

ITEM 4

Time commenced – 1:00pm

Time finished –2.47pm

CORPORATE PARENTING COMMITTEE

Tuesday 20 February 2018

Present: Councillor Bolton (Chair)
Councillors Care, Eldret, Harwood and Russell.

In attendance: Three representatives of the Children in Care Council
Claire Hurst – Children's Participation Officer
Suanne Lim - Service Director, Children's Integrated Services
Hazel Lymbery – Director – Specialist Services
Andy Smith- Strategic Director Children and Young People
Andrew Kaiser Head of Service - Early Help and Children's Safeguarding
Gareth Dakin – Deputy Head of Service, Children in Care
Catherine Young – Children in Care Commissioning and Placements Manager
Maria Murphy – Director of Derby Homes
Pervez Akhtar – Corporate Parenting Lead Officer
Heather Peet – Designated Nurse Looked After Children
Kelly Thompson –Named Nurse Looked After Children
Jacquelynne Dominiczak – Democratic Services Officer

22/17 Apologies

Apologies were received from Councillor Marshall, Graeme Ferguson and Annamarie Johannesson

23/17 Late Items to be Introduced by the Chair

There were none.

24/17 Declarations of Interest

There were none.

25/17 Minutes of the meeting held on 24 October 2017

The minutes of the meeting held on 24 October 2017 were agreed as a correct record.

26/17 Children in Care Council – Update February 2018

The Committee received a report of the Strategic Director of People Services on Children in Care Council (CICC) which provided the three young people representing CICC and the Children's Participation Officer with an opportunity to share what has been discussed and progressed by the CICC and the impact of their work. It also provided an opportunity for the CICC to raise any queries or issues and share any challenges that the Children in Care Council may have encountered and for the Corporate Parenting Committee to help and offer solutions.

It was reported by the Participation Officer that the CICC had met four times since the last Corporate Parenting Committee meeting, in October 2017, in November 2017, in January 2018 and participated in a Pledge event.

On 4 October 2017, nine members attended the Children in Care Council meeting which was also attended by the Fostering Manager – Recruitment and Assessment Team who asked CICC members what they would like people to know when they were thinking about becoming a foster carer and what makes a good foster carer. The Fostering Manager fed these ideas back to their team to include them in the work they do with new foster carers.

CICC Members also looked at how moves to new placements happen and what was important to them as children and young people at that time. Their ideas and views were made into an information sheet for professionals; this was shown at the October meeting of the Corporate Parenting Committee. This was sent with the CICC minutes to be sent on to managers of teams who work with children in care; for social workers, foster carers, supervising social workers and managers to think about the messages and how these can be used. It was not clear if workers in all teams have seen this yet.

CICC Members asked if young people could be involved in making a video for foster carers to give these key messages; and asked if carers could make video profiles for children and young people to see before they move. The Fostering team thought about these ideas. They decided video profiles might make it difficult to keep children safe in terms of keeping confidentiality of placements; they will continue to think about the possibility of a video to show to foster carers in their induction training. Members fed back on the Virtual School leaflet and these comments were passed to the Virtual School team and those changes were made.

On 1st November, 11 members attended the Children in Care Council meeting. The Cabinet Member for Children and Young People and Safeguarding and the Strategic Director of People Services attended. The Cabinet Member for Children and Young People and Safeguarding thanked the young person from the CICC for going to the Corporate Parenting Committee meeting and talking about the Children in Care Council.

The Cabinet Member for Children and Young People and Safeguarding Council and the Strategic Director of People Services both encouraged more members to attend the Committee meetings in the future and asked them to think about what time and days would make it easier for young people to come to the meeting. They said the

topics and an early draft of the reports could be sent to the Participation Officer to talk with the CICC members about before the meeting.

The Cabinet Member for Children and Young People and Safeguarding Council gave members the date of the next Pledge event, Tuesday 28 November, 6-7pm. Members were asked their views on what they would like from the event. The Cabinet Member for Children and Young People and Safeguarding Council explained Pledge Point 7 has been updated, after the July Pledge event, to include work experience and apprenticeships, and this has been printed as posters and pocket sized cards. Cards were given to members to take home.

A group of members met with the Participation Officer before the meeting to write a new welcome/information pack to be given when children and young people first come into care. Members looked at the draft welcome pack in groups to give comments and ideas. The pack was changed using these comments and ideas. The design officer has made some designs that will be presented to the members for their views.

On 29 November 2017, 13 members attended the meeting at the Council House and then enjoyed a Christmas meal at Cosmos. The three young people representing the CICC, together with CICC Participation Officer all reported to the Members of the Corporate Parenting Committee that they particularly enjoyed the opportunity to celebrate the achievements of the CICC at the Christmas meal.

The Participation Officer gave feedback from the Fostering Team after a visit by their Team Manager to the CICC. Fostering are making sure all their foster carers have a printed profile sheet that can be given to children and young people before they move. New foster carers going to the Fostering Panel for approval are asked to have a family book (with photos and information about themselves).

The Participation Officer shared feedback from the Deputy Head of Children In Care who informed them that social workers were reminded about sending out social worker profiles by their managers. An audit done by an external person (where they look at what is happening for a small group of children and young people in care), found that this part of the pledge was being met. There were 3 members who reported they hadn't had a profile and these names were given to Gareth as he wanted to look into the individual cases.

Two CICC members wanted to be involved with speaking to Newly Qualified Social Workers as part of their training programme and this would happen in March 2018. CICC Members who were interested in going to the Corporate Parenting Committee meetings said they would prefer meetings to be in school holidays, in the daytime. Unfortunately there were no other members who wanted, or were able to, help with the interviews for the Participation Apprentice that week. The members were given the suggested interview questions and asked for further suggestions or changes. One member suggested "What would you do if a young person shared something worrying e.g. about mental health" and suggested the right answer would be to tell someone about it. This question was used in the interviews.

On 10 January, seven members attended the Children in Care Council meeting. The Named Nurse for Children and Young People in Care came to the meeting to ask the members about the design and content of biographies for the nurses which will be sent to young people before their health assessment, and a feedback form was devised. Members gave their views and ideas, and the Named Nurse said she would take these and make changes to the forms. Changes will be shown to the members.

Two Senior Training Officers from the Children's Team to the meeting to ask members about Assessments and Care Plans. Most of the young people at the meeting had not seen their assessments or care plans. Members gave their views on how they would like to be included when social workers are writing these documents and what they would like to see included. The Senior Training Officers said they will include this information in their training with social workers around assessments and care plans.

The Participation Officer who encourages new members to join the Children In Care Council by going to team meetings, promotional and recruitment activities, training, committee meetings, and talking to social workers, team managers and Deputy Heads of Service. There are many new members who joined in 2017. Many new members have come from Independent Reviewing Officers talking to young people about it at their review meetings.

There was a leaflet to tell young people and their carers about the Children in Care Council, designed with the members. This was being given to young people, social workers and carers. A copy of this leaflet was sent to all young people (aged 10-18), with the Focus On Us newsletter in October 2017.

The Corporate Parenting Committee was informed that each residential home had a member of staff who was the champion for the Children In Care Council. As champion, it is this person's role to help and encourage young people to go to the CICC meetings. The Participation Officer meets with the champions to help them encourage the young people to come to the meetings. This was an area we still need to work on, to make sure the Children in Care Council represents our range of young people and their experiences and views. The Participation Officer and Deputy Head of Service also meet with the Head of Service for children's residential homes to talk about how to improve attendance.

There were now four Champions who support the Children In Care Council regularly. There was one new volunteer starting in 2018, with another volunteer hopefully joining later in 2018. The volunteers will carry on supporting the group in 2018 and giving excellent encouragement and support to the young people, as without their help the group could not run.

On 28 November a Pledge event took place at the Council House and six members attended. Officers gave young people an update on their pledges and how these will carry on being delivered over the next year.

Members of the Corporate Parenting Committee were further informed about a national event organised by The Office of The Children's Commissioner for England,

called the Takeover Challenge. This year the Takeover Challenge ran from Monday 20 to Friday 24 November 2017. This was a chance for young people to develop skills by working with others, problem solving, communicating with a range of people and making decisions. The day aims to give young people a chance to better understand how important decisions are made about issues that affect their community. It is also an opportunity to gain an insight into the world of work.

A number of departments throughout the Council offered opportunities to young people for a day or half day. Four young people took part in: a Stay and Play session at a Children's Centre, in the IT team at Connect Derby, in the IT department and in Public Health Commissioning.

In 2018 it would be excellent to see some similar opportunities in higher management positions, as Corporate Parents we want to encourage our children and young people to aim high.

The Members of the Corporate Parenting Committee were updated regarding staffing and were told a Participation Apprentice had started on Monday 15 January. They would support the Participation Officer in the office and at the meetings and were visiting various teams and shadowing different workers to get an understanding of the different experiences of children in care.

It has been agreed that a Mifi be bought so that the Participation Officer's laptop can connect to the internet during meetings. This will mean young people living further away can join in by an online conferencing website. This has been ordered and we are waiting for IT to confirm it has been delivered.

At the meeting a CICC representative brought it to the Committee's attention that often the reports CICC consider at their meetings were too long and used complicated words which were difficult for young people to understand.

The Participation Officer stated an audit was to be undertaken by CICC to identify the young people who are living out of the area to encourage them to attend CICC meetings. Another of the CICC representatives confirmed that that MiFi system is up and running and it will help reach young people who are placed out of Derby.

A third CICC representative reported they felt it was important that Social Workers knew what it was like to work with them from a young person's perspective. The CICC representative also stated that he felt the Children in Care Council reports were written using words that are too long for and complicated for young people to understand.

Resolved to note contents of the report and the comments made by the Children in Care Council attendees.

27/17 Leaving Care Service and Care Leavers Forum Report

The Committee received a report of the Strategic Director of People Services presented by the Deputy Head of Service - Children in Care and Leaving Care which provided an update on the Leaving Care Service and the issues that the Care Leavers Forum were raising. The report also included strategies of how the Leaving Care Service were responding to these issues and how this is helping to shape and improve the service.

The report stated at present the Care Leavers forum has no independence and is being facilitated by the service itself. The forum was currently chaired by the Deputy Head of Service for Children In Care and Leaving Care Service. Prior to this the forum was run by Personal Advisors and the Team Manager, which Forum members considered inappropriate.

Unlike the Children in Care Council, there is neither an independent facilitator nor resources available to the forum in order to ensure that the forum functions as well as it possibly could.

There were significant issues facing Care Leavers and their experiences matter and shape our service. Key themes raised by Care Leavers in visits with Personal Advisor's 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.

The Deputy Head of Service - Children in Care and Leaving Care informed Members under the current Leaver in Forum format attendance was struggling as there had been four meetings arranged, two had to be cancelled due to logistical issues and at the remaining two meetings one in October 2017 and one in January 2018 there had only been one attendee. This issue was being addressed by endeavouring to use social media and alternative ways to connect with the target audience.

Members enquired about meeting venues and whether other local Authorities had been approached to enquire how they engage with young people who had left care. The Deputy Head of Service - Children in Care and Leaving Care responded by stating that different venues for meetings were being looked at aiming to have the meetings in a more social environment to encourage attendance. Attendees needed to be approached rather than expecting them to come to us, we should go to them and be more dynamic in our approach, as the aspiration is that the Care Leavers Forum should be conducted by the Care Leavers themselves.

The Leaving Care Service Development Update element of the report informed Members that Care Leavers had identified that they can experience significant financial challenges especially when they become fully independent. This was noted in the previous report to the Corporate Parenting Committee. The report reflected that work had been undertaken to gain Care Leavers exemption from the payment of Council Tax and a report was expected to be presented to Council Cabinet in February Or March 2018. An enhanced Communication Allowance and White Goods

Package had been agreed at Chief Officer Group in December 2017 and work was currently being undertaken in these two areas to look at implementation in mid 2018.

Resolved to:

- a) **note the content of the report updating the Corporate Parenting Committee on Leaving Care Service, the issues that the Care Leavers Forum are raising and how the Leaving Care Service is responding to these issues and how this is helping to shape and improve the service**
- b) **note the issues raised by Care Leavers with regards to their finances, independence and isolation**
- c) **to note the continued challenges faced by the leaving Care Service to ensure that attendance at the forum is healthy, diverse and representative. That the forum is facilitated effectively and that current format is able to meet the needs of Derby Care Leavers**
- d) **note that a dynamic response was taken to improve the quality of consultation and participation of Care Leavers.**

28/17 Children in Care Service

The Committee received a report of the Strategic Director of People Services presented by the Deputy Head of Service - Children in Care and Leaving Care which provided an update on the Leaving Care Service and the issues that the Care Leavers Forum were raising and how the Leaving Care Service were responding to these issues and how this is helping to shape and improve the service.

The Deputy Head of Service – Children in Care and Leaving Care gave a presentation via Powerpoint which informed the Members that the OFSTED inspection in 2017 had judged the Derby City Council Children in Care and Care Leavers Service to be "Good". Furthermore it was highlighted that the CIC service had not employed any agency workers for over 12 months as part of their on going commitment to reduce the number of Social Workers Children in Care experience. Members heard there were 481 children currently looked after as at 5 February 2018 compared to 429 as of 6 February 2018 which represented a 12% increase.

Resolved to note the report.

29/17 Children and Young People Missing from Care

A report of the Strategic Director of People Services was presented to the Committee by the Head of Service – Locality 1 and 5 which updated the Committee on the progress made over Quarter 3 relating to children and young people who go missing.

The report stated that the plan to reduce incidences of children and young people going missing had been in place since May 2015 and was updated in June 2016 on the back of the annual report on missing children and young people for 2015-16. A presentation was also given to the Members to update them on the progress over Quarter 3 of 2016-17.

The presentation further stated there had been an increase in young people missing in Derby City between quarter 2 and quarter 3 from 57 to 77 an increase of 20 individuals. There had been 147 missing episodes in quarter 2 compared to 228 in quarter 3 an increase of 81 missing episodes. Furthermore the Head of Service stated that at quarter 3, 2016-17, two less young people had gone missing and there also less missing episodes by 71 in 2016-17, the vast majority of young people who went missing did so for up to 12 hours.

The presentation went onto give reasons why young people go missing and the relating statistics.

Members of the Board discussed the findings of the report and the incidences of missing episodes from Derby City Council children's homes.

Resolved to note the progress over quarter 3 relating to the children and young people who go missing.

30/17 Inspection and Monitoring of Children's Homes

The Committee received a report of the Strategic Director of People presented by the Cabinet Member for Children and Young People and Safeguarding who is also Chair of the Corporate Parenting Committee in the absence of the Head of Direct and Children in Care Services which updated the Members on the inspection outcomes and work undertaken.

The report stated Children's Homes were regulated and inspected by Ofsted as required by the Care Standards Act 2000. Inspections are based on the Children's Homes (England) Regulations 2015 and Quality Standards. Every children's home was inspected at least twice a year, receiving one full and one interim inspection.

The table included in the report detailed the dates and outcomes of the OFSTED inspections, there had to date been 12 inspections undertaken by OFSTED

Elected Members visits were also listed, three homes, Bute Walk, Shine and The Willows had been visited by Members in October 2017 and reports had been received from the visiting councillors.

The Cabinet Member for Children and Young People and Safeguarding had made an independent visit to 402 on 13 November 2017.

Each home was also visited by an independent officer every month under Regulation 44, the report detailed the recommendations made by the independent officer.

Resolved to note the report.

31/17 Update on the Implementation of Commitments regarding the Pledge for Children in Care 2017/18

A report of the Strategic Director of People Services was presented to the Committee by the Cabinet Member for Children and Young People and Safeguarding, who is also Chair of the Corporate Parenting Committee which updated the Members on the Implementation of Commitments regarding the Pledge for Children in Care 2017/18.

The Pledge was a promise made by Derby City Council to all children in their care. The Pledge was part of Derby's commitment to give children in their care the best opportunities they can have in life.

Since the launch of the new Pledge in January 2016 significant progress had been made by departments in developing, improving and embedding services for children in care.

The Corporate Parenting Committee had worked hard to ensure that the whole Council was fully committed to the Pledge. To review progress and overview the Corporate Parenting Committee had received regular updates and monitored progress of each department's commitments.

For 2017/18 it had been agreed to continue with the Pledge events. An event was held on 11 July 2017 as well as a more recent Pledge event on 28 November 2017.

The Corporate Parenting Committee will undertake further progress monitoring of the Pledge commitments throughout 2018/19.

The Chair of Corporate Parenting Committee provided a verbal update at the meeting from the 28 November 2017 event and confirmed that the Pledge had been sent to all Derby City Council staff and Derby Homes staff.

Resolved to:

- a) note the report**
- b) note the progress made by different Council departments.**

32/17 Emotional Health and Wellbeing Service – 'The Keep' Update

A report of the Strategic Director of People Services was presented to the Committee was presented to the Committee by the Children in Care (CIC) Commissioning and Placements Manager which updated the Members on the Emotional Health and Wellbeing Service – 'The Keep'.

The report informed Members the service 'The Keep' was launched on the 1 October 2016 with the aim of providing an emotional wellbeing service to children in the care of Derby City Council, those leaving care and those adopted. Additionally, the service

aimed to support children and young people who have been sexually abused but remain with birth parents and who demonstrate harmful sexual behaviour.

The service, jointly commissioned by Southern Derbyshire Clinical Commissioning Group (SDCCG) and Derby City Council, was agreed as an 18 month 'proof of concept', ending 31st March 2018.

A Service Review had been undertaken to inform commissioning decisions post March 2018 and it was been agreed in principle to extend the Proof of Concept stage until 31st December 2018 to enable a wider review considering Derbyshire-wide provision.

The report contained information on the number of referrals, where the referrals came from, the demographic of the referrals, the waiting times for an initial consultation appointment and the number of cases which had been discharged from the service as of September 2017.

Resolved to note the report.

33/17 Annual Report for Derby City Looked After Children Provision 2016/17

A report of the Strategic Director of Peoples Services was presented to the Committee by the Designated Nurse for Looked After Children and the Named Nurse – Looked After Children, the report had been compiled in partnership with the Named Nurse for Looked After Children, Designated Nurse and Designated Doctor for Looked After Children and the Medical Advisors supporting looked after children.

The report gave Members an overview of the progress, challenges, opportunities and future plans to support and improve the health and wellbeing of looked after children by Derby City Council, this included all cohorts of looked after children that Derby City Local Authority are responsible for no matter where they live.

The report also outlined the service performance and set out the priorities for the next year 2017-18.

In the presentation the Designated Nurse for Looked after Children informed the Committee Members of the following:

- Complexities of compiling the report for 2016/17
- Summary of achievements
- Challenges encountered
- Highlights of the report
- Priorities in 2017/18 for the Looked After Children health team
- Priorities in 2017/18 for the Designated Nurse

Resolved to note the report.

Late Item – Derby Homes – Children in Care Pledge Update

The report had been produced at the request of the Chair of the Corporate Parenting Committee. The report was presented by the Director of Derby Homes. Derby Homes Ltd was an Arm's Length Management Company, solely owned by Derby City Council to deliver housing management and maintenance services to Council Tenants on behalf of the Council.

The business plan and wider objectives of Derby Homes were aligned to the Council's corporate priorities. Derby Homes work in partnership with the council to meet statutory duties towards young people leaving care.

The report was broken down into two sections which covered Derby Homes commitment to providing training and employment opportunities for children in care and young people leaving care and the pathway into housing for young people leaving care.

Training and apprenticeship opportunities were detailed in the report, highlighting that Derby Homes had operated a successful apprenticeship programme since 2013 and offered opportunities in trades apprenticeships, business administration, customer service and more recently housing management.

The report stated that Derby Homes ensured that our care leaver apprentices receive support throughout their apprenticeship journey and that an Employee Development Manager met with them regularly and we ensure that they have day to day support from their mentors.

Pre-Tenancy Training

Derby Homes had been delivering training within schools aiming to improve the understanding held by young people on what living independently means, in terms of the levels of responsibility, cost and budgeting. We delivered this training through a company call MashUp who are skilled at working with young people and the experience is interactive, fun and informative.

This training had been adapted for young people leaving care and have arranged with colleagues in Derby City Council to deliver the first tailored session in early 2018.

The pre-tenancy training will link into the Housing Pathway and equip the cohort with the skills required to increase their chances of successfully transitioning to independent living.

Joint Housing Protocol for Care Leavers

Members were informed that the Joint Housing Protocol for Care Leavers was being refreshed. This protocol directed a multi-agency approach to securing accommodation for care leavers through pathway planning and joint assessments between Social Care and Derby Homes Housing Options team. The protocol aimed

to prevent care leavers becoming homeless and seeks to address the diverse accommodation needs of young people leaving care.

All Care Leavers aged 16-21 were eligible under the protocol to have an assessment of housing need and a pathway plan. Amendments to the protocol ensured care leavers are given reasonable preference within the allocations policy, and will also remove barriers to a phased transition from care to independent living by improving flexibility in tenancy start dates for care leavers. Care leavers will be able to bid for properties before their 18th Birthday, allowing a period of transition from their existing accommodation to their first tenancy.

It has been agreed that we will pilot a new initiative aimed at improving tenancy sustainability for care leavers.

Furthermore the report stated that in essence, Derby Homes wanted to allow Children's services to continue paying accommodation costs for a care leave up until their 18th birthday in their placement (foster care for example), whilst at the same time allowing a period of transition into a Derby Homes managed property. This would allow care leavers up to 3 months 'transition period'. By that we mean that they could bid and be successful for a property from 17 ³/₄ years old and spend up to 3 months 'moving in'.

Members heard that Housing Benefit would not cover the accommodation costs until the property is fully occupied. We have therefore agreed that the Housing Revenue Account will cover the rental accommodation cost for up to 3 months prior to the care leaver being fully responsible for the rent from the age of 18.

The intention was to trial this for a year, monitor the costs and evaluate the outcomes for the young people.

Resolved to note the report.

MINUTES END