

Contact officer: Helen Kilroy – Tel. 01484 221000

KIRKLEES COUNCIL
CORPORATE PARENTING BOARD

Monday 22 January 2018

Present: Councillor Viv Kendrick (Chair)
Councillors Allison, Loonat
Elaine McShane, Service Director (Family Support and Child Protection)
Janet Tolley, Virtual School Headteacher
John Walsh, Service Manager (Safeguarding Services)
Martin Green, Head of Localities Officer (Children and Families)
Scott Deacon, Participation Officer
Steve Comb, Interim Head of Corporate Parenting

In attendance: Helen Kilroy, Principal Governance & Democratic Engagement Officer

Apologies: Councillors Hill, Marchington, Wilson
J Sanders, T Brailsford, S Tariq

1 Introductions and Apologies

The Board elected Cllr Viv Kendrick as Chair of the Corporate Parenting Board in the absence of Cllr Erin Hill.

The Board welcomed Steve Comb and Ophelia Rix to the meeting.

Apologies for absence were received on behalf of Councillors Hill, Marchington and Wilson and Jo-Anne Sanders, Tom Brailsford and Sal Tariq.

2 Minutes of previous meeting

That the minutes of the meeting held on 13 November 2017 be approved as a correct record.

3 Interests

No interests were declared.

4 Admission of the public

All items were considered in public session

5 Deputations/Petitions

No deputations or petitions were received.

6 Public Question Time

No questions were received.

7 Ofsted update

The Board considered a letter from Ofsted summarising the findings of the monitoring visit to Kirklees Children's Services on the 8th and 9th October 2017 and a verbal update from Elaine McShane, Service Director (Family Support and Child Protection).

Elaine McShane advised the Board that the next Ofsted Inspection of the Children's Service was due in March 2018. The Board was informed that a number of concerns had been raised by partners and social workers who had not been spoken to by Ofsted relating to their experience of the Front Door service. The Board noted that Ofsted's focus during the last inspection had focussed on different areas than what had been anticipated.

Elaine McShane informed the Board that Kirklees would need to demonstrate improvements by the next Inspection on the areas outlined within Ofsted's report. The Board was informed that the Director of Children's Service for Kirklees would be meeting with Ofsted to discuss the focus for the next inspection.

The Board acknowledged that staff within the Children's Service had been under tremendous pressure and that Kirklees was hoping to get some positive feedback from the March Ofsted Inspection that could be shared with staff. Steve Comb advised that a significant amount of good work was being undertaken with children and families.

Elaine McShane advised the Board that a Good Practice Newsletter would be shared with staff after the next meeting of the Improvement Board.

Elaine McShane updated the Board to advise that positive feedback had been received from Head Teachers on some improvements they had seen on the Front Door. The Board agreed that the positive feedback from Head Teachers should be shared with staff.

Ophelia Rix advised the Board that officers were looking at putting together a story board to share with Ofsted which would include evidence of improvements made.

Elaine McShane confirmed to the Board that a focused Action Plan had been put in place to demonstrate the action being taken to address the issues raised by Ofsted.

RESOLVED –

1. The Board noted the letter from Ofsted summarising the findings of the monitoring visit to Kirklees Children's Services on the 8 and 9 October 2017 and noted the verbal update by Elaine McShane.
2. The Board agreed that Officers would provide feedback to staff on the positive messages received from Head Teachers on improvements to Front Door and on the good work taking place with children and families.

8 Fostering Network

The Board considered a verbal update on the Fostering Network from Elaine McShane.

Elaine McShane gave an update on the Fostering Network and advised that Colleagues from Leeds had come to look at the Fostering and Placement services in Kirklees in November 2017. The Board was informed that an action plan had been developed following the visit.

The Board noted that Kirklees needed to ensure that long term support was in place to support the family carer and that a clear support package was in place including financial and practical support for foster carers. The Board agreed to consider a future report on the practical and financial support for foster carers.

The Board discussed Special Guardianship Orders and agreed that assessments should be robust to ensure that grandparents did not end up struggling financially.

Steve Comb informed the Board that recruitment of foster carers was being revisited to get positive messages out about fostering and to help children have a better life.

RESOLVED –

- 1) The Board noted the verbal report on the Fostering Network.
- 2) The Board agreed to consider a future report on financial and practical support for foster carers – date to be determined.

9 Update on Regional Adoption Work

The Board considered an update on the Regional Adoption work presented by Elaine McShane on behalf of Sal Tariq.

Elaine McShane advised the Panel that West Yorkshire One Adoption had been in place since April 2017. Elaine McShane highlighted the following key issues:-

- One Adoption had been giving careful consideration to the benefits of sibling groups and keeping children together;
- A Parents Forum have been invited to have their say in terms of contact from Social Workers;
- A Regional Adoption Family Forum was in place;
- One Adoption would be looking at post experience of parents who have had children removed and engage with those parents to ensure they receive the support available.

Elaine McShane advised that it had been recognised nationally that the number of adoptive parents had reduced and the Board agreed that children should not be in foster care longer than necessary. The Board noted that there was significant work to do in this area.

Cllr Kendrick advised the Board that the numbers of Fostering Panels had increased to weekly and that quoracy had been an issue at the Panel meetings. The Board noted that Kirklees was looking into other options to increase the number of Kirklees representatives who could sit on Foster Panels.

RESOLVED –

1) That the Board noted the update on the Regional Adoption Work.

10 Corporate Parenting Board Agenda Plan

The Board considered the Agenda Plan for the remainder of the 2017/18 Municipal year.

The Board agreed to consider future reports on the following issues:-

- Ofsted Updates to become a standard item
- Annual Report on Children's Homes (April 2018)
- CSE and Missing Provision to include work with looked after children and children at risk – date to be determined
- Foster Care Recruitment and future membership of One Adoption Foster Panels – date to be determined

RESOLVED -

1) That the Corporate Parenting Board Agenda Plan for 2017/18 be updated as agreed.

2) That the Board's Supporting Officer be authorised to liaise with attendees to address the agreed actions.

11 Dates of Future Meetings

To note future meeting dates of the Board:

- Monday 12 March 2018, 10am
- Monday 30 April 2018, 10am

RESOLVED -

That the Board noted the meeting dates for the remainder of the 2017/18 Municipal year.