

Contact Officer: Tish Barker

KIRKLEES COUNCIL

CORPORATE PARENTING BOARD

Monday 15th May 2017

Present: Councillor Erin Hill (Chair)
Councillor Karen Allison
Councillor Andrew Marchington
Councillor Fazila Fadia
Councillor Gemma Wilson
Gill Ellis, Interim Strategic Director for Children & Young People
Jo-Anne Sanders, Acting Assistant Director for Learning & Skills
Anne Coyle, Service Director for Family Support & Child Protection
Martin Green, Deputy Assistant Director
Julie Mephram, Head of Corporate Parenting
Janet Tolley, Virtual School Headteacher

In attendance: Laura Counce, Residential Team Manager
Alaina McGlade, Governance & Democratic Engagement Officer

Apologies: Naz Parkar, Strategic Director – Economy & Infrastructure
Andrew Carden, Integrated Children’s Service Manager
Marion Gray, Learning & Organisational Development Manager
Steve Collins, Calderdale & Kirklees Careers
Rachel Spencer-Henshall, Director of Public Health

1 Membership of the Board/Apologies

Apologies for absence were received on behalf of Naz Parkar, Strategic Director – Economy & Infrastructure, Andrew Carden, Integrated Children’s Service Manager, Steve Collins, Calderdale & Kirklees Careers, Rachel Spencer-Henshall, Director of Public Health and Marion Gray, Learning & Organisational Development Manager.

2 Minutes of previous meeting

That the minutes of the meeting held on 24 April 2017 be approved as a correct record.

3 Interests

No interests were declared.

4 Admission of the Public

The Panel considered the question of the admission of the public and determined that all items would be considered in public.

5 Deputations/Petitions

No deputations or petitions were received.

6 Revised Terms of Reference/ Annual Report

The Board considered a report which set out the proposed amended terms of reference and the re-constitution of the Board, prior to consideration at Annual Council.

RESOLVED –

That the revised Terms of Reference be submitted to Annual Council with a recommendation for approval.

7 Service Plan Update

The Board considered a report which updated the Board on the current developments in the Corporate Parenting Service and the plans for the future of the service.

The Board was advised that service plans are reviewed and updated monthly by the service managers who report directly to the Head of Service and that all updates are fed into the improvement plan.

Julie Mepham, Head of Corporate Parenting advised that an increased number of older children/ young people (13-16 year olds) were being placed into accommodation by the service. She explained that as part of the sufficiency strategy, an edge of care service was being developed, that along with a more robust “front door” will ensure that we have the right children accommodated at the right time. It was also advised that cross service working with the Director of Place and other partners across the Council was already taking place. A needs analysis of current and projected placements is to be undertaken to inform the sufficiency strategy and plan. This plan will be presented to the Improvement Board in June, and if agreed, will then be presented to the July Corporate Parenting Board.

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She explained that the service have a current target to recruit an additional 21 carers each year for the next three years and that at that point in time, there were 20 new assessments underway. She explained that this was very positive but explained that it should be noted that not all 20 would become carers and that additionally, carers would be retiring within the financial year.

It was advised that the leaving care service had recently recruited to a number of permanent personal advisor posts and an experienced team manager post and that at the current time, 81% of plans are on the system were up to date; this was an improving figure.

Julie advised that Young Dewsbury, the drop in venue, had been going from strength to strength with 26 sessions having taken place between 27/01/2017 & 28/04/2017. It was explained that young people use the drop-in to use the public access computers, to collect food parcels, meet professionals from Housing Support Services and Careers, meet with their Personal Advisor / Social worker and to receive advice, guidance and emotional support from the team based at the provision. The refurbishment of the new drop in base under Civic 1 was envisaged to be open for business in August and it was advised that young people are involved in the project.

It was explained that the Personal Advisor service was required to be extended in 2017/18 to be legally compliant, to ensure looked after young people aged 16+ have a PA to the age of 25. Gill Ellis, Interim Strategic Director for Children & Young People advised that a summary of the change in legislation would be provided for the Board.

The report advised that performance in the Corporate Parenting Service in terms of children's plans was an improving picture with 79% of plans being in place at time of writing, however Julie advised that this has since increased to 89% and that the focus was now shifting to quality checks.

RESOLVED –

That the content of the report be noted.

8 Extension of Age Range of Virtual School

Janet Tolley, Virtual School Head Teacher advised the Board that the Virtual School currently operates from a Looked After Child's 3rd birthday through to their 16th birthday or the end of Year 11 education. She explained that this age range did not meet with all of the legal requirements placed on the service.

Janet explained that the links across the Looked After Children service and the Virtual School had been explored and it had been identified that an integrated approach across the services and age range was required.

The Board was made aware that most schools do not have their own sixth form and it had been identified that the point of transition from high school was where support was required. It was advised that recommendation 27 of the OFSTED report referred to this and to assist in meeting this recommendation, approval had been

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given to appoint to a post-16 advisor which would assist in providing this support. A strategic lead and two achievement coordinators would also be recruited to.

Janet explained that the aim was to be involved in problems sooner to avoid acting in crisis once an issue becomes apparent. She explained that three key areas contributed to higher attainment levels in relation to a Looked After Child:

- Residential Stability
- Educational Stability
- Social Worker Stability

Janet distributed a diagram that demonstrated the link between these three areas in relation to providing stability and support to Looked After Children. Gill Ellis, Interim Director for Children & Young People advised that a health component required including within the structure.

She explained that currently, not only was there was a high percentage of Looked After Children moving schools during KS3 but there was a high number that were moving more than once in Years 10 and 11. It was advised that the sufficiency strategy had been developed to enable work to take place on matching placements to need rather than placing in crisis. She explained that this was a difficult area as there is a lack of placements available nationally.

Janet explained that the aim was to start providing this support in time for the forthcoming Year 11 cohort. She also advised that the summer holidays provided a lengthy period of time without contact from schools for the children. This is a time where things can go wrong and Janet explained that a menu for engagement activities needed to be available to continue contact.

Anne Coyle, Interim Service Director for Family Support & Child Protection advised that the Board needed to have an oversight on the attainment levels for Looked After Children. It was advised that this would be included within the standing report for the Board.

RESOLVED -

That the update be received, with thanks to Janet.

9 Performance Report

The Board considered a report providing an end of year summary with an overview of all the agreed indicators that monitor performance relevant to the Corporate Parenting Board.

RESOLVED -

That the content of the report be noted, with special thanks to Sue for the hard work that has gone into developing the performance report into a format beneficial for the Board.