

**CORPORATE PARENTING PANEL**  
**Tuesday, 5th February, 2019**

Present:- Councillor Watson (in the Chair); Councillors Cusworth, M. Elliott and Jarvis.

Also present were:- Ailsa Barr, Peter Douglas, Catherine Hall, Tina Hohn, Ian Walker, Rebecca Wall and Cathryn Woodward.

Members of the Looked After Children Council present were Adorabella, Angelina, Brogan Jordan, Kaylen, Kiran, Manny and Zusanne together with Lisa Duvall.

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor J. Elliot, Tracey Arnold and Jon Stonehouse.

**49.           DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

There were no Declarations of Interest made at the meeting.

**50.           MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING HELD ON 18TH DECEMBER, 2018**

Consideration was given to the minutes of the previous meeting held on 18<sup>th</sup> December, 2018.

Resolved:- That the minutes of the previous meeting held on 18<sup>th</sup> December, 2018, be approved as a correct record of proceedings.

**51.           ROTHERHAM THERAPEUTIC TEAM - ANNUAL REPORT 1ST APRIL 2017-31ST MARCH 2018**

Ian Walker, Head of Service, presented the Rotherham Therapeutic Team's annual report for 1<sup>st</sup> April, 2017 to 31<sup>st</sup> March, 2018.

The report provided performance and activity data on the Service, reports on the activity and functioning of the Therapeutic Team and detailed Service delivery that had occurred during the year and those that were planned in 2019/20.

The In-house Therapeutic Team had been developed to meet the therapeutic, mental health and emotional needs of children in care whose needs were often overlooked/misunderstood and included a Clinical Psychologist lead, 4 Therapeutic Intervention Workers as well as highly skilled and experienced workers. The Service aimed to provide a swift initial intervention in order to avoid long waiting times in accessing intervention i.e. CAMHS.

The main headlines were:-

- The Intensive Intervention Programme (IIP) had seen an increase of provision to include 5 part-time workers. The Team was also supported by up to 3 trainee Clinical Psychologists and one Social Work student and/or an Art Therapy trainee
- The Team provided Rotherham's Statutory Post-Adoption Support Service, liaised with the Adoption Team, commissioned therapy using the Adoption Support Fund and the Statutory Post Special Guardianship Order Service
- Nationally the Team worked alongside the LAC Nursing Team and the Clinical Commissioning Group to ensure that children living in different parts of the country received CAMHS and other services as appropriate
- The Team had worked with 610 cases during the reporting year 457 of which were new referrals
- There had been 211 referrals into the Service in relation to Children in Care, with 94 children additionally referred with high scoring SDQs (Strengths and Difficulties Questionnaire)
- 357 interventions had been delivered
- Over 30 Children in Care, their carers and the professionals working with them had received an intervention from the IIP. This comprised the 'higher risk' children including those who had experienced multiple placement moves, those at risk of childhood sexual abuse and/or exploitation or children and young people who had histories of complex developmental, familial trauma who needed lengthy packages of therapy
- 35 new Post-Adoption Support assessments undertaken with a further 141 families receiving ongoing support
- Dedicated worker within the Team who provided support to carers of children with an adoption plan as well as a dedicated Post Adoption support Worker who undertook assessment, provided support or, where relevant, signposted to alternative provision
- 104 successful applications made to the Adoption Support Fund for post-adoption intervention. 72 children living with 65 families had been supported through the Fund
- 117 new Special Guardian referrals had been received. The Service was actively working with 70 families
- 'Team Around the Child' approach deployed to ensure everyone was working together to keep children safe, to support education,

placement stability and security for the child

- The Service planned to:-
  - Build on the IIP as a model of best practice for the most vulnerable children
  - Roll out Fostering Service workshops on the emotional needs of children in care and best practice in supporting carers and children
  - Work with the Adoption Service to review best practice guidance when moving children onto Adoption
  - Recruitment of 2 therapists to the Team to work with eligible post-adoption and post-SGO families
  - Develop links with Edge of Care and Early Help Services
  - Consider additional therapeutic models
  - Continue to use ASF effectively to support local families
  - Work with Performance and Quality Team and Liquid Logic to make better use of performance analytics

Discussion ensued with the following issues raised/clarified;-

- It would require substantial investment for other authorities to replicate the IIP. Rotherham was unique in having this Service
- Proposed discussions to take place with Independent Fostering Agency providers as to whether Rotherham could sell/reduce the cost of a placement because of the skills being provided to their foster carers for not only the child they were currently caring for but also future children
- The management team were very keen to work with universities on IIP regarding research in providing an evidence base for it
- Dr. Sara Whittaker had met with the Virtual School and was keen to work on some of the education data that was derived from the PEPS and attendance monitoring as it was felt that IIP was having an impact on what was happening within schools
- Through the Virtual School Governing Body it was hoped to extend the range of performance measures in respect of education i.e. persistent absence, exclusions etc.
- Initially it had been young people of 13 years and above but there were now children of 8 years old in the Programme. 8 years was felt to be the right age to be able to have the ability to engage at a therapeutic level
- The Virtual School was looking at children of that age who it was thought could be children who required support and, along with the

Social Worker, which would fit the criteria for the therapeutic work

Resolved:- That the report be noted.

## **52. THE MUSLIM FOSTER CARER PROJECT**

Ian Walker, Head of Service, reported on the work taking place on the Muslim Foster Carer Project.

A Muslim Foster Carer Working Party had been established which included some of the Service's existing Muslim foster carers, Borough Councillor and the South Yorkshire Police Specialist Community Engagement Officer. However, it had since become apparent that it had resulted in limited impact.

A partnership was currently being developed with the Rotherham Muslim Community Forum (RMCF) to support the work. The Forum had also engaged with Mercy Mission UK who had a proven track record of recruiting Muslim foster carers for a number of local authorities.

It was planned that RMCF would use their strong local connections to highlight the pressing need for Muslim foster carers and to act as an initial point of contact for any expressions of interest. The initial expressions of interest would then be passed onto the Mercy Mission UK who would make an initial visit to the family in order to undertake a very broad viability assessment. Where appropriate, they would then refer the family to the Fostering Service for the full assessment to commence. The families would be supported throughout the assessment process by RMCF.

Mercy Mission UK would be seeking a monthly retainer underwrite marketing and administrative costs as well as a finder's fee for every placement payable only at the point of approval. They were reasonably confident that they could recruit up to 12 new foster carers from the Muslim community in Rotherham over the course of 2019/20.

The report detailed the financial implications of the proposal.

Resolved:- That the report be noted.

## **53. CORPORATE PARENTING PERFORMANCE DECEMBER 2018**

Consideration was given to the report presented by Cathryn Woodward, Performance and Data Officer Social Care, provided a summary of performance for key performance indicators across Looked After Children Services for December, 2018. This was read in conjunction with the accompanying performance data report at Appendix A detailing trend data, graphical analysis and benchmarking data against national and statistical neighbour averages where possible.

A Service overview and context was provided which stated that at the end of 2018 a reduction in the number of Looked After Children had started to be seen with more children leaving care and less children entering care. The reduction in some of the longer term LAC had impacted the long term placement stability figure, however, the performance for placement stability indicators remained good overall. The second phase of the Right Child Right Care project had begun in January 2019 where a new cohort of children and young people were tracked with the focus of securing long term permanent homes for them and, where appropriate, moving children out of care. Also the Lifelong Links programme of work had commenced with the aim of improving outcomes for those children who did not have a plan to live with their family or secure permanence through adoption by helping them to make lifelong links with people who were important to them.

The report also drew attention to:-

- A reduction in the number of LAC since the last meeting of the Panel to 634 – the lowest number since the beginning of the financial year. The net reduction had slightly reduced the rate of LAC per 10,000 population to 112% from a high of 115.6%. However, Rotherham was still exceptionally high in comparison to statistical neighbours
- The percentage of children who ceased to be Looked After due to permanence was at 29% for the financial year an increased on the previous 2 years of 27.9% (2016/17) and 27.3% (2017/18)
- The percentage distribution by legal status remained consistent with 53% of children subject to full Care Orders, 31% on an Interim Care Order, 10% on Placement Orders with Care Order and 5% under Section 20
- The proportion of LAC with an up-to-date care plan had declined to 86.4%, the lowest so far this year. Team managers had been directed to address the shortfalls and would be a focus at performance meetings over the coming month
- 93.8% Statutory Reviews within timescale
- 96.5% statutory visits
- Due to a number of children ceasing to be Looked After through the 'Right Child Right Care' programme, the overall number of children had reduced to 65.8%
- The number of LAC with 3 or more placement moves in the last 12 months continued to improve – at the end of December the figures was at its lowest at 11.9% of LAC experiencing multiple placement moves

- 83.9% of LAC placed in family based settings including internal fostering, independent fostering, pre-adoption placements and those placed with parent/family/friends
- Known delays in the inputting of data for both Health and Dental information. The figures reported by the LAC Health Team were higher than those recorded in local systems
- Below last year's performance of 55% of Initial Health Assessments in time with only 46.2% recorded so far this year
- Up-to-date Health Assessments was also at a low of 82.2% at the end of December from 94.4% in July
- Dental performance had reduced to 66% from 76% in August
- 97% of LAC had a PEP meeting during the 2018-19 Autumn term with 86% of them being complete and signed off by the Virtual School. Schools were actively chased for incomplete PEPs, therefore, the figure would continue to rise
- At the end of December, 94.4% eligible LAC population had a PEP
- There had been a realignment of the performance reporting for the Care Leavers cohort to reflect the requirements of legislation. Performance would now be reported on the wider cohort of young people identified as care leavers as opposed to previous classifications arising as a consequence of allocation of a Personal Advisor
- The number of young people receiving a Care Leavers service at the end of December was 294
- The proportion of care leavers in suitable accommodation remained strong and had slightly improved to 96.3%, the highest this financial year
- The number of care leavers who were in Education, Employment or Training had slightly improved to 63.6% and placed Rotherham in the top quartile
- 70.5% of LAC were in foster placements
- One new foster carer approved – 150 inhouse fostering households
- 12 new foster families approved so this financial year with a further 7 assessments ongoing hopefully given a total of 19 approvals over 2018-19

- 17 de-registrations since April with a further 3 to be considered at the January Fostering Panel
- Target set of a net increase of 15 new foster families every year over the course of the next 3 years
- 7 new assessments that would be allocated in January
- 25 children had been adopted, 28% of which were adopted within 12 months of receiving the formal decision
- 23 children had become Looked After and placed in an adoption placement within the average of 380 days as opposed to the national target of 426 days. However, the national target between receiving a Placement Order and being match with an adoptive family was 121 days. For the 25 children so far there had been an average of 214 days
- 7 further children had Court dates set for Adoption order and one had an application lodged
- 27 children were already in their adoptive placements, 12 of which were able to lodge because the children had been in place for more than 10 weeks
- 17 sets of adoptive parents had been fully approved so far this financial year with a further 7 at stage 1 and 6 at stage 2 of the recruitment process
- Average caseloads for LAC teams 1-3 were high at 15.5 and teams 4-5 was 14.4
- Recruitment within the Court and Permanence Teams was becoming increasingly challenging and were currently operating on 75% capacity

Discussion ensued with the following issues raised/highlighted:-

- If a young person decided they did not want a Health Assessment their wish had to be respected
- There was no age limit for foster carers. The reasons for deregistration varied ranging from becoming grandparents, illness, bereavement, change in financial circumstances. A number had resigned during the investigation process
- The foster carer support package was currently being revamped and would include a designated Support Worker to provide them with the support they required and an identified buddy foster carer

- Members of the Improving Lives Select Commission were to meet with Rebecca Wall to gain a better understanding of the LADO process

Resolved:- That the contents of the report and accompanying dataset (Appendix A) be received and noted.

#### 54. LOOKED AFTER COUNCIL - UPDATE

Adorabella, Angelina, Brogan Jordan, Kaylen, Kiran, Manny and Zusanne gave a powerpoint presentation on the work of the LAC Council which highlighted:-

- Pride of Rotherham Award 2018
- Young Volunteer of the Year 2018  
Kiran Meharban
- Remembrance Sunday Service and Parade 2018  
Brogan had laid the wreath
- Xmas Crafts LAC Council and Lil LAC Club
- Raising funds for LAC Council and Lil LAC Club Activities through:-  
LAC Health Assessment  
LACC NHS Consultation  
Delivering training “Total Respect” to Social Workers, corporate parents and foster carers  
Fundraising opportunities  
CIDON Construction sponsorship etc.  
Opened their own bank account
- Media Policy  
The LAC Council produced DVDs, Voice Recordings, Pictures and Photographs as part of their LAC Council Training Sessions. All of these materials were owned entirely by the members of the LAC Council. Any use of these moving images, voices, photographs or pictures etc. without explicit consent by the Rotherham LAC Council was strictly prohibited. Any requests for public viewing of LAC Council materials should be made via email to **Lisa.duvalle@rotherham.gov.uk**  
This would be added to the LACC Constitution
- “Total Respect” Training delivery by the LACC  
25<sup>th</sup> April 9.30 a.m.-4.00 p.m. in the Garden Room, Rotherham Town Hall  
15 places available for corporate parent, Social Workers, PA’s, foster carers  
Professionals learning through young peoples’ experiences in care.

This training was an opportunity for professionals to learn from our children and young people  
Email Lisa Duvalle if interested in attending

- Sheffield Film Festival  
Rotherham LACC's film 'Precious Things'  
22<sup>nd</sup> February at 9.30 a.m.-1.00 p.m. in the Dorothy Fleming Lecture Theatre, Arundel Gate, Sheffield

Discussion ensued with the following issues raised:-

- The LACC had received £400 for taking part in the Health Assessment
- The Virtual School would be interested to making use of the LACC's services with regard to a future consultation exercise
- The LACC was set up as a community group so could now draw down funding
- The plans for 2019 included planning for summer activities, appointment of Treasurer and Vice-Treasurer and solution focus
- The LACC would be attending a residential in August – Children in Care Council Regional meeting – for 3 nights at a cost of £95 per young person. It was suggested that each of the Corporate Parenting Panel members could be linked to a specific young person and be responsible for the collecting of sponsorship to contribute to the cost of the residential

Resolved:- (1) That the update be noted.

(2) That the LACC consider the offer of the Corporate Parenting Panel to be responsible for the obtaining of sponsors and also to discuss what event they would undertake for the sponsorship.

(3) That Lisa and Alisa discuss (2) further.

## **55. EXCLUSION OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC**

Resolved:- That under Section 100A(4) of the Local Government Act 1972, the public be excluded from the meeting for the following item of business on the grounds that it involves the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in Paragraph 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 relates to finance and business affairs).

## **56. ILACS SELF-ASSESSMENT LAC AND CARE LEAVERS**

Ian Walker, Head of Service, submitted for information the ILACS self-assessment of LAC and Care Leavers.

Discussion ensued with the following issues raised:-

- Right Child Right Care
- IIP
- Regional Adoption Agency
- Foster care recruitment

Resolved:- That the report be noted.

**57. DATE AND TIME OF THE NEXT MEETING: -**

Resolved:- That a further meeting be held on Tuesday, 9<sup>th</sup> April, 2019, commencing at 3.30 p.m.