

Meeting	Corporate Parenting Board
Date	4 July 2013
Present	Councillors Looker (Chair), Potter, Scott and Wiseman
Apologies	Councillors Runciman, Brooks, Cuthbertson and Funnell

1. Declarations Of Interest

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

2. Minutes

Resolved: That the minutes of the last meeting of the Corporate Parenting Board held on 2 May 2013 be approved and signed by the Chair as a correct record.

3. Public Participation

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

4. Update To Work Plan For 2013-14

It was agreed that a representative from the York Area Foster Carers Association should be invited to the next meeting of the Board on 3 October as this would coincide with discussion on the Health of Looked After Children.

Officers suggested that it would be beneficial for the Board to examine and provide an input into the strategy and process for reducing the number of Looked After Children in the city. It was agreed that, at the next meeting, officers would provide a report on the profile of Looked After Children in the city and the

proactive steps being taken to reduce numbers. Board Members asked that they received a twice yearly update on this issue.

Board Members were advised that a review of the current multi agency strategic partnership planning arrangements was underway. Officers advised that they would provide an update to the Board at the meeting in December 2013 or March 2014.

Resolved: That the above changes be made to the work plan agreed by the Board at the last meeting.

Reason: To ensure the Council's commitment to undertake its role as a responsible Corporate Parent in line with the desired outcomes in the Looked After Children's Strategy 2012-15.

5. Good And Safe Placements For Looked After Children - A Progress Report On Fostering And Adoption Activity And Outcomes In York

Members considered a report which updated the Board on York's progress through the delivery of its fostering and adoption services, in delivering good and safe placements to children who require alternative care.

The Adoption Service Manager and Fostering Service Manager were in attendance at the meeting and they presented the annual report on the Adoption Service in York for the period April 2012 to March 2013 and the Fostering Service 3 Monthly Report for Executive and Senior Management Team for the period 1 January to 31 March 2013 to the Board. They responded to queries from Members on particular issues covered by both reports.

Members noted that York's Pledge for Looked After Children and Young People was currently being reviewed and officers agreed that the Board's input in the refresh of the pledge would be of benefit.

Resolved: That the reports on the adoption and fostering services be noted.

Reason: To develop the Board's knowledge and experience of Looked after Children.

6. Children In Out Of Authority Residential Care - Quality And Surveillance

Members received a verbal update on the quality and surveillance of children in out of authority residential care.

The Assistant Director informed the Board that a Freedom of Information (FOI) request had been sent to all local authorities to find out where looked after children were placed when not placed within the local authority. York had completed and returned the proforma showing that all children were placed in at least adequate provision when in fact they were all placed in good or outstanding provision. Unfortunately this interpretation of the FOI request led a Panorama programme to portray York as performing poorly.

Officers also explained that that if someone was placed in a good/outstanding placement, it was not unusual for provision to be reassessed and downgraded. This would not necessarily necessitate moving the child out of the placement unless there was an issue of safety/safeguarding but it may lead to a decision to undertake increased surveillance.

Officers explained that although the actual monitoring was carried out by Ofsted, the local authority did undertake visits to the child/young person. Members expressed the view that there ought to be some mechanism, other than an Ofsted inspection, to ensure the accommodation was up to standard. Officers confirmed that they were responsible for monitoring provision and that reporting arrangements were in place with individual agencies.

Resolved: That the update be noted.

Reason: In order that the Board is kept informed about the quality and surveillance of children in out of authority residential care

Councillor Looker, Chair

[The meeting started at 5.30 pm and finished at 6.40 pm].