

Meeting	Corporate Parenting Board
Date	18 February 2020
Present	Councillors Fitzpatrick (Vice-Chair), Cuthbertson (Chair), Heaton, Hunter, Musson, Rowley, Runciman and D Taylor

24. Declarations of Interest

At this point in the meeting, Members were invited to declare any personal or prejudicial interests they might have in relation to the business on the agenda or any other general interests they might have within the remit of the Board. None were declared.

25. Minutes

Resolved: That the minutes of the last meeting of the Corporate Parenting Board, held on 26 November 2019 be approved and then signed by the Chair as a correct record.

Members discussed the work plan and agreed to receive an update on the Placement Review at an appropriate future meeting.

The Board also considered the options available to include direct involvement of young people in care and Foster Carers and that similarly appropriate officers, individuals or partners could be invited to attend specific meetings where themes were relevant to them.

26. Public Participation

It was reported that there had been no registrations to speak under the Councils Public Participation Scheme.

27. Pathway Team Update

The Board considered a report that gave them an update of Pathway Team work in 2019.

The Pathway Manager was in attendance to give an update and he informed Members that the Pathway Team worked with young people, aged 16-25, who were previously looked after by the Local Authority. He discussed their main areas of work, as set out in the report and in answer to Members questions it was noted that:

- 2 unaccompanied asylum seeking children (UASC) had been supported in their decision to move to London.
- A range of accommodation options were available for our young people, including 4 small self-contained flats at Robinson Court.
- 6 care leavers were at Universities across the country and to support them their accommodation fees were provided along with a £2000 bursary to help with the cost of books and materials. Universities also provided support to care leavers to ensure they received all the possible help to complete their degrees.
- The taster flat offered a young person the opportunity to experience living in the community fully supported for 4 to 6 weeks and the trainer flat provided the opportunity to live in a council property for 6 months, giving a real experience of independent living. Both options had been hugely popular and successful in 2019.
- 68% of young people were engaged in education, training and employment, which was significantly better than the national average of 49%.

Members expressed their thanks to the Dean Court Hotel for hosting an excellent Christmas celebration and they thanked officers for their report.

Resolved: That the report be noted.

Reason: To keep the Board updated.

28. Placement Finding Commissioning and Support Team Update

Members considered a report that updated them on the developments and work of the Placement Finding Commissioning and Support Team.

The Service Manager was in attendance to give an update and she informed the Board that the Team were responsible for supporting and training approved Foster Carers and matching and commissioning placements. She highlighted the Council's offer and the ongoing developments. Members noted that:

- Increased learning, development and training opportunities had been made available for Foster Carers, including a dedicated course for Connected Carers.
- Links between Foster Carers and the Virtual School had improved and support was also available from the York Foster Carer Association.
- In April 2019 the annual increase of Foster Carers fees were not agreed. This was appealed by Foster Carers and following an independent review, it was agreed to pay a 2% up lift to level 1 and 2 carers in order to strengthen the recruitment strategy.

In answer to Members questions, officers confirmed that:

- Social Workers would monitor the delegated authority payment.
- The three level's linked to Foster Carer fees were banded in terms of experience, skills and knowledge.
- The additional school holiday payment had been reduced from £400 to £300.
- The long service award payment provided an incentive to retain Foster Carers. The payment was issued in instalments and started at £250, increasing every 5 years, to a maximum payment of £1000.

Member noted the ongoing work to provide safe and secure placements for our children and young people in care and they thanked officers for their update.

Resolved: That the report be noted.

Reason: To keep the Board updated.

29. Assessing Permanent Carers Team Update

Members considered a report that provided an update regarding fostering recruitment.

The Service Manager was in attendance to give an update on the developments in the last year and the aims and objectives for the year ahead and Members noted that:

- To ensure a continued awareness of fostering, various techniques and initiatives had been used throughout 2019 to provide a steady stream of information to the general public.
- Enquiries had increased in 2019, with 9 Foster Carers being approved, which was a significant improvement on previous years.
- Two companies had been appointed to lead on developing a Foster Carer recruitment campaign for 2020 and it was hoped that the campaign would see the number of 'high quality' enquires double.

In answer to Members questions, officers confirmed:

- A stall would be present at York Pride 2020.
- They would be consulting with the York Interfaith Group again to encourage people of a faith background to consider fostering.
- All enquiries received were monitored and the reasons for not proceeding were recorded.

Members discussed the future recruitment direction and noted that officers were introducing tighter timescales to respond to Foster Carer enquiries, which should result in a full assessment and a panel decision being made within 8 months.

Members thanked officers for their report.

Resolved: That the report be noted.

Reason: To keep the Board updated.

Cllr Cuthbertson, Chair

[The meeting started at 5.00 pm and finished at 6.40 pm].