
MEETING	CORPORATE PARENTING BOARD
DATE	1 OCTOBER 2012
PRESENT	COUNCILLORS LOOKER (CHAIR), SCOTT, WISEMAN, BROOKS AND RUNCIMAN (VICE-CHAIR)
APOLOGIES	COUNCILLORS FUNNELL, POTTER AND CUTHBERTSON

8. DECLARATIONS OF INTERESTS

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.

Cllr Scott expressed a non prejudicial personal interest that he had attended a meeting about becoming a potential Foster Parent with his wife.

9. MINUTES

RESOLVED: That the minutes of the last meeting of the Corporate Parenting Board held on 10 July 2012 be approved and signed by the chair as a correct record.

10. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

It was reported that there had been one registration to speak under the Council's Public Participation Scheme.

Paul Kind spoke on matters within the remit of the Committee. Firstly he informed Members that he was a Foster Carer and the Chair of the Foster Association. He expressed his concerns with the YorOK Board's new Terms of Reference and that they were no longer meeting in public. He expressed concerns that decisions on Looked After Children (LAC) would be made in

private with no public scrutiny or press involvement. He felt this was a backwards step and urged the Corporate Parenting Board (CPB) to raise these issues with the YorOk Board. He also suggested that the Foster Association attends a future CPB meeting

Members thanked Mr Kind for his comments and it was suggested that the YorOk Board should be invited to a future meeting to allow the CPB to understand which Strategic Partnership they feed into.

11. ADOPTION, FOSTERING, EDUCATION OF LOOKED AFTER CHILDREN AND CARE LEAVING SERVICES

Members considered a report that focussed on a series of specific areas of interest relating to the Looked After Children's Strategy.

Officers gave an update on the annual report on the Adoption Service in York and informed Members that York had always been a high performing adoption agency that performed well in respect of placing a high percentage of children with a prospective adoptive family, usually within 12 months of the plan for adoption being agreed. Officers stated that due to York's geographical size they could not usually place York children with York adopters.

In answer to Members' questions, officers confirmed that:

- sibling group adoption was considered carefully because for some it could reawaken trauma. If siblings were separated then the adoptive families would be encouraged to have direct contact with each other.
- children who had been legally adopted were no longer the authorities responsibility.
- Any legally adopted children would become the Local Authorities responsibility where they were currently living if the adoption broke down but if they were not legally adopted they would return to our Local Authority.
- Children that were not adopted continue to live with long term foster parents.

Members thanked officers for their update and requested they receive a more detailed report at a future meeting which explains all the adoption statistics.³

Officers gave an update on the Fostering Service and stated that:

- They were inspected by Ofsted.
- Some foster carers in York offer homes to children right through to 18 years and beyond.
- they had a wide range of foster carers across the City.
- high volumes of training was given to potential foster carers and a child was always matched with a suitable carer.
- Management Teams received 3 monthly reports.
- The assessment progress for all potential foster carers was recommended via the Foster Panel.
- All foster carers had social workers to support them.

It was reported that the Service Manager for Fostering was a key member of the Council's Strategic Partnership for Looked After Children (LAC) and had led on achieving good safe placements and worked collaboratively with other key partners to promote best practice. The Strategic Partnership for LAC Committee would be reporting to the newly established Corporate Parenting Board (CPB).

In answer to some of Members questions it was confirmed that:

- A review would always take place when Foster Carers resign.
- Their resignation would go forward to the Foster Panel where questions would be asked as to why they had chosen to no longer foster.
- Any complaints made about a foster carer were taken seriously and a decision would be made by the Foster Panel as to whether they could continue to foster.

Members thanked officers for their update and agreed to invite the Foster Association to a future meeting and to maintain regular dialogue with them.¹ Members also felt it would be beneficial to invite the Chair and some young people from the 'Show Me that I Matter' panel.²

The new virtual team were present at the meeting and the virtual Headteacher confirmed they were in the very early

stages of developing an action plan to support all Looked After Children (LAC) in education. She informed Members of their current plans and development priorities, such as:

- Revising the structure and constitution of the senior leadership team to ensure that it had capacity to impact on learner outcomes.
- Developing data analysis and tracking systems to ensure that they were more robust.
- Reviewing the deployment of the specialist teacher for LAC so that schools were supported to implement targeted interventions.
- Developing and introducing learner profiles for LAC children and young people.
- Using the School Improvement partner visits to probe end of Key Stage 1 (KS1) attainment for LAC.
- Adding further data to show the performance of LAC in English and maths combined at the end of Key Stage 2 (KS2) and the percentage of LAC pupils who made 2 levels progress between KS1 and KS2.
- Collecting and analysing data about the progress of Year 3 and Year 4 LAC pupils.
- Develop analysis performance in Key Stage 4 to include a broader range of indicators to more accurately track the progress and future progression of LAC pupils.

Members thanked officers for their update and were pleased that each individual child would be tracked throughout their school years and be supported to progress and achieve.

The Pathway Team updated Members on the support they offer Looked after Children (LAC) who were moving into adulthood. Officers confirmed they were:

- creating more supported accommodation options.
- developing a more consistent approach to preparing young people for independent living by creating a programme that builds up their skills which can be used in a variety of settings.

- ensuring the sustainability of the Staying Put scheme by recruiting enough foster carers to replace those whose young people stay put.
- adopting a more structured approach to the identification of young people's skills and learning needs when they are moving to independent living, and include this in the planning process.
- ensuring there was easy access to mental health and counselling services for care leavers and young adults up to the age of 25.
- putting in place a system of exit interviews for care leavers approaching 21 years, and use this information to improve the service.
- jointly, with other agencies, create more accessible social, leisure, sport and cultural opportunities for care leavers, to equip them to enjoy living independently.
- putting in place better arrangements for the provision of health care to young people and care leavers who are no longer at school, and offer them choices in how they access health care and information.
- using the new provision at Howe Hill to build on and develop existing links with colleagues in housing, education and the voluntary sector, to increase the Education, Training and Employment options available to care leavers.

In answer to Members questions officers confirmed that the dentist situation had improved as more LAC were now registered with a dentist before they turned 18.

Members were pleased that Howe Hill Hostel and trainer flats were available to offer support to LAC moving into their own accommodation as it can be an isolated and lonely time.

Members thanked all officers for their updates and were delighted with the work that was being achieved.

RESOLVED:

- (i) That the quarterly updates be noted.
- (ii) That a more detailed report explaining all the Adoption statistics be brought to a future meeting.

- (iii) That the Foster Association be invited to a future meeting.
- (iv) That the Chair and young people from the 'Show Me That I Matter' Panel be invited to attend a future meeting.

REASON:

The Board will be able to ensure that all partners in the Strategic Partnership for Looked After Children are making good progress to address the areas for development identified in the Looked After Children's strategy 2012-15 and the Pledge to Looked After Children.

Action Required

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| Invite the Foster Carers Association to a future CPB meeting | HL |
| Invite the Chair and some young people from the 'Show me that I Matter' Panel | HL |
| Ensure a more detailed report explaining all the Adoption statistics be available a future meeting | HL |

12. 2012/13 WORK PLAN AND DATES FOR 2013 MEETINGS

Members consider the Board's 2012/13 work plan.

RESOLVED:

- (i) That the Chair and Head of Services Resources meet to consider the agenda for future meetings.
- (ii) That the YorOk Board be invited to a future meeting.
- (iii) That LAC in Education be considered at the meeting in April 2013.

REASON:

To progress the work of the Board.

Cllr Looker, Chair
[The meeting started at 5.30 pm and finished at 7.35 pm].