

Corporate Parenting Board

Thursday, 22 March 2018, County Hall, Worcester - 2.00 pm

Minutes

Present:

Mr A C Roberts (Chairman), Cllr Joe Baker, Ms P A Hill, Mrs L C Hodgson, Dr C Hotham, Mrs F M Oborski, Mrs J A Potter and Mr David Watkins

Also attended:

Adam Benkalai, Justine Bishop, Thomas Bourne, Sally Branchflower, Rhys Davis, Victoria Hylan, James McDonald, Selena Rawicz, Celena Rossano, Tina Russell, Elaine Salter, Jake Shaw, Richard Stevenson, Hannah Whittle

127 Apologies

Apologies were received from Marc Bayliss, Nicky Gale and Margaret Sherrey.

128 Confirmation of the Minutes

The minutes were agreed to be a correct record of the meeting held on 8 February 2018 and were signed by the Chairman.

129 Review of Previous Action Points

Minute 120: Care Leavers Housing and Accommodation update – It was confirmed that joint working would continue with housing and any updates would be brought back to the Corporate Parenting Board.

With regard to District Councils agreeing that Care Leavers should be exempt from Council tax; four District Councils had agreed and 2 were taking the proposal through their governance processes. Generally District Councils were agreeing that the Care Leaver would need to be in receipt of Council Tax benefit to be eligible and the issue would be referred back to the Local Authority if the District Councils were finding the scheme was causing them financial difficulty.

Minute 121: Consultation with Looked After Children – The powerpoint on the Perdiswell activity day had been distributed to Board Members on 6 March 2018.

The IRO annual report was scheduled for the July meeting of the Board.

Minute 122: Children and Young People who had become Looked After – An update would be brought to a future meeting.

Minute 124: Leisure Passes – Cllr Bayliss was not present at the meeting so would feed back at the next

130 Through Care Services

meeting.

Tina Russell explained that Through Care Services was a new service which had been created as part of the Children's Services restructure. Smaller social work teams had been created which allowed for more management oversight and smaller workloads for Team Managers oversight.

The Through Care Service would be responsible for one of the work-streams within the Children's Social Care Improvement Plan and would deliver effective 'Through Care' in five areas:

1. Through Care Experience for Children and Young People in care and leaving care
2. Sufficiency
3. Improving quality of care plans
4. Permanency – Care Proceedings
5. Embed corporate parenting strategy

Tina Russell explained she had led a workshop with Through Care Managers in February to look at what we wanted to achieve as a service, what we wanted Children and Young People to experience and how we would measure this.

The commitments and pledge made to Children in Care and Care Leavers was important and the aim was for young people who had been through the care system to feel that they had been supported when they needed to be and that they had been fully involved in their care plan. Young people needed to know that the Council cared, that someone fought their corner and they needed to feel as though they belonged. Young people needed a stable home and then at the appropriate time ensure that they were ready for independent living arrangements.

(see power point presentation)

Selina Rawicz, Manager of the Through Care Services introduced the Team Managers. It was explained that the Council was working with around 450 young people and the Social Work Teams had started with caseloads of around 20-22 per social worker and were now at around 17 in the new Through Care Service. Social workers in the new service were now more permanent and there was less reliance on agency workers. New social workers now had more support with the Assessed and Supported Year in Employment (ASYE) and higher numbers were choosing to stay in Worcestershire following their ASYE. Advanced Social Workers also

131 Planning for April's Keep in Touch visits

offered support to social workers.

The Team Managers all gave a good news story from their area. These included case examples of:

- pupils who had achieved excellent academic results
- foster carers adopting the children they had fostered and therefore being able to provide a child with a permanent home
- support workers who had achieved good outcomes for children despite very challenging circumstances.

The Care Leavers Team Managers explained that all 16-18 year olds were assessed to see if they wished to move out of their placement. They explained that sometimes young people were more vulnerable as a teenager than when they were younger. Pathway plans were developed but subsistence would be provided until they were 18 and support was provided up to the age of 25 if it was needed or requested.

It was clarified that there were no specific qualifications for PAs (Personal Assistants) they just needed a good understanding of the needs of young people in general and Looked After Children in particular.

ACTIONS

- 1. The Chairman asked the Team Managers to take back to the individuals involved how impressed the Board had been.**

Keep In Touch is part of the Corporate Parenting programme to enable members to meet and understand some experiences of children in care and staff working with them.

Sessions were to include visits, reviews, pathway meetings or supported living placements. The visits had been organised to take place on 3-6 April. It was pointed out that the visits were due to take place in the run up to local elections so it may be difficult for some Councillors to take part so other opportunities in the year would be arranged.

ACTIONS

- 1. The list of options for visits should be distributed to Councillors who were requested to respond by 28 March about which ones they**

would be available for.

132 Work Plan

The future work plan was considered.

ACTIONS

1. The meeting takeover by Youth Voice Groups would be moved to July as the original June date would be within the exam period.
2. Jake Shaw would continue his round of visits to attend District Council meetings to give a presentation on Corporate Parenting.
3. Workshops to explain Corporate Parenting to District Councillors had been proposed. They would be led by the LGA and there would be one for the North of the County and one for the South.

133 Future Meeting Dates

All at 2pm at County Hall

- 7 June 2018
- 12 July 2018
- 11 October 2018
- 29 November 2018

The meeting ended at 3.40pm

Chairman