157 of these contacts did not proceed to the formal complaints process and were dealt with under the Early Resolution procedure. When matters are resolved in this way, the Complaints Unit agrees with the person raising the concern /complaint that informal resolution is appropriate without denying the complainant's right to use the complaints procedure.

RESOLVED – That the report be noted.

13 OFSTED and Improvement Board Update

Tom Brailsford provided a verbal update to the board and explained that steps were underway to broaden the remit of the Board to include representation from SEND, Social Care and Learning Performance. It was reported that new membership and terms of reference had been drafted and that an additional conversation with Ofsted was scheduled for 4 December.

RESOLVED- That the Update be noted.

14 Corporate Parenting Agenda Plan 2020-21

The Board considered the agenda plan of the Corporate Parenting Board for 2020/21.

RESOLVED-

That the agenda plan be noted

15 Dates of Future Meetings

The Board noted the future meeting dates:

- 13th Jan 21, 10am
- 23rd Feb 21, 10am
- 23rd March 21, 10am

