

CORPORATE PARENTING PANEL
Friday 13 May 2022

Present:- Councillor Cusworth (in the Chair); Councillors Browne and Pitchley.

Apologies for absence:- Apologies were received from Bird, Castledine-Dack, Z. Collingham, Cooksey, Griffin and Yasseen.

37. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no Declarations of Interest made at the meeting.

38. EXCLUSION OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC

There was no business requiring the exclusion of the press and public.

39. MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING HELD ON 15TH FEBRUARY, 2022

Arising from Minute No. 32 (Leisure Cards for Looked After Children and Leaving Care Young People), Rebecca Wall, Sharon Sandell and Chris Siddall had attended the LAC Council meeting in order to get a better understanding from them of what they were looking for in a Leisure Card.

Work was taking place on exploring across the whole Council as to whether there were any appropriate funding resources. A report would then be submitted to the appropriate Directorate Leadership Teams for consideration.

The very minimum the young people were asking for was swimming at the community leisure centres; it was not just for the Local Authority but for the leisure centres and what they did for their communities. Through conversations with them, an offer had been made to foster carers for swimming lessons.

Pete Douglas stated that the Virtual School had been aware there was free gym membership available through the Big Sister Project for girls aged between 9-15 years (<https://www.womeninsport.org/press-release/girls-offered-free-gym-memberships-to-encourage-active-lives-as-part-of-new-big-sister-project/>). The free 6 month membership offer included unlimited use of the gym and swimming pool, a selection of group workout classes and free access to virtual classes and resources through the Places Leisure Locker App.

It was noted that the leisure centres had been invited to the Young Peoples' Festival on 22nd July to share what they could offer.

This was something that had come from the young people in Rotherham that wanted to be able to access services. All Looked After Children were

encouraged to be part of out of school activities and part of their LAC review. It was not to replace but to add value to what was already there.

All LAC, those placed within and out of the Borough had been invited to the Festival. A key part of the day would be consultation with a particular steer on emotional wellbeing and mental health.

Catherine Hall reported that there the Health footprint would change very shortly when it became the Integrated Care System covering the whole of South Yorkshire bringing more opportunity to work together and opportunities to get a better offer for our children. The aim of the Integrated Care Partnership was to reduce inequalities and predominantly our children lived within a 20 miles radius. It did not start until 1st July and not all of the statutory guidance was out as yet.

Resolved:- (1) That the minutes of the previous meeting held on 15th February, 2022, were agreed as a correct record.

(2) That an update on the Integrated Care System be submitted to the September meeting.

40. CORPORATE PARENTING PANEL TERMS OF REFERENCE

The proposed refreshed Terms of Reference were submitted for consideration which incorporated all comments received.

The Chair thanked everyone for their time and involvement in the refresh of the Terms of Reference.

Discussion ensued with the following issues raised:-

- Should the Police be represented on the Panel? It was felt that there were wider issues raised with all children in the Borough that sat with the Rotherham Safeguarding Children's Board
- Representatives of the LAC may ask for specific Directorate representation to attend meetings

Resolved:- (1) That the refreshed Corporate Parenting Panel Terms of Reference be approved.

(2) That the Reducing Unnecessary Criminalisation of Looked After Children be submitted to the June meeting together with appropriate Police representation.

41. INDEPENDENT REVIEWING SERVICE ANNUAL REPORT 2020-2021

Consideration was given to the Independent Reviewing Service (IRO) Annual Report 2020-21. The IRO annual report was a statutory requirement providing an update on the breadth of IRO activity within the year.

The report reflected the work undertaken by the IRO Service between April 2020 to March 2021 detailing key performance figures and how the Service met its stated aims and responsibilities to Looked After Children. It also included children's views on the Service that they had received and actions for the Service and wider system for the year ahead.

Discussion ensued with the following issues raised/clarified:-

Reviews

- During the pandemic, the reviews had taken place via Teams; as soon as the restrictions had lifted IROs had been back out seeing the children in their settings
- IROs were clear they did not want to review without clear information

Health

- One of the continuing key challenges was Dental. Proposed incentives were being worked on in an attempt to get young people to engage in dental care. There was also an issue with regard to signed consent should a LAC require anaesthesia as well as registration with a NHS dentist
- Rotherham Health's standards were very high and the Initial Health Assessments checks were extremely thorough

Quality and Compliance

- A Quality and Compliance form was completed before every IRO review and scale what they thought the record was like in relation to the care plan. Significant positive increase had been seen
- Need to improve the timeliness of some of the paperwork for reports to ensure within statutory compliance
- Every child in Social Care was tracked with the IRO working very closely to ensure it was shared in their care planning work

Foster Carers

- The pandemic had caused anxiety for some of the foster carers due to their age and requirement to shield. Work had taken place to make such the best decision were taken together and that the Service knew which children were in school
- A number of foster carers had resigned

Virtual School/Education

- The Virtual School welcomed the challenge from IROs
- The Virtual School did not provide home elective education. They had had children come who had been home educated and they had supported them back into mainstream education
- One of the biggest issues in secondary education was ensuring that the Personal Education Plans were of the highest quality. Head Teachers had access to them as it was their document and they signed them off. They were reminded that it was their duty to inform the Virtual School of an exclusion/considering an exclusion
- 14 of the 16 Rotherham schools would be taking up the Trauma Informed Practice training. It was hoped that the remaining 2 (unable to release staff) would be able to participate
- The Strategic Lead for Inclusion was introducing, both for primary and

secondary, inclusion panels so where a school was thinking/considering exclusion, they would be encouraged to submit the case before a panel for consideration and wider support. The panel would be made up of other Heads and a Local Authority Officer who could try and provide some help and guidance

- From September there would be a one year pilot of an outreach team for secondary schools. It would provide supportive intervention with the aim of that the one person learning would be able to spread it across the school, improving the skill set of the school and support assistance so it could meet the needs more effectively rather than escalating a child through the system

IRO Line Management

- Currently line managed by the Head of Safeguarding, Learning and Development and reports directly to the Strategic Director
- Their visibility and footprint sat within the child's recording – they were asked to record visits to children and report within the system to make sure they were visible and have line management supervision ever 4-6 weeks
- It allowed them to be the other voice in the team and worked in a very restorative way
- IROs were experienced Social Workers – “critical friend”
- They used Liquid Logic and it had to be recorded as part of the child's record

Resolved:- That the Independent Reviewing Service Annual Report 2020-21 be noted.

42. QUARTER 3 CORPORATE PARENTING PERFORMANCE

Consideration was given to the Quarter 3 2021/22 Corporate Parenting performance report which provided a summary of performance for Key Performance Indicators across the Looked After Children (LAC) Services. Appendix 1 of the report submitted provided performance on a page giving an overview of the Service's performance in comparison to the same period 2020/21 and Appendix 2 provided trend data, graphical analysis and benchmarking data against national and statistical neighbour averages where possible.

The report highlighted:-

- The number of children and young people looked after had risen (+4) to 574
- 49 children became Looked After giving a total year to date of 129 an increase of 7 to the same quarter in 2020/21
- 42 children ceased to be Looked After (151 to date) compared to 41 in 2020/21 (120 year to date). This showed a significant year to date increase (+31)
- 91.3% of all Looked After Children plans were up-to-date (-0.6%) in comparison to last year (91.9%)

- A small decrease in the number of Looked After Children in a family based setting (-0.7%)
- 124 in-house foster carer households registered at the end of the quarter in comparison to 153 (-29) continuing the reducing trend. There had been 8 approvals so far and 31 de-registrations).
- Of the 574 children and young people looked after by Rotherham, 5 were known to the Youth Offending Team
- 21 children had been adopted since April 2021 with a number still in the adoption pathway. This was a reduction of 5 from 2020/21
- The number of up-to-date dental checks had increased to 42.7% in comparison to quarter 3 last year (20.7%) and the number of up-to-date Health Assessments had increased to 83.4% (80.1% 2020/21)
- 94.7% of reviews were completed within timescales
- 98.3% of LAC had a PEPE compared to 97.9% Autumn Term 2020

Resolved:- That the Quarter 3 2021/22 performance report be noted.

43. URGENT BUSINESS

There was no urgent business to be considered.

44. DATE AND TIME OF FUTURE MEETINGS

Resolved:- That meetings for the 2022/23 Municipal Year take place on:-

Tuesday, 14th June, 2022
 13th September
 13th December
 28th March, 2023

all commencing at 4.30 p.m. in the Town Hall, Rotherham.