



Corporate Parenting Board Minutes – 13 March 2014

Attendance

Members

Cllr Val Gibson (Chair)
Cllr Paula Brookfield
Cllr Dr Michael Hardacre
Cllr Julie Hodgkiss
Cllr Mrs Christine Mills
Cllr Mrs Patricia Patten
Cllr Rita Potter
Cllr Paul Singh
Cllr Martin Waite

Staff

Steve Cox	Interim Head of Looked After Children – Community
Lorraine Millard	Designated Senior Nurse Safeguarding Children, Wolverhampton Clinical Commissioning Group
Darren Martindale	Team Manager and Virtual Head for LAC - Community
Dr Chitra Ramalingham	Designated Doctor LAC / Medical Advisor for Adoption and Fostering
John Welsby	Assistant Director, Children and Families - Community
Carl Craney	Democratic Support Officer - Delivery

Part 1 – items open to the press and public

Item No. *Title*

1. **Apologies for absence**
An apology for absence was received from Cllr Philip Page.

Chair's announcements

The Chair welcomed Councillors and Officers to the meeting. She invited Councillors and Officers to introduce themselves. Introductions were duly made.

2. **Declarations of interest**

Cllr Dr Michael Hardacre declared personal interests in any matters pertaining to Matters pertaining to Woodthorne School (Chair of Governors), Central Learning Partnership (Heath Park, Moseley Park and Woden Primary Schools) [Director], City of Wolverhampton College (Governor) and Graiseley Primary (Governor).

3. **Minutes of the previous meeting (27 November 2013)**

Resolved:

That the minutes of the meeting held on 27 November 2013 be approved as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

4. **Matters arising**

There were no matters arising from the minutes of the meeting held on 27 November 2013.

5. **Health Care Service Annual Report**

Lorraine Millard presented the Health Care Service Annual Report for the period September 2012 to August 2013 and explained that the report had been scheduled to be presented in September 2013 but resulting from a vacancy in the post of Designated Senior Nurse Safeguarding Children this had not been possible. The report had been prepared for presentation to the November meeting but had been withdrawn in view of the amount of business to be conducted at that meeting. She assured the Board that an up to date report would be presented to the September 2014 meeting.

With reference to paragraph 3.8.3, Cllr Paula Brookfield queried the figures in respect of uptake rates and with reference to paragraph 4 questioned who was responsible and accountable for ensuring that assessments were undertaken. Cllr Dr Michael Hardacre enquired as to steps being taken to address issues relating to undertaking assessments of Out of City placements. Lorraine Millard and Dr Chitra Ramalingham explained the figures relating to uptake rates and undertook to ensure a more detailed explanation would be included in the 2014 report. In relation to responsibility and accountability they reported that, ultimately, the duty lay with the Council. It was acknowledged that the delay that occurred in reporting on referrals compounded the problem together with the capacity of the Looked after Children (LAC) Health Team.

Cllr Paula Brookfield requested an update on the position with the Business Case to increase staffing in the LAC Health Team. Lorraine Millard advised that this had been presented to the relevant forum on 11 March 2014 and that the Clinical Commissioning Group and the Royal Wolverhampton NHS Trust were working together to address the capacity issue.

Cllr Dr Michael Hardacre enquired as to whether the mental health of LAC was a priority issue for General Practitioners (GP's) having regard to their role as Commissioners of services. Lorraine Millard reported on the training provided to all GP practices in the City in relation to both mental health and safeguarding issues for LAC, on the good working relationship between the LAC Health Team and the Children's and Adolescent Mental Health

(CAMHS) Team. She reminded the Board that strategic guidance had been issued by the Department for Education in 2012 for Levels 1, 2 and 3, with specialist advice being provided for those GP practices with responsibility for Level 3 patients. With regard to Out of City placements she advised that the health assessments were being treated as a priority and were being completed as a matter of urgency. Cllr Dr Michael Hardacre expressed concern as to when specialist service was received despite how quickly a referral may have been made by the respective GP. Dr Ramalingham explained that a referral via a GP would not always be necessary as this could be requested through CAMHS or the Designated Nurse or through a Foster Carer.

Steve Cox assured the Board that contact between a LAC in an Out of City placement and their original GP was often maintained, that Wolverhampton did not have a waiting list for referral to CAMHS and of the "Strengths and Difficulties" system which could be accessed by Carers'. Furthermore, a Psychologist visited all Care Homes used by the Council on a monthly basis. He also confirmed the strong working relationship between the Council, the LAC Health Team and the Black Country Partnership NHS Trust. Assessments for Out of City placements were also followed up by independent Fostering Agencies contracted to the Council.

Cllr Paula Brookfield sought an assurance that the medical records for LAC in Out of City placements were not lost in transfer between GP's and also any delays which occurred in registering for a new GP following an Out of City placement. Lorraine Millard and Dr Ramalingham advised that whilst gaps in the records might occur the records were not lost in the system and that at each health assessment the details of the GP were requested and documented to ensure each child was registered with a GP.

Cllr Dr Michael Hardacre welcomed the information in the report pertaining to the reduced conception rates of LAC and Care Leavers but requested additional comparative data with the national picture. Steve Cox reported that the City had a high rate of teenage conception of non LAC and was rated amongst the highest in the country but with LAC it had one of the lowest rates nationally. Dr Ramalingham undertook to ensure that comparative data would be included in the 2014 report.

Resolved:

That the report be received and noted and that the report in respect of the period September 2013 to August 2014 be presented to the meeting of the Board in September 2014.

6. **Future Aspirations for Education of Looked after Children in the City**
Presented a report which outlined the proposed improvements to education support for the Council's LAC. He also appraised the Board on the new conditions of grant published by the Department for Education in relation to Pupil Premium with effect from 1 April 2014 and on the recommendations which had been made by the Children's Services Management Team (CSMT) in connection with the allocation of these monies. John Welsby explained the composition of the CSMT.

Cllr Paula Brookfield welcomed both elements of the reports but expressed concern with regard to the use of the Pupil Premium insofar as to whether the needs of all the LAC could be offered given that those needs could differ widely. Dr Michael Hardacre echoed the comments of Cllr Paula Brookfield and cited examples of best practice elsewhere in the country where, for example, football coaching and dance lessons had been offered to LAC who did not require additional educational support. Darren Martindale explained that there was clear guidance available from the Department for Education on what the Pupil Premium could and could not be used for. Cllr Paula Brookfield cited an example of where bricklaying lessons had been offered to LAC who wished to pursue that particular career rather than receiving additional academic support and commended the adoption of a flexible approach to the use of those monies.

Cllr Rita Potter suggested that there was a need for a demonstration of receiving Value for Money from the use of the Pupil Premium and enquired as to how this was monitored currently. Darren Martindale assured the Board that this was monitored against the individual Personal Education Plans. Dr Michael Hardacre commented that Ofsted was also conscious of the need to monitor use of Pupil Premium funds.

Resolved:

1. That the proposals for the future education support for Wolverhampton's LAC and the formation of a Board of Governors for the Virtual School be approved;
2. That the proposed allocations of the Pupil Premium, i.e. £900 to be allocated to the respective school with the remaining £1,000 to be retained by the Council for use in partnership with the relevant school in order to benefit the particular LAC, linked to the respective Personal Education Plan be supported.

7. **Performance Monitoring – Looked After Children**

John Welsby presented Performance Management Information based on an extract from high level information from December 2013. He explained that the Balanced Scorecard did not yet focus on LAC but work was ongoing in this respect. He advised that at present the LAC population in the City was 770. Cllr Paula Brookfield enquired as to whether there were any trends such as by age group. John Welsby reminded the Board that this type of analysis was currently being undertaken by the LAC Scrutiny Inquiry but advised that the figures had been increased recently by a number of large sibling groups entering into care.

Cllr Dr Michael Hardacre referred to the information relating to “Vulnerable Young People in education, Employment or Training – Care Leavers” and

enquired as to the steps being taken in relation to the 14 Care Leavers who were not currently in education, employment or training (NEET). John Welsby reported that the Community Directorate Management Team (CDMT) had requested a report on each of the 14 young people recorded as NEET. He explained that in a number of cases there were legitimate reasons for these cases, such as acting as a full time carer, while in some cases EET had since been arranged. The CDMT had also requested a regular report against this indicator.

With regard to the Briefing Note which had been circulated previously in relation to the forthcoming Ofsted Inspection, John Welsby encouraged Councillors to contact him if they required any additional information.

Resolved:

That the report be received and noted and that the Balanced Scorecard with regard to LAC be presented to the first available meeting of the Board.

9. **Exclusion of the press and public**

Resolved:

That in accordance with Section 100A(4) of the Local Government Act 1972 the press and public be excluded from the meeting for the following items of business as they involve the likely disclosure of exempt information contained in paragraph 1 of the Act, namely information relating to any individual.

10. **Members Visits to Establishments**

The Chair, Cllr Val Gibson, reported on visits she had undertaken to Windmill Lane and Wergs Road Residential Homes.

Cllr Rita Potter reported on a visit she had undertaken to the Red Gables Residential Home.

Resolved:

That the reports be received and noted.

11. **John Welsby, Assistant Director, Children, Young People and Families**

The Chair, Cllr Val Gibson reminded the Board that this would be last meeting of the Board to be attended by John Welsby, Assistant Director, Children, Young People and Families as he would be retiring from the Council shortly. She paid tribute to the sterling work he had undertaken during his employment with the Council and expressed her personal thanks to him for his help and assistance following her appointment as Cabinet Member for Children and Families. Other Councillors expressed their thanks and appreciation to John. John Welsby responded appropriately.