
Meeting	Corporate Parenting Board
Date	22 September 2014
Present	Councillors Looker (Chair), Runciman (Vice-Chair), Brooks, Cuthbertson and Fitzpatrick
Apologies	Councillors Funnell, Gunnell and Wiseman

7. **Declarations of Interest**

At this point in the meeting, Members were asked to declare any personal interests, not included on the Register of Interests, or any prejudicial or disclosable pecuniary interests they may have in relation to the business on the agenda or other general interests they might have had within the remit of the Board. None were declared.

8. **Minutes**

Resolved: That the minutes of the last meeting of the Corporate Parenting Board held on 30 June 2014 be approved and signed by the Chair as a correct record.

9. **Public Participation**

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

10. **Education of Looked After Children**

(i) Education of Looked After Children

Members considered a report that focused on the progress in relation to the education of looked after children.

The Virtual School Assistant Headteacher was in attendance at the meeting and went through the key issues in the report including:

- The number of students in the Virtual School

- Staffing arrangements and areas of responsibility
- The national context
- Pupil Premiums and how these were being utilised
- Personal Education Plans, including completion rates and the re-writing of the PEP document to meet the new Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND) Code of Practice
- Attendance monitoring and the work that was taking place to put systematic processes in place to collect attendance information, including investigating an Integris data storage system. It was noted that the link teacher had a role to play in ensuring that the Virtual School was aware of any attendance issues. It was also important that foster carers and social workers were aware of the best point of contact regarding such matters.
- York Looked After Children outcomes. It was noted that these statistics fluctuated year on year due to the small cohort size and pupil contextual factors. There was a focus on reading as this was a tool to also access other subjects.
- The tracking arrangements that were in place to monitor progress, including visits to schools and other placements

Members were pleased to hear of the achievements of GCSE students in the face of some very challenging circumstances. Both the Chief Executive and the Director of Children's Services, Education and Skills had written to the GCSE cohort to congratulate them on the results and to seek feedback on their school experiences.

Members gave consideration to the Virtual School Improvement Plan 2014/15. Officers gave details of the key priorities, as outlined in the plan.

(ii) Child Sexual Exploitation

Officers were asked if the Authority was aware if any Looked After Children had been sexually exploited and if the Authority was satisfied that appropriate systems were in place to address this issue.

Officers stated that York's focus on Child Sexual Exploitation from children social care and the police long predated the publication and publicity from Professor's Jay's recent report. It

was noted that there were features that set York apart from the factors that prevailed in Rotherham, but notwithstanding the differences in York, there was absolutely no complacency:

- The level of elected member interest and scrutiny remained very high and constant
- The local strategy had three key streams
 - i) Robust arrangements to ensure that awareness, identification and intervention into concerns about child sexual exploitation and child sexual abuse were in place across all agencies but particularly in the working arrangements between children social care and the police
 - ii) Utilising core and established child safeguarding arrangement including referrals to and between Children's Social Care and the police
 - iii) Building and refining the offer made to children and young people who may be at risk of child sexual exploitation locally
- The Local Authority was committed to ensuring that young people who were identified as vulnerable had a fast and open track to knowledgeable, skilled and trusted professionals, both day time and out of office hours
- The manager and staff of Wenlock Terrace children's home were fully trained in the issues of child sexual exploitation, they adhered to their own agency procedures and also to the local multi agency safeguarding guidelines from the Safeguarding Board. They maintained very good working links with the community support officers from the police, who were regular visitors to the home as friends of the residents. The Local Authority was confident that Wenlock Terrace children's home was not affected by child sexual exploitation. There was however no complacency and the ongoing dialogue would be maintained to ensure that any emergence of concern was identified and addressed.

Officers stated that the Assistant Director, Children's Specialist Services had requested that the Corporate Parenting Board be made aware that the Local Authority was confident that current and emerging arrangements would address the issue of child

sexual exploitation and child sexual abuse as its awareness and its incidence occurred.

There had been a briefing to Council Management team and to Cabinet Members. The issue had also been discussed at the recent meeting, which included the independent chair of the York Safeguarding Children's Board.

The Assistant Director, Children's Specialist Services had stated that he would be pleased to attend a future meeting to brief Members further. It was noted that the child sexual exploitation would be a major topic of consideration for the York Safeguarding Children Board. This issue had also been discussed at a scrutiny meeting and by the Gambling, Licensing and Regulatory Committee. A statement on this issue was also due to be given at the next Full Council meeting.

(iii) Accommodation for care leavers 16 to 21

A paper was tabled which detailed the accommodation arrangements for care leavers aged 16 to 21. At the request of Members, officers explained the arrangements that were made for university students outside of term time.

Resolved: That the report be noted.

Reason: To ensure that all those involved with children and young people are collaborating to consolidate the arrangements for children's education and welfare.

11. Corporate Parenting Events

Details were circulated of the corporate parenting events that were planned to take place during Autumn 2014, both regionally and nationally.

Resolved: That further details of the events, including the timings, be circulated to Members who would email their availability to attend.

Reason: To ensure appropriate representation at the events.

12. **Work Plan for 2014-15**

Consideration was given to the Board's work plan for the 2014-15 municipal year.

Resolved: That the work plan be approved subject to the following amendments:

- Remove "update from Service Manager and the Elected Members with responsibility for visiting children's homes" from the meeting scheduled for 2 February 2015 as this matter would be considered at the November meeting.
- Include on item on "Child Sexual Exploitation" on the agenda for the meeting on 24 November 2014.
- Agenda item on "Health of Looked After Children" to be included on the agenda for the meeting on 2 February 2015 rather than 24 November 2014.

Reason: To ensure that the Board has a planned programme of work in place.

Councillor Looker, Chair
[the meeting started at 5.10 pm and finished at 6.55 pm].