
Meeting	Corporate Parenting Board
Date	24 November 2014
Present	Councillors Looker (Chair), Brooks, Cuthbertson, Fitzpatrick, Funnell, Gunnell and Wiseman
Apologies	Councillors Runciman

13. 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.

14. Minutes

Resolved: That the minutes of the last meeting of the Corporate Parenting Board held on 22 September 2014 be approved and signed by the Chair as a correct record.

The Chair stated that the minutes did declare that a report on Child Sexual Exploitation and an update report on the Independent Reviewing Officer would be available at this meeting. Officers confirmed that these would be reported at a future meeting and offered to give a brief verbal update to the Board.

The Head of Service for Safeguarding discussed how officers were currently dealing with child sexual exploitation in York and how it impacted upon looked after children and young people. She explained how they worked with other organisations in York and North Yorkshire including the Police to ensure that City of York's current and emerging arrangements would address the issue of child sexual exploitation and child sexual abuse.

She informed Members of the systems that were currently in place and how imperative it was that officers had a clear understanding of the different definitions linked to child sexual exploitation. The procedures officers follow were discussed especially regarding:

- vulnerable young people sexually abused within exploitative relationships.

- abuse from a family member or from a trusted adult.
- abuse from another child/young person or from an organised group.

It was noted that officers also worked alongside the strategy and procedure models that OFSTED released.

In answer to Members questions it was confirmed that:

- the Police had moved on dramatically in this area and officers would have every confidence in their approach should a case be reported.
- the NSPCC were launching an awareness raising campaign in the New Year.
- all Primary Schools within the City were aware that the NSPCC were offering a free awareness service to all Year 5 and 6 children.
- a website called 'It's Not Ok' would be launched next year for young people to use.
- Childline was still available 24 hours a day.

The Principal Advisor gave a brief verbal update on the Independent Reviewing Officers Annual Report. He was pleased to announce that since May 2014 the authority had improved in many areas including:

- Case loads had reduced from an average of 98 to 74. This improvement had made workloads more manageable allowing the quality of work to improve.
- Looked after Children reviews had increased from 86% to 95% which was above the set target of 90%.
- Paperwork had been revised and was now fit for purpose.
- Distributions of reviews had improved from 12% to 55%

He stated that a child's participation in their review had not improved enough and was still around 40%. Officers were looking at ways to improve this figure and would be looking at best practice from other local authorities.

Members thanked officers for their updates and agreed that these subjects needed to be reported and discussed at a future meeting.

15. Public Participation

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

16. York's Guarantee to Looked After Children

Members considered a report that focussed on the work of the Show Me That I Matter Panel.

Members were informed that The Pledge that was endorsed in 2010 to Looked After Children in York had been reviewed by the Show Me That I Matter Panel. They reviewed the experience of looked after children and young people and presented a refreshed, more concise version of the key issues called York's Guarantee.

The Guarantee represents a standard of services for children, young people and care leavers from elected Members, social workers, council staff and its partners. It had been endorsed by the Cabinet Member for Education, Children and Young People and the Director of Children's Services, Education and Skills.

Members were made aware of the services the Guarantee covered:

- Good placements
- Treated with respect
- Help you keep in touch
- Have fun together
- Help you in school
- Reliable social worker
- An Independent Reviewing Officer you know
- Support you until you're an adult.

The Board found the new Guarantee to be an excellent and honest proclamation and agreed this would not have been achievable without the input of the Show Me That I Matter Panel. Members requested officers inform the Panel of their response and thank them for all their hard work.¹

Members agreed that the Guarantee needed to be promoted especially to all Councillors as their role as a Corporate Parent. Officers agreed to identify the best way to provide an induction to new and existing Members.²

In answer to Members questions, officers confirmed they would be measuring the impact of the new Guarantee and would use the performance indicators to see what difference it had made.

Resolved: That the endorsement of York's Guarantee to Looked after Children by the Cabinet Member for Education, Children and Young People and the Director of Children's Services, Education and Skills be noted.

Reason: To ensure that all those involved with children and young people are collaborating to ensure that Corporate Parenting is central to all planning and operational work of elected Members, staff and partners in accordance with the Looked After Children's Strategy 2012-15

Action Required

On behalf of the Board thank the SMTIM	HL
Panel	HL
Source the best way to promote the new	
Guarantee	

17. Corporate Parenting: Taking It To The Next Level

Members considered a report that focussed on the participation work undertaken by looked after young people, care leavers and Corporate Parents at recent regional events to reflect upon the progress of York's services for looked after children and care leavers. These events were entitled Corporate Parenting Taking it to the Next Level and a Passport to Parliament.

Members were made aware of and invited to an event taking place on 6 December 2014 in Leeds regarding Health and Wellbeing.

Members discussed the key areas that were identified at the Leaving Care event that took place in Newcastle on 8 November 2014. These issues related to gas, electricity and winter fuel costs. Officers noted that this was a concern for the whole of the North East and they would be having discussions on this issue.

In answer to Members questions officers confirmed they were developing a guide to advise care leavers of their rights and entitlements about Staying Put and upon leaving care. Officers would support young people into adulthood and if suitable would encourage them to stay with foster carers after their 18th birthday.

Members agreed that officers should receive feedback from children and young people to ensure that the Council was keeping its York's Guarantee promise. It was suggested that a questionnaire be issued to ensure all support was being achieved.

Resolved: That the feedback and key actions from elected members, young people and officers in relation to the participation in the National Children's Bureau Taking It To The Next Level and the Passport to Parliament conferences.

Reason: To ensure that all those involved with children and young people are collaborating to ensure that Corporate Parenting is central to all planning and operational work of elected members staff and partners in accordance with the Looked After Children's Strategy 2012-15.

18. Work Plan for 2014-15

Consideration was given to the Boards work plan for the 2014-15 municipal year.

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

- Members agreed to meet the Show Me That I Matter Panel on 2 February 2015 at 5pm outside of the formal meeting which would begin at 6pm

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

Cllr Looker, Chair

[The meeting started at 5.00 pm and finished at 6.50 pm].

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