

Corporate Parenting Board

Minutes - 26 January 2017

Attendance

Chair Cllr Val Gibson (Lab) (*for part of meeting*)

Labour

Cllr Julie Hodgkiss
Cllr Hazel Malcolm

Cllr Lynne Moran
Cllr Peter O'Neill

Cllr Zee Russell
Cllr Martin Waite

Conservative

Cllr Christine Mills

Employees

Emma Bennett
Alison Hinds
Darren Martindale
Alice Vickers
Andrew Scragg
Puja Taloy
Mike Hooper

Service Director for Children and Young People
Head of Looked After Children
Virtual School Head for Looked After Children
Corporate Parenting Officer
Participation Officer
Participation Officer
Democratic Services Officer

Item No. *Title*

1 Election of Chair for the Meeting

The Chair, Councillor Gibson, had provided notice that she would be delayed. In her absence, the Democratic Services Officer invited the Board to nominate a Chair for the meeting.

Resolved: That Councillor O'Neill take the Chair.

2 Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Brookfield and Potter.

3 Declarations of Interests

There were no declarations of interest.

4 Minutes of the Meeting Held on 24 November 2016

Resolved: That the minutes of the meeting held on 24 November 2016 be confirmed as correct record and signed by the Chair.

5 Matters Arising

There were no matters arising.

6 Children in Care Council Workshop

Puja Taloy and Andrew Scragg, Participation Officers, and members of the Children in Care Council joined the meeting.

P. Taloy led a workshop in which everyone present undertook a questionnaire entitled 'So You Think You Know LAC?' before discussing the answers.

Resolved:

1. That the 'So You Think You Know LAC?' questionnaire be circulated to Board members;
2. That P. Taloy, A. Scragg and the Children in Care Council be thanked for the workshop.

7 Care Leavers Forum Annual Report

Neither of the current co-Chairs of the Care Leavers Forum had been able to attend. In their absence, Casey Gavin, a previous Chair, presented the Care Leavers Forum Annual Report for 2016.

In response to questions from the Board, C. Gavin stated the following:

- Training flats enabled care leavers to recognise if they were ready for independence or if they would be better placed to remain in the system for the time being;
- Free WV Active gym memberships provided care leavers with new possibilities to form bonds;
- The ideal accommodation for a care leaver would be dependent on the character of the individual but a blank canvas on which they could express their personality would provide them with an opportunity they may not have had before;
- A peer mentor programme could be very beneficial as it could show care leavers that they had life opportunities and that they did not have to conform to stereotypes. A. Vickers added that she had had spoken to Headstart about the potential for such a scheme.

Alice Vickers undertook to share online blogs from Care Leavers Week with Board members.

Councillor Hodgkiss suggested that the Forum could lobby for free travel for care leavers.

Resolved:

1. That C. Gavin be thanked for presenting and that the Care Leavers Annual Report for 2016 be noted;
2. That links to online blogs from Care Leavers Week be circulated to Board members.

8 **Virtual School Head Annual Report 2015/16**

Darren Martindale, Virtual School Head for Looked After Children (LAC), presented the Virtual School Head Annual Report for 2015/16.

In response to questions from the Board, D. Martindale stated the following:

- With regard to the impact that Pupil Premium had on the attainment of LAC pupils, the negative impact of 1.47% reflected the occasions when a young person may not be ready for intervention or one to one support. It was not a funding issue;
- The differentials between schools outside of and inside Wolverhampton were recognised and an officer had been appointed to focus upon out of city LAC. In addition, D. Martindale and his Teacher Advisor had placed additional focus on those young people and how the Pupil Premium was being used. Work was also underway to improve datasets to enable earlier intervention;
- The 'Aspire to Uni' project' aimed to address the drop-off in attainment levels between KS2 and the taking of GCSEs through allowing access to university at KS3.
- It was important to track attainment levels and identify issues during teenage years as the data obtained could be quite blunt due to the varied issues affecting young people of that age. Many teenagers entering care already had entrenched educational issues but it should be recognised that many achieved beyond expectations and some GCSEs results had been excellent;

- Evidence indicated that children that weren't school-ready with regard to literacy skills continued to experience problems at KS1. For that reason, D. Martindale's team had been reconfigured to have officers focussed upon Early Years. Those officers would also look at the whether or not children born in the summer were particularly affected. E. Bennett, Service Director for Children and Young People, added that there was a fine balance to be had with regard to preparing children for school as bonding with carers could be considered as important as attending nursery;
- 22 LACs had gone on to attend university. Councillor Malcolm added that it was important to obtain data and feedback on the educational attainment of children placed less than 20 miles from Wolverhampton with a view to helping them achieve a university place.

Resolved: That the Virtual School Head Annual Report for 2015/16 be noted.

Councillor V. Gibson, who had joined the meeting during consideration of the previous item, took the Chair.

9 **Unaccompanied Asylum Seekers**

Alison Hinds, Head of Looked After Children, circulated to Board members a case study of a 15 year old unaccompanied asylum seeker and gave a presentation on unaccompanied asylum seeking children which detailed the following:

- The definition of an unaccompanied asylum seeking child;
- Why unaccompanied children and young people seek asylum;
- How unaccompanied asylum seeking children arrived in Wolverhampton;
- How Wolverhampton had supported 6 children through NTS or voluntary support to other authorities;
- The total numbers of unaccompanied asylum seeking children in the care of the City of Wolverhampton Council;
- The academic, sporting and social achievement of Wolverhampton placements.

Resolved: That the case study and presentation be noted.

10 **Mind of My Own Application**

Alice Vickers, Corporate Parenting Officer, presented a report which contained a Briefing Note detailing the progress of the implementation of the Mind Of My Own application to support participation for children and young people.

Resolved: That the report be noted.

11 **Performance Monitoring Data**

E. Bennett, Service Director for Children and Young People, tabled the Corporate Parenting Board Performance Report for January 2017 (data as at November 2016).

A. Hinds, Head of Looked After Children, acknowledged the high rate of care leavers that were mothers or pregnant. Contraception advice was already provided, there was a LAC nurse and young mothers were supported but it was hoped that further

services could be rolled out which would include a nurse that would be allocated specifically to the Care Leaving Service. E. Bennett undertook to feed back to the next meeting of the Board the number of care leavers up to the age of 18 that were pregnant or already mothers and how that those figures compared to overall figures.

Resolved:

1. That the report be noted;
2. That the number of care leavers up to the age of 18 that were pregnant or already mothers and how that those figures compared to overall figures be reported to the next meeting of the Board.