

Contact Officer: Helen Kilroy

KIRKLEES COUNCIL

CORPORATE PARENTING BOARD

Wednesday 19th June 2019

- Present: Councillor Viv Kendrick (Chair)
Gill Addy
Christine Bennett
Tom Brailsford
Steve Comb
Martin Green
Charlotte Jackson
Mel Meggs
Melanie Tiernan
Janet Tolley
- In attendance: Sarah Johal, One Adoption (West Yorkshire)
- Observers: Lucy Kirby, Fostering Advisor, Kirklees Council
- Apologies: Julie Bragg
Keith Fielding
Barry Lockwood
Ophelia Rix
Councillor Andrew Marchington

1 Membership of the Board/Apologies

The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting and apologies had been received from Ophelia Rix, Barry Lockwood, Keith Fielding, Julie Bragg and Cllr Andrew Marchington.

The Board was informed that the Chair of the Children's Scrutiny Panel, ex-officio Member on the Board, would be Cllr Andrew Marchington for the 2019/20 municipal year but as this change had been made since Council AGM in May 2019, it had to be approved by Council on the 17th July 2019.

The Board agreed to amend the Membership of the Board to include the Interim Head of Service for Safeguarding and Quality Assurance (Children) and to amend the Head of Safeguarding and Quality Assurance to Principal Social Worker. The Board noted that the Membership on the Terms of Reference would be updated to reflect these changes.

The Board noted that Martin Green, who represented the Chair of Governors, would be leaving the Council and agreed that enquiries should be made as to whether the new Chair of Governors should attend future Board meetings.

RESOLVED –

- (1) The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting and apologies had been received from Cllr Marchington, Ophelia Rix, Barry Lockwood, Keith Fielding and Julie Bragg.

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(2) The Board agreed to amend the Membership of the Board to include the Interim Head of Service for Safeguarding and Quality Assurance (Children) and to amend the Head of Safeguarding and Quality Assurance to Principal Social Worker. The Board noted that the Terms of Reference would be updated to reflect these changes.

(3) The Board noted that Martin Green, who represents the Chair of Governors, would be leaving the Council and agreed that enquiries should be made as to whether the new Chair of Governors should attend future Board meetings.

2 Interests

No interests were declared.

3 Admission of the Public

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

4 Deputations/Petitions

No deputations or petitions.

5 One Adoption West Yorkshire Annual Report

The Board considered an Annual Report from One Adoption West Yorkshire and welcomed Sarah Johal from One Adoption to the meeting.

Sarah Johal presented the report and highlighted the following key points:-

- Between April 2018 and March 2019, 229 children had a plan for adoption ratified by the 5 West Yorkshire local authorities Agency Decision Makers which was a 16% increase on last year's full year figure of 191 children;
- In Kirklees, there were currently 24 children with a plan for adoption agreed;
- 125 children currently in assessment for adoption;
- One Adoption had started a campaign regarding black and ethnic minority children to meet the needs of those children with complex levels of diversity, there will be a big emphasis on this area within the next 12 months;
- Time in care before being placed with adoptive families was reducing;
- There was a national shortage of adoptive families and in particular for sibling groups and those children with complex needs;
- Between April 2018 and March 2019, 37 children from Kirklees were matched with families at adoption panels which was an increase from 27 last year;
- In March 2019, One Adoption West Yorkshire won the 2018 Local Government Chronicles Award for working across public to public partnerships;
- One Adoption introduced peer mentoring services for peer mentors in Kirklees and 16 families had benefited from this service.

Sarah Johal advised the Board that an animation had been produced by adopted teenagers giving important key messages to social workers, teachers and adoptive parents about what had and had not helped the adopted teenagers throughout their childhood into adulthood as adopted people. The Board agreed to view the animation at the next meeting of the Corporate Parenting Board.

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Colleen Kenworthy advised the Board that a group of teenagers in foster care wanted to set up a Youth Group and the Board noted that this meant that teenagers could get support from peers in similar circumstances.

The Board acknowledged the good work of the One Adoption Panels.

Sarah Johal advised the Board that funding for the one adoption panels had been extended to the end of March 2020 and that One Adoption West Yorkshire were looking at funding beyond March 2020 and how it could be sustained in future years.

Janet Tolley advised the Board that there was a project running which was led by the Education Psychologist team in 8 schools in Kirklees to do some whole school attachment awareness training as part of the national Timpson Project. The Board was informed that this project was funded from pupil premium plus and would support all young people, with a particular focus on young people currently in care, and those who had been previously in care.

Andy Quinlan advised that there were support groups in place for Special Guardians and that they had access to the fostering support fund. Sarah Johal also confirmed that there was support to Special Guardians through Grandparents Plus.

Tom Brailsford advised the Board that he was in discussions with One Adoption regarding the level of health and wellbeing support available for looked after children.

The Board was informed that arrangements were being put into place for staff from One Adoption to be co-located within Kirklees to work alongside staff from the Children's service and that it was likely the move would take place in August 2019.

RESOLVED –

- (1) The Board noted the Annual Report from One Adoption West Yorkshire and thanked Sarah Johal from One Adoption for her contributions.
- (2) The Board agreed that an animation by adoptive teenagers giving important key messages to social workers, teachers and adoptive parents about what had and had not helped the adopted teenagers throughout their childhood into adulthood as adopted people, should be shown at the next meeting of the Corporate Parenting Board.

6 Ofsted and Improvement Board update

The Board considered a verbal update on key issues from Ofsted and the Improvement Board, presented by Steve Comb, Head of Corporate Parenting.

Steve Comb advised the Board that there had been no further Ofsted Inspections at Children's Homes since the last meeting of the Board in April.

The Board noted that a full Ofsted Inspection of Children's Services was currently underway.

RESOLVED - The Board noted the update on Ofsted and Improvement Board and thanked Steve Comb for his contributions.

7 Children's Performance Highlight Report (April 2019)

The Board considered an update giving key highlights on Performance Monitoring data for the Children's Service in April 2019, presented by Steve Comb, Head of Corporate Parenting (Sufficiency), Gill Addy (Designated Nurse for Looked after Children) and Janet Tolley (Virtual School Head Teacher).

Sanna Mahmood, Care Leavers Advocate, advised the Board that it had been really helpful having substance misuse nurses in the No 11 drop-in facility and the Board agreed that they should also visit the new drop-in facility in Dewsbury, which would open sometime in September 2019.

The Board was informed that there had been a slight dip in the number of care leavers in education, employment and training and Julie Bragg advised that following some intensive work in this area, numbers had recently increased slightly. The Board agreed to consider a future report giving an update on Educational Employment and Training and what was underway with local businesses.

The Board was informed that when events took place within Children's Homes, Ofsted were informed.

Sanna Mahmood raised a query regarding the financial authorisation levels of Personal Advisors and asked whether they could be given financial authority to sign for items such as food parcels or financial assistance on behalf of care leavers. The Board agreed that delegated authority for Personal Advisors to approve expenditure on behalf of care leavers needed to be reviewed. The Care Leavers Advocate agreed to liaise with the Heads of Corporate Parenting regarding this matter.

RESOLVED -

- (1) The Board noted the Children's Performance Highlight Report (April 2019) and thanked Steve Comb, Janet Tolley and Gill Addy for their contributions.
- (2) The Board agreed that arrangements should be made for Substance Misuse nurses from Change Grove Live to visit the new drop-in facility in Dewsbury.
- (3) That a future report be considered by the Board giving an update on Educational Employment and Training, to include an update on the work underway with local businesses.
- (4) The Board agreed that delegated authority for Personal Advisors to approve expenditure on behalf of looked after children, needed to be reviewed. The Care Leavers Advocate agreed to liaise with the Heads of Corporate Parenting regarding this matter.

8 Overview of number of children in Care

The Board considered an overview of the number of children in care (snapshot) including age profile presented by Steve Comb, Head of Corporate Parenting (Sufficiency).

In response to a question from the Board relating to whether Members could be assured that children leaving care was the right decision, Steve Comb advised that

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statutory reviews and monitoring was undertaken once children and young people returned home after leaving care. The Board was also informed that Social Workers had to present their cases to a Board to request that a child or young person should leave care and the Board would make a decision on whether the child could be returned home and this was also overseen by the courts in some cases.

The Board agreed to consider a future report on sufficiency of foster placements living outside the area, to include subset data showing the residual number of children on placement living outside the area.

Colleen Kenworthy raised the issue of support required for foster carers of birth children and agreed to liaise direct with the Head of Corporate Parenting (Sufficiency).

RESOLVED –

- (1) The Board noted the report on Number and age of Children in Care and thanked Steve Comb for his contributions.
- (2) That the Board consider a future report on sufficiency of foster placements living outside the area, to include subset data showing the residual number of children on placement living outside the area.
- (3) That the representative from the Kirklees Fostering Network would liaise with the Head of Corporate Parenting (Sufficiency) to discuss the issues in relation to the support needed for foster carers of birth children.

9 Summary of Educational outcome analysis for children and young people in care from 2018

The Board considered a report giving a summary of the educational outcomes analysis for children and young people in care from 2018 presented by Janet Tolley, Virtual School Head Teacher.

Janet Tolley confirmed that the data covered the period 31st March 2017 to 31st March 2018.

Sanna Mahmood advised the Board that a number of Council run courses could be accessed by young people at the No 11 drop-in facility, eg food hygiene.

The Board discussed concerns relating to the number of secondary school moves taking place for looked after children due to care placement changes and agreed to consider a future report outlining what action was being taken to reduce these school moves.

The Board agreed to consider the draft Head Teacher's report in December 2019.

The Board agreed to consider the wider Learning Strategy at a future meeting, with particular focus on looked after children.

RESOLVED -

- (1) The Board noted the report giving a summary of the educational outcomes analysis for children and young people in care from 2018 and thanked Janet Tolley for her contributions.

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- (2) The Board agreed to consider a future report showing the number of secondary school moves for looked after children, together with the number of placement moves and an update on what action was being taken to reduce the number of moves that take place.
- (3) That the Board consider the draft Head Teachers report in December 2019.
- (4) That the Board consider the Learning Strategy at a future meeting, with particular focus on looked after children.

10 **Statement of Purpose for Fostering Service (Annual)**

The Board considered an Annual Report on the Statement of Purpose for the Fostering Service presented by Andy Quinlan, Service Manager (Fostering) and Lucy Kirby, Fostering Advisor.

The Board was informed that each Local Authority must have a Statement of Purpose (SOP) for the Fostering Service. Andy Quinlan explained that there was a version of the Fostering Service SOP which had been developed with children for children and when finalised, this would be sent to children who had been fostered.

The Board was informed that all Managers within the Fostering Team were now permanent and that they would help to drive the service forward.

The Board noted and agreed the following:-

- That the Statement of Purpose Fostering Service brochure be circulated to Board Members for information;
- That the Young Persons draft version of the Fostering Service Statement of Purpose be circulated to Board Members for comment;
- To receive details of future Foster Carer Recruitment events;
- That Foster Carers should have access to a wide range of services and that Benefit Advisors, CAMHS representatives and employment agencies should attend future recruitment events to provide advice to current and new Foster Carers;
- That Foster Carers should have access to the employee health care services, including advice on immunisations for carers and family members;
- That events be arranged for existing foster carers to raise awareness of what support was available;
- There had been a 30% increase in enquiries regarding fostering since this quarter last year.

Sanna Mahmood advised the Board that her story of her experiences of being in care had been in the Yorkshire post and that the article had been nominated for the Examiner Community Award. The Board congratulated Sanna Mahmood on getting her degree which was a First in Health and Community Development. Sanna Mahmood thanked Kirklees for giving her the work placement.

Colleen Kenworthy raised concerns relating to when foster carers could no longer support a young person at the age of 18 and that it could be detrimental to their future. The Board agreed that more support should be given to staying put carers.

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The Board agreed to consider a future report on the impact of staying put on foster carers, to include learning from what was being carried out in other local authorities.

The Board noted that every care leaver now had access to the KAL card and that the Council would shortly be providing free bus passes for care leavers. The Board was informed that arrangements were being finalised to provide free driving lessons for care leavers.

RESOLVED -

- (1) The Board noted the Annual report on the Statement of Purpose for the Fostering Service and thanked Andy Quinlan for his contributions.
- (2) That the Statement of Purpose Fostering Service brochure be circulated to Board Members for information.
- (3) That the Young Persons draft version of the Fostering Service Statement of Purpose be circulated to Board Members for comment.
- (4) The Board agreed to receive details of future Foster Carer Recruitment events.
- (5) The Board agreed that Foster Carers should have access to a wide range of services and that Benefit Advisors, CAMHS representatives and employment agencies should attend future recruitment events to provide advice to current and new Foster Carers.
- (6) That Foster Carers should have access to the employee health care services, including advice on immunisations for carers and family members.
- (7) That events be arranged for existing foster carers to raise awareness of what support was available.
- (8) That the Board consider a future report on the impact of Staying Put on foster carers, to include learning from what was being done in other local authorities.

11 Corporate Parenting Board - Areas for Board Members to Champion and Corporate Parenting Board Agenda Plan 2019/20

The Board considered areas for Board Members to champion and the agenda plan for the 2019/20 municipal year.

The Board Members agreed to sign interact with other services and partners to challenge the role of the Council as a Corporate Parent and report back to the Board, as follows:-

- Planning – Cllr John Lawson
- Preventative work – Family and Conference Team – Cllr John Lawson
- Cabinet Members – Cllr Viv Kendrick to speak to Cabinet colleagues
- Accommodation for all young people as well as care leavers – Cllr Karen Allison
- Criminal Justice System (Youth Offending Team) – Cllr Richard Smith

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- Leaving Care – Sanna Mahmood
- Social work teams, management Styles and health and wellbeing – Sanna Mahmood
- Fostering and Adoption and sustainability of recruitment – Cllr Fazila Loonat
- Health and Wellbeing of looked after children and foster carers – Colleen Kenworthy
- KAL – Tom Brailsford and Colleen Kenworthy
- Drop-in facilities for looked after children – Janet Tolley

RESOLVED –

- (1) The Board Members agreed to interact with other services on a number of key areas to challenge the role of the Corporate Parent and voice of the child and report back to future Board meetings on progress and findings.
- (2) The Board noted that interaction with services could be in the form of a formal meeting with the service or partner, a telephone conversation or email exchange.
- (3) The Board agreed that key contact points for the respective areas to be focused on should be circulated to Members of the Board for information.
- (4) The Board noted the Agenda Plan for the 2019/20 municipal year.

12 Updates from Board Members on interaction with Services

The Board considered verbal updates from Board Members on interaction with Services.

The Chair of the Board, Cllr Kendrick, gave a summary of events, visits and meetings she had recently attended, as follows:-

- 9th May – Grandparents+ Event
- 14th May – Foster Carers Awards
- 21st May – Foster Carers Recruitment Event
- 24th May – Youth Summit
- 6th June – Kirklees Fostering Network Coffee Morning – Mirfield and phone interview with Ofsted Chief Inspector
- 7th June – Yorkshire and Humberside Children’s Lead Member Network
- 10th June – CSE Briefing for Councillors with Dr Mark Peel
- 11th June – 50 things to do before you are 5 – Launch Batley Town Hall
- 12th June – Kirklees Safeguarding Children’s Board Board
- 13th June – Short Breaks Engagement Event with parents and carers

RESOLVED –

- (1) The Board noted the updates from Board Members on interaction with services.
- (2) The Board agreed that this item be considered earlier on the agenda in future.

13 Dates of Future Meetings

The Board noted the dates of the Board meetings in the 2019/20 municipal year.

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RESOLVED - The Board noted the dates of meetings in the 2019/20 municipal year:-

- 28th August 2019, 10 am
- 23rd October 2019, 10 am
- 13th December 2019, 10 am
- 10th February 2020, 10 am
- 9th April 2020, 10 am