

# MINUTES

meeting: **CORPORATE PARENTING PANEL**

date: **13 MARCH 2013**

## **PRESENT:-**

Councillor Constable (Chair):  
Councillors Hodgkiss, Mrs Mills, Potter, P Singh and Waite

## **OFFICERS IN ATTENDANCE:-**

- S Cox - Deputy Head of Looked After Children, Children and Family Support Division, Community Directorate
- J Welsby - Assistant Director, Children and Family Support, Community Directorate
- T Westwood - Assistant Director, Schools, Skills and Learning, Education and Enterprise Directorate
- D Williams - Head of Safeguarding, Children and Family Support, Community Directorate
- C W Craney - Democratic Support Officer, Central Services Division, Delivery Directorate

**Wolverhampton**  
City Council



**PART I - OPEN ITEMS**  
**(Open to the Press and Public)**

**Apologies for Absence**

- 36 Apologies for absence had been received from Councillors Paula Brookfield, Dr Hardacre and Mrs Patten together with A Viggers (Royal Wolverhampton NHS Trust).

**Declarations of Interest**

- 37 No declarations of interest were made relative to items under consideration at the meeting.

**Minutes – Meeting – 14 November 2012**

- 38 Resolved:-  
That the minutes of the meeting held on 14 November 2012 be confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

**Matters Arising**

- 39 There were no matters arising from the minutes of the meeting held on 14 November 2012.

**Minutes – Children in Care Council – 30 January 2013 (Appendix 13)**

The minutes of the meeting of the Children in Care Council held on 30 January 2013 were presented. The latter part of the meeting had taken the form of a Joint Meeting with the Corporate Parenting Panel during which progress with the implementation of the Corporate Parenting Pledge was discussed.

- 40 Resolved:-  
That the minutes of the meeting of the Children in Care Council held on 30 January 2013 be received and noted subject to the inclusion in the list of apologies of “Councillor Mrs Patten”.

**Matters Arising**

J Welsby, Assistant Director, Children, Young People and Families, Community Directorate, drew to the attention of the Panel the following issues which had been raised at the meeting of the Children in Care Council on 30 January 2013 and upon which he intended to submit reports to future meetings of the Corporate Parenting Panel:

- Differences between foster care finances and residential care finances in terms of pocket money, clothing allowances, holiday spending money etc.
- Setting Up Home Support Grants and Support.

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Resolved:-

- (i) That the reports now referred to be submitted to a future meeting of the Corporate Parenting Panel;
- (ii) That arrangements be made for the Corporate Parenting Panel to meet with the Children in Care Council on an annual basis.

**Strategic Priorities for Corporate Parenting – Education and Enterprise Directorate**

T Westwood, Assistant Director, Schools, Skills and Learning, Education and Enterprise Directorate reported on the strategic priorities of the Education and Enterprise Directorate in relation to Corporate Parenting including:

- Pupil Premium;
- Wolverhampton Peer Support Group;
- Raising the Participation Age (RPA);
- Connexions Contract;
- Apprenticeships.

S Cox, Deputy Head of Looked After Children, Children, young People and Families Division, Community Directorate, commented on the success of the Apprenticeship Programme insofar as it related to Looked After Children. T Westwood acknowledged the comment but reminded the Panel that the Programme was not restricted to Looked After Children but was available to all school leavers in Wolverhampton.

Councillor Hodgkiss referred to the work in respect of absenteeism from school and enquired as to the availability of more general information focussed on the general school population and whether it would be possible for a report on this matter to be considered by the Children and Young People Scrutiny Panel. J Welsby reported that this particular area of work was undertaken by the Education Welfare Service. Any Looked After Children not attending 85% of lessons would be considered by a Specialist Officer Panel. S Cox explained that targeted support would be provided to these particular children.

In response to a question from the Chair, Councillor Constable, J Welsby advised that as a direct result of their life experiences it was always unlikely that Looked After Children would enjoy equitable academic achievement to their Non Looked After peers. There was a clear link between attainment and domestic stability from an early age. It would be difficult to assess the true picture given that some young children would be adopted at an early age and would not form part of a statistical set. A fairer measure would be academic improvement measured from the time a child was taken into care. S Cox confirmed that whilst equalisation was an aspiration it was unlikely ever to be achieved.

Councillors P Singh, Potter and Waite referred to a number of Looked After Children who had gone on to particular academic success, including entrance to Oxford University, and to the recent successes at the Midlands Achievers of the Year Award. Councillor Waite enquired as to whether any partnership work was undertaken with the Girls High School with a view to LAC's being recruited. S Cox reported on the work undertaken by the Looked After Children Education Team (LACE) in seeking to identify exceptional achievers for attendance at such schools.

- 42 Resolved:-
- (i) That the report be received and noted;
  - (ii) That an analysis of the number of Looked After Children attending good / outstanding schools be submitted to a future meeting.

**Work Programme 2013/14 (Appendix 14)**

S Cox presented a report which outlined a suggested Work Programme for the Panel for the 2013/14 Municipal Year.

- 43 Resolved:-
- That, together with the reports identified earlier in the meeting, the Work Programme for 2013/14 as detailed in the report be approved.

**Date of Next Meeting**

The Chair, Councillor Constable, advised the Panel that following the re-scheduling of this meeting the proximity to the next scheduled meeting was only a matter of two weeks and suggested that it be cancelled

- 44 Resolved:-
- That the next meeting of the Panel scheduled for 27 March 2013 be cancelled.