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## **KIRKLEES COUNCIL**

### **CORPORATE PARENTING BOARD**

Monday 12<sup>th</sup> March 2018

**Present:** Councillor Viv Kendrick (Chair)  
Councillors Allison, Loonat  
Ophelia Rix, Head of Safeguarding and Quality Assurance  
Janet Tolley, Virtual School Head Teacher  
John Walsh, Service Manager (Safeguarding Services)  
Melanie Tiernan, Service Manager  
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  
Julie Chew, One Adoption

**Apologies:** Cllrs Hill and Watson  
T Brailsford, E Mc Shane, J Sanders

#### **1 Introductions and Apologies**

The Board welcomed Melanie Tiernan to the meeting.

Apologies for absence were received on behalf of Councillor Hill and Watson, Tom Brailsford, Elaine McShane and Jo-Anne Sanders.

#### **2 Minutes of previous meeting**

The Board considered the minutes of the meeting held on 22<sup>nd</sup> January 2018 and noted apologies from Councillor Loonat.

The Board discussed the visit from officers from Leeds Council to the Fostering and Placement Services and agreed to consider the Action Plan when it was available.

#### **RESOLVED –**

1. That the minutes of the meeting held on 22<sup>nd</sup> January 2018 be amended to record apologies from Councillor Fazila Loonat and be approved as a correct record.
2. That the Board consider the Action Plan on the Fostering and Placement services in Kirklees as soon as it was available – date to be determined.

#### **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 Overview update on One Adoption**

The Board considered a report giving an overview update on One Adoption and welcomed Julie Chew from One Adoption to the meeting.

Julie Chew highlighted the main challenges faced by One Adoption since it had started in April 2017 and the key points were as follows:-

- IT had been the biggest challenge as One Adoption had moved onto the Mosaic System and key IT training would be undertaken on the Mosaic case recording system for all staff;
- One Adoption had an adoption support team based in Kirklees;
- There were currently less adoptive families around, but more children were needing adoption;
- Information evenings were taking place and interest in adopting was on the increase;
- As soon as someone was approved for adopting they were placed on the waiting list for a child;
- One Adoption were making use of early permanence places and placing children with approved adopters;
- Some cases required a decision within 24 hours which could be outside of the fostering panels, eg decisions to make approved adopters temporary foster carers;
- Social Workers attended a monthly meeting to discuss potential children for adoption;
- There were ongoing access issues to other local authority legacy systems and problems with fire walls, but progress was being made and solutions were being found;
- One Adoption Panels – 11 Panels were set up originally, but this had reduced to 7 panels per month held in 3 locations – 2 in Huddersfield, 3 in Bradford and 2 in Leeds;
- Membership on the Adoption Panels had now settled and training for Panel Members was taking place and Panel papers were now circulated electronically;
- More applicants were currently in the middle of the adoptive process so the number of children matched should increase;
- Number of children matched with an adoption was similar to the numbers across the rest of West Yorkshire;
- One Adoption were represented at Legal Gateway meetings in Kirklees.

The Board considered the performance data relating to Kirklees Children for Quarters 1, 2 and 3 which was outlined within the report.

The Board agreed to receive the comparable adoption data for quarter 4 for West Yorkshire and the One Adoption Annual Report at a future meeting of the Board. The Board agreed to receive information regarding the 'journey of a child' both prior to and since One Adoption had been in place so that there were some clear comparators for the Board to consider.

In response to a question from the Panel regarding what difference One Adoption had made, Julie Chew advised that it was hard to evidence until a full year of data was available for analysis and could be shared with the Board.

**Resolved –**

1. That the Overview update on One Adoption be noted and that Julie Chew be thanked for attending the meeting.
2. That the Board consider a future report giving comparable data for West Yorkshire in Quarter 4.
3. That the Board consider an Annual Report on One Adoption, which should include an update on further progress and what difference One Adoption had made to children and young people – date to be determined.

**8. Ofsted update**

The Board considered a verbal update from Steve Comb, Interim Head of Corporate Parenting, on the scheduled monitoring visit by Ofsted on the 13<sup>th</sup> and 14<sup>th</sup> March 2018.

Steve Comb advised the Board that Ofsted planned to meet with a number of officers focusing on looked after children, children in care and placement with parents (children on legal orders).

The Board was advised that a focused piece of work had been undertaken by officers in Kirklees in preparation for the visit which included progress made since the monitoring visit in 2016 and data where there had been both challenges and improvements. Steve Comb advised the Board that Kirklees was hoping for some feedback from Ofsted shortly after the planned monitoring visit and that it was hoped this would include some positive messages that could be shared with staff.

Steve Comb advised the Board that Copthorne Children's Home had been closed by Ofsted following an inspection in November 2017. The Board was informed that Kirklees was in dialogue with the children's home. Steve Comb advised the Board that it was anticipated the number of looked after children at the home would be reduced from 6 to 4, but that further feedback from Ofsted was expected in the near future. Steve Comb explained that the Statement of Purpose for the Copthorne Children's home would be revised in accordance with Ofsted's recommendations.

The Board was informed that Members from the Children's Scrutiny Panel had recently visited Healds Children's Home and the Chair of the Corporate Parenting Board would be visiting the home in the near future.

In response to a question from the Panel regarding why children in Kirklees were placed back at home, Steve Comb advised that people and families changed and made progress. The Board was also informed that Courts could sometimes place a child back at home on an interim care order while further assessments took place.

In response to a question by the Panel regarding the position of the Children's Service in terms of the 2 year timeline on progress, Ophelia Rix confirmed that it was a rolling programme time plan and that the Leeds Improvement Team had come to Kirklees in 2017 which was almost a year after the initial inspection by Ofsted in 2016. Ophelia Rix further explained that progress had been made and the Service was beginning to see the change and it was important that this was shared with Ofsted.

**RESOLVED –**

1. That the Ofsted update be noted.

**9 Future shape of service and relationship with partners**

The Board agreed to defer consideration of the update on the future shape of the Children's Service and relationship with partners to a future meeting.

**RESOLVED –**

- 1) The Board agreed to defer consideration of the update on the future shape of the Children's Service and relationship with partners to a future meeting – date to be determined.

**10 Corporate Parenting Board relationship with Children in Care Council and Care Leavers Forum**

The Board considered a verbal report on the Corporate Parenting Board relationship with Children in Care Council (CCIC) and Care Leavers Forum (CL Forum) from Ophelia Rix, Head of Safeguarding and Quality Assurance.

The Board were informed that the Chairs of the CCIC and CL Forum would be attending the Board in April to give an update on progress and the Board noted that they would be invited to attend a future meeting of the CCIC and CL Forum in the near future.

Ophelia Rix circulated a paper at the meeting outlining the role of the Corporate Parenting Board and the responsibility of local authorities towards children and young people in care. The Board noted that the Board should be able to evidence and challenge what difference was being made to children and young people.

The Board discussed the Corporate Parenting Board Strategy for 2017-2019. The Board agreed to set up a Working Party to include the Chair and other Members of the Board to review and update the Strategy and consider the new draft at the Board meeting in April 2018. The Board agreed that the Strategy should be updated to demonstrate how it links with the 10 point improvement plan, to reflect Ofsted's priorities, the Children's Act and include

the 7 Corporate Parenting principles for looked after children and care leavers.

**RESOLVED –**

1. That the update on Corporate Parenting Board relationship with Children in Care Council (CCIC) and Care Leavers Forum (CL Forum) be noted.
2. That the Board consider a presentation by the Chairs of the CCIC and CL Forum at the April Board meeting.
3. That the Corporate Parenting Board Strategy be reviewed, updated and considered at the next Board meeting in April.

**11 Overview of number of children in care**

The Board considered a report giving an overview of the number of looked after children in care, presented by Steve Comb, Interim Head of Corporate Parenting.

Steve Comb highlighted the following key areas from the report:-

- The Sufficiency Strategy was being updated – sufficiency was a challenge and Kirklees wanted as many of our children and young people to be placed within the Kirklees boundary as possible;
- 'Refer a Friend' scheme was now in place which was offering £500 if an existing foster carer referred a friend and they became a foster carer;
- A review had been undertaken of the recruitment of foster carers –foster carers who were transferring to Kirklees from another local authority retained their existing fee for 2 years but after that time they would be paid the Kirklees standard rate;
- Foster Care week would be held in May 2018;
- Kirklees was building relationships with private Children's Home providers and were hoping to seek agreement that more vacancies would be allocated to Kirklees children in the first instance;
- Children in care was 669 as of Friday 9<sup>th</sup> March, measured against a population of 10,000;
- There were more children in care currently than in recent years.

**RESOLVED –**

1. That the Overview of number of children in care be noted and that Steve Comb and Julie Bragg be thanked for the report and their contributions.

**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:-

- Review of Corporate Parenting Board Strategy – April 2018;
- Preparation for SEND Inspection – Mandy Cameron to be invited to a future meeting of the Board – date to be determined;
- That the Board receive a presentation by the Chairs of the CCIC and CL Forum at the April Board meeting.

**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.
3. That the Board consider a draft agenda plan for the 2018/19 municipal year at the April meeting.

**11 Dates of Future Meetings**

To note future meeting dates of the Board during the 2017/18 municipal year:

- Monday 30 April 2018, 10am

To note the provisional dates for the 2018/19 municipal year:-

- Monday 9th July 2018, 10 am
- Monday 24<sup>th</sup> September 2018, 10 am
- Monday 19<sup>th</sup> November 2018, 10 am
- Monday 21<sup>st</sup> January 2019, 10 am
- Monday 11<sup>th</sup> March 2019, 10 am
- Monday 15<sup>th</sup> April 2019, 10 am