ITEM 4

Time commenced – 1:02pm
Time finished –2.55pm

CORPORATE PARENTING COMMITTEE
Tuesday 24 July 2018

Present: Councillor Williams (Chair)
Councillors Harwood, Hezelgrave, Harwood, Hudson and Russell

In attendance: One representative of the Children in Care Council
Pervez Akhtar – Corporate Parenting Lead Officer
Gillian Black – SOVA – Service Lead Children's Rights Service
Kelly Buswell – SOVA Area Manager (East Midlands)
Gareth Dakin - Deputy Head of Service - Children in Care
Jax Dominiczak – Democratic Services Officer
Graeme Ferguson - Headteacher of the Virtual School for Looked After Children
Emma Humphrey – Children's Participation Officer
Andrew Kaiser - Head of Specialist Services
Suanne Lim – Director of Children's Integrated Services
Hazel Lymbery – Director of Early Help and Children's Safeguarding
Heather Peet – Designated Nurse for Looked After Children
Andy Smith – Strategic Director of People Services
Trisha Thomas – Housing Advice Manager

01/18 Apologies

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Winter.

02/18 Late Items to be introduced by the Chair

There were none.

03/18 Declarations of Interest

There were none.

04/18 Minutes of the meeting held on 3 April 2018

The minutes of the meeting held on 3 April 2018 were agreed as a correct record.

05/18 Children in Care Council – Update July 2018

The Children's Participation Officer introduced one member of the Children in Care Council (CICC) who provided an update on their recent activity.

The Committee heard there had been three meetings of the Children in Care Council since the last report, in April, May and June:

i. April's meeting looked at the National Fostering Stocktake consultation

ii. May's meeting looked at the Leaving Care service and emotional wellbeing services

iii. June's meeting looked at the Concordat project, Corporate Parenting Committee, Pledge events and the feedback from the regional event on 1st June.

At the meeting of 4 April 2018, three CICC members went to the Children In Care Council meeting.

At the meeting of 1 June 2018, the group worked on their presentation for the regional meeting of Children In Care Councils.

Members gave their views on the Independent Fostering Review around:

- What is foster care for?
- What should it be for?
- What makes a good foster carer?
- How do we encourage these people to become foster carers?
- How do we match the right foster carer to the right child or young person?
- What kind of information would you want to know about your new foster carer?
- What information would you want them to know about you?
- Who are the most important people in your life?
- How do you keep in touch with them?
- Are there any people that you want to be in touch with, but are not?

The Participation Officer sent these to the national project team and the fostering team managers to share with Supervising Social Workers.

At the May meeting on 2 May 2018 six members went to the Children In Care Council meeting. The members watched the podcast they recorded with the Derby Safeguarding Children Board which is now available on the website.

The Leaving Care Manager attended the meeting. He spoke with members about the Leaving Care Service extending support until young people are 25 years old, together with the changes Derby City Council is making with the communication grant and council tax exemption. Members asked the Leaving Care Manager some questions about the Leaving Care service. The Leaving Care manager left the Local Offer consultation form for young people to share their views - the Participation

Officer recorded the views of the young people. These were shared with the Leaving Care Manager after the meeting. This consultation document was also sent out to the Virtual Members for them to send feedback to the Leaving Care Manager.

The Children In Care Commissioning Project Officer also attended the meeting to get the members' views on the emotional wellbeing service. The young people shared what they thought was good about the service, what they would like the building to be like, what they would like to change, how they would like to receive support and what good emotional health feels like. The Children In Care Commissioning Project Officer will use these views when reviewing the emotional wellbeing service. Members designed questions for a workshop they will be running at the regional event on 1 June.

A young person gave an update on the Wi-Fi at their home. The money for the Wi-Fi had been agreed and approved, but it was not yet in place. There is progress in the right direction and it is hoped that further details can be shared at a future meeting.

At the meeting of 6 June 2018, seven young people attended the Children In Care Council, including a new young person who joined after taking part in the telephone survey in April.

The Participation Officer asked for members' views on some questions linked to the Concordat work, to be passed to the Head of Specialist Services (around sanctions used in residential homes).

- What do young people feel is the right thing to do to help young people in residential homes?
- How would young people want it to be treated by agencies?
- What can young people do?

Young people talked at length about how behaviour was linked to emotions (the workshop that was delivered at the regional event), and that it is important for adults to look beyond the behaviour to the emotions behind it. Young people felt that by helping with the emotions, adults can help with the behaviour.

The young person who presented at the regional event for Children In Care Councils on 1 June 2018 gave some feedback on the presentations and workshops. Young people gave their views on the workshops topics, and the Participation Officer will pass these to the event co-ordinator.

Members gave their views on how Corporate Parenting Committee and Pledge events could be improved further and the Participation Officer shared these with the Corporate Parenting Lead and responsible councillors.

Children in Care Council members were asked if there were any specific issues they wanted to discuss this year; how teachers treat children in care and rules around sleepovers with friends were suggested.

Members were told that the Participation Officer will be leaving the Council in July and so the next meeting will be her final meeting. Members voted to move the

August event to the October half term, when the new person is in post. Members will be included in the interview panel and are developing questions for the interview.
The Participation Officer shared with members the positive comments that have been received about the welcome packs and their hard work has been recognised.

One young person went to the regional meeting of Children In Care Councils which the Children's Commissioner also went to on 1 June 2018 in Mansfield. A young person and her Leaving Care PA also attended. The member gave an excellent presentation on the Derby City Children In Care Council, telling young people in other areas about the work of the group. The member also helped run two workshops in the afternoon on behaviour linked to emotions.

On 27 June 2018 a meeting of the Residential Homes Champions was held. It was reported that very low numbers of young people in Derby City residential homes were coming to the meetings, with no young people at the last two meetings. One young person from an independent residential home placed outside of Derby came to the last meeting, joined by his key worker.

The Committee were also informed that a Participation Apprentice had joined the team on 23 April 2018, she was learning a lot about participation with children and young people and was providing good support to the Participation Officer.

The Members were also informed that the Spring - Focus On Us newsletter had been sent out electronically to foster carers and agencies in April 2018, these are sent out twice a year.
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Resolved to note the update from the Children in Care Council.

06/18 Leaving Care Service – Update – Care leavers Forum and the 'Local Offer'

The Deputy Head of Service for Children in Care presented a report on behalf of the Strategic Director of People Services. The report provided Members with an update on developments in relation to the Care Leavers forum and information on the draft Local Offer for Care Leavers as required under the Children and Social Work Act 2017.

Leaving Care Forum

Attendance at the forum remains a challenge with low numbers attending. Recruitment to a dedicated participation officer is currently in progress and is intended to address this issue.

The key themes raised by Care Leavers in visits with Personal Advisor’s (PAs) and from the forum suggest that the following issues are of key note: financial hardship, isolation, independent living skills, limited support networks and general support and advice issues.

Additionally, the Leaving Care Service is developing and implementing an activity schedule facilitated by PAs on a regular basis to promote Young Person

engagement. These sessions will be informal, but will also be used to listen to the voice of Care Leavers and form part of the wider forum structure.

The Communication Allowance is now being provided to circa 60 Care Leavers and numbers are growing rapidly. This is providing us with a central record of up to date email and telephone contacts that can then be used for the dissemination of information but also consultative purposes.

Resolved to note the report and consider the recommendations of the Care Leavers Forum.

07/18 Independent Reviewing Service – Annual Report 2017-18

A report was presented by the Deputy Head of Service - Childrens' Quality Assurance on behalf of the Strategic Director of People Services which provided Members the Independent Reviewing Service's Annual Report.

Resolved to note the report.

08/18 Children in Care – Protection from Child Sexual Exploitation

A report of the Strategic Director of People Services was presented by the Child Protection Manager which provided members with information on Children in Care – Protection from Child Sexual Exploitation.

The report aimed to provide the Committee with information on children at risk of exploitation (CSE); the impact that this had on children in care and the work being undertaken in Derby to raise awareness and safeguard children in care from exploitation.

The report stated there had been government and national recognition that children are now affected by ‘modern day risks’ and that exploitation did not recognise race, ability, disability, sexual orientation, gender or class and all children are vulnerable to exploitation. Child sexual exploitation is child abuse and is recognised as such within Derby City.

There are a number of common risk factors which affect children who are sexually exploited and these included:

- A history of abuse
- Recent bereavement or loss
- Low self- esteem and poor confidence
- Lack positive friendship or support network from the same age group
- Being in care or leaving care

The report went on to state that Derby had recognised that children are vulnerable to many forms of exploitation and as a consequence the authority had developed a Vulnerable Young People’s group which was made up of different professionals

across the local authority and health agencies. The group considered different vulnerabilities and how they impacted on children including children who are in care. This included drug misuse, missing children, young people involved in offending behaviour etc.

The Committee were further informed that 100 young people had been spoken to in the Voices in Action Group – many of whom are children in care, as well as 27 young people from the Children in Care Council. The purpose of these sessions was to obtain children's views of how to update the CSE strategy, to identify any gaps in delivery and to ensure there is purposeful child participation in the CSE strategy meetings. The report also stated that further, young people must have an active voice in the creation of the policies and strategies of the Derby Safeguarding Children Board.

In relation to this young people have suggested that they would also like to be CSE champions and this was something that was being considered. It was reported that the participation of children in strengthening the work undertaken by children social care in relation to CSE was very important and a small group has been created which includes young people to provide the best ideas of how to encourage children to participate in meetings. To date this had been very successful and a number of ideas had been shared which would be developed over the next 6 months. These included ensuring that there was useful information material to explain sexual exploitation and why adults may be worried about them. There was also an ongoing campaign in the city called 'See Something Say Something', this campaign sought to ensure that all of us take responsibility for protecting children from CSE by reporting negative and worrying behaviours to the authorities.

Resolved:

- **To note the report**
- **To approve the ongoing work related to safeguarding children in care in Derby.**

09/18 The Children's Rights Service Annual Report 2017-18

The Committee received a report of Strategic Director of People Services which provided information on The Children's Rights Service – Annual Report 2017-18. The report presented by the Service Lead of the Derby Children's Rights Services and the East Midland's SOVA Area Manager stated on 1 April 2017 advocacy and independent visitor services changed from Volunteering Matters to SOVA. The annual report at Appendix 2 provided information about how SOVA had continued to provide these services. As part of the change two of the staff moved over from Volunteering Matters to SOVA.

The report also stated that the provision of the Children's Rights Service was enshrined in legislation for looked after children through the Children Act 1989 and through related regulation and guidance. The council had a statutory duty to provide advocacy services for looked after children making complaints and to appoint independent visitors.

The Children's Rights Service in Derby was made up of three services and from the 1 April 2017 it had been delivered by SOVA, the services included;

- The Independent Visitor Service
- The Independent Advocacy Service for all children in care (Since January 2018 this has been expanded to include children who are privately fostered)
- Independent Advocacy at Child Protection Conference

Since taking over the contract for children rights service on 1st April 2017, SOVA had worked hard to develop partnerships and provide quality children's rights service. In 2017/18 SOVA have received 62 advocacy referrals, which covered a range of themes including placement issues, support for meetings/reviews and education issues. Advocacy clinics in residential centres have continued to take place on a monthly basis.

Advocacy in child protection conferences has continued to be provided and over 2017/18 73 young people were supported to participate in over 38 separate conferences.

In January 2018 SOVA agreed to provide independent advocacy to children that are privately fostered. There are a small number of children that are privately fostered.

In 2017/18 SOVA received 28 new referrals for independent visitors. There were some initial delays at the start of the year, but these have now been resolved and currently at the end of year, 38 young people have an independent visitor in place.

Resolved:

- **To note the report and progress made to date in the delivery of a Children's Rights Service**

- **To explore the feasibility of increasing the funding to for their Independent Volunteer Advocacy programme but this was to be explored taking into account current contractual procedures, procurement rules and the timelines of existing contracts**

- **To receive further updates at future meetings of the Corporate Parenting Committee**

- **To explore the feasibility of Independent Volunteer Advocates attending the following meetings: Child Sexual Exploitation, Looked After Children, Children in Need.**

10/18 Children in Care CONCORDAT

The Head of Service – Specialist Services presented a report on behalf of the Strategic Director of People Services which updated the Committee on the progress of the Children in Care CONCORDAT which was the multi -agency approach to support the behavioural needs of those children in care that would otherwise be dealt with via the youth justice system. The aim of the establishment of a multi-agency Concordat was to drive the shared vision that prevention is better than remedial or rehabilitation action for children in care who are at risk of coming into contact with the youth justice system.

The report stated that National reviews of Local Authorities had found that:

- Children in care who come to police attention may have a higher risk of being convicted as opposed to being cautioned compared to other children.
- Children in care who enter custody show greater levels of mental health need (as a group) compared to other children in custody.
- 94% of Children in care do not get in trouble with the law. However children in care in England are six times more likely to be cautioned or convicted of an offence than other children.

Nationally, it was estimated there were 400 children in care who were in custody at any one time, of which about 100 will be being held on remand. The Youth Justice Board for England and Wales cite 44 per cent of children in care in custody are from a black of minority ethnic background, which was more than one and a half times the proportion in the general population and the looked after population.

The report also stated the Concordat work completed to date had helped to form a strategic approach and shared vision by relevant partners comprising; the Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner, YOS, Children Social Care, Residential Services, Police and Health Services. The Governance for the Concordat would come from the Youth Justice Partnership Board, Corporate Parenting Committee and Children and Families and Learners Board.

Furthermore the report stated that operationally, a steering group chaired by the Deputy Police and Crime Commissioner and attended by a range of partner agencies provided a steer for this work and was underpinned by a tactical group which involved the YOS, Residential Services, Police, Health Services and the Virtual School. This group had received agreement from the steering group to develop a CONCORDAT pilot in Derby at the Sinfin care homes. This would help deliver a focused approach that can later be widened to include all Derby City Council care homes, foster carers and then private providers, as the learning was developed from the pilot to inform out approach going forward.

The tactical group had also benchmarked the impact of children in care on services, such as the number of Police calls for service, number of offences, YOS interventions and educational attendance/attainment. This allowed the tactical group to develop a performance framework to measure progress against some of the benchmark data outlined below, which covered the time period between October 2017 and March 2018. Findings included:

- 26 offences were reported (to the Police) in the 6 months
- 83% involved violence against the person or criminal damage
- There were 233 Police calls for service
- Missing children accounted for 140 calls and absent children for 41 (77.6%)
- 5 young people were involved with YOS
- 14 offences were committed in the period (convictions rather than reported)
- 13 court appearances by 3 young people
- No breaches
- 5/6 young people were on part time timetables (83.3%)
- The attendance range was 3.5%-86%
- Average attendance was 39%
- There were no exclusions.

Members were assured that they would have opportunity to feed into the CONCORDAT action plan as it is dynamic and ongoing.

Resolved:

- **To approve the on-going development of a multi-agency Concordat approach for children in care in Derby**

- **Provide a further update on the development of the Concordat at a future meeting of the Corporate Parenting Committee.**

11/18 Children in Care Open to the Youth Offending Service

The Head of Service – Speciality Services presented a report on behalf of the Strategic Director of People Services which updated Members on Children in Care Open to the Youth Offending Service and the progress made by the group of young people who are looked after children and subject to the Youth Offending Service (YOS).

The report complemented another report that was presented to the Corporate Parenting Committee, which focused on multi-agency work being devised and implemented to reduce unnecessary criminalisation of young people in care through the CONCORDAT.

Resolved to approve the on-going developments in the Youth Offending Service with regards to managing children in care and the performance data pertaining to this

12/18 Children in Care Missing Education

A report was presented by the Head Teacher of the Virtual School for Looked After Children on behalf of the Strategic Director of People Services. The report - Children in Care Missing Education informed the Committee of the number of looked after

children who are not accessing education and that these statistics are monitored on a termly basis.

In February 2018, 10 pupils were not accessing education but by July 2018 all 10 identified in February were in school and a different group of seven pupils were identified as not accessing education.

The report stated the main reasons pupils were not accessing education were: care placement changes, behaviour at school, refusal to attend school and finding appropriate SEND provision in other local authority areas.

Of the seven pupils currently not accessing education, two were due to SEND provision not having been found yet; two have had care placements moves; one due to behaviour; one school refuser; and one pupil where the school closed down. All pupils who did not have a school place are offered appropriate one to one tuition until a school place can be found.

Furthermore the report stated that Virtual School, social workers and SEN teams work very hard to ensure pupils are found appropriate education as soon as possible.

Resolved:

- **To note the number of Local Authority Children missing education**

- **To agree the appropriateness of the actions taken to date to minimise the time a pupil is without a school place.**

MINUTES END