

CORPORATE PARENTING PANEL
Tuesday 12 December 2023

Present:- Councillor Cusworth (in the Chair); Councillors Browne, Z. Collingham and C Carter.

116. MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING HELD ON 13 NOVEMBER 2023

Resolved: - That the minutes of the previous meeting held on 13 November 2023, were agreed as a correct record.

117. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no personal interests declared.

118. EXCLUSION OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC

Minutes 121 (The Children in Care and Care Leavers Strategy 2024-2027) were exempt from the press and public. The Chair moved the following resolution:- That under Section 100(A) 4 of the Local Government Act 1972, the public be excluded from the meeting for the following items of business on the grounds that they involve the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in paragraphs 2 and 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12(A) of such Act indicated, as now amended by the Local Government (Access to Information) (Variation) Order 2006 (information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person, including the authority holding that information).

Resolved: - That members of the press and public be excluded for this items.

119. PERFORMANCE ON A PAGE- QUARTER 2

Cathryn Woodward, Performance and Business Intelligence Manager, presented the submitted report which provided a summary of performance for key indicators across the Looked After Children Services for Quarter 2 2023 to 2024. It also included a summary of Service performance in comparison to the same period in 2022 to 2023, trend data, graphical analysis and the latest benchmarking data against national and statistical neighbour averages (where possible). The following was outlined: -

- The number of children entering care was lower in comparison to the same period last year. 78 children entered this year, which was a reduction of 13.
- 79% of care plans were up to date in this quarter. The service had re-aligned the way in which plans were monitored, to ensure they were completed closer to looked after reviews to ensure a better-

quality care plan. As a result of this change, the performance measure had reduced this quarter.

- 76% of children were in a family-based placement, this was similar to last year.
- 64% of children looked after for two years or more were in a stable long-term placement. This was 1.5% higher than last year. The aim was to be at 70%.
- 7.7% of children looked after were in a stable short-term placement, this was 3.7% higher than last year.
- There were 108 fostering families, this was 12 lower than the previous year. There had been 8 approvals in this quarter and 11 de-registrations.
- There were 10 children in care that were known to the Youth Justice Service.
- There were 11 children adopted in this quarter.
- 57% of initial health assessments were completed on time, with the target being 20 days. 71% of children and young people in this cohort had up to date dental assessments.
- 91% of reviews were completed on time, with 93.4% of visits up to date. These performance measures had been impacted by staffing levels which caused instability in the service. Reassurance was provided that the service was now fully staffed.
- 98.9% of education plans were up to date, this was 3.9% better than the last quarter.
- There had been an increase in care leavers, with 322 young people leaving care. 96% of those young people were in suitable accommodation. 12 young people were in un-suitable accommodation, with 6 in custody.
- There was 101 children and young people discharged from care. 22% were moved into permanence.

Discussion ensued with the following discussed: -

- In relation to care plans, the service had changed the way in which the plans were monitored, to align this with the care plan being updated within 10 days of the looked after child (LAC) review. Before the change, this was updated within six months of a LAC review.
- Children in care often had several concurrent plans. When reviewing the IRO's, the service wanted to ensure all other plans were up to date.
- There was an older cohort of looked after children entering the service, who were near the age of leaving care.
- In relation to the 6 out of 12 children in custody, all children and young people in custody had allocated personal assistants working with them in anticipation of leaving custody. It was more challenging to maintain contact with children and young people in custody. Some of these children and young people had no history of care and were remanded into the care of the Local Authority.

- Any child or young person under the age of 18 would have the support of the virtual school in custody to ensure there was an appropriate education offer. There was a working group for education for serving headteachers, which ensured headteachers were part of the safeguarding of exploitation. This group fed into the Safeguarding Partnership Executive Group.
- There was on-site health provision at all custody sites, with a Comprehensive Health Assessment Tool (CHAT) completed within one hour of arriving in a secure estate, to establish if there could be any immediate risk of harm. This was also reviewed regularly.

120. A LOOK BACK OVER THE YEAR- JANUARY TO DECEMBER 2023

The Chair provided an update on the achievements of the Corporate Parenting Panel over the last year, between the period of January 2023 to December 2023. This provided the following high-level overview of the following activities: -

- A looked After Childrens Council Update was presented in January 2023 which provided the following update:
 - VIP Big Brother Project 2023, which was free gym memberships for 50 boys aged 11 to 15 years old.
 - VIP Sister Project 2023, which was free gym memberships for girls aged 9 to 15 years old.
 - VIP Swimming Project 2023, which was free swimming for children and young people who were looked after and leaving care, across four leisure centres aged 0 to 25 years old.
- The Looked After Children and Care Leavers Sufficiency Strategy 2023-2028.
- The Independent Reviewing Officer Service Annual Report.
- The Rotherham Fostering Service Annual Report 2021-2022.
- The Review of the Fostering Panel.
- The Performance and Business Intelligence Manager Report.
- The Independent Reviewing Officer Service Annual Report 2022-2023.
- Annual LADO report was presented which covered the period 2022- 2023.
- The One Adoption South Yorkshire Annual Report.
- The Rotherham Fostering Service Annual Report 2022-2023.

121. THE CHILDREN IN CARE AND CARE LEAVERS STRATEGY 2024-2027

The Chair advised that as the item contained restricted information and as resolved in Minute 118, the Panel would go into private session for the

consideration of this item.

The Head of Service for Looked After Children provided a high-level update on the Children in Care and Care Leavers Strategy Draft 2024-2027, which outlined the following:

- The Strategy sat alongside the Care Leavers Action Plan and the Children in Care Action Plan.
- The Corporate Parenting Principles had been revised.
- The Strategic Priorities.

122. URGENT BUSINESS

There was no urgent business to consider.

123. DATE AND TIME OF THE NEXT MEETING

Resolved: - That the next meeting be held on 23 January 2024, commencing at 4.00 p.m. to be held in the Town Hall, Moorgate Street, Rotherham.