

AT A MEETING of the Children and Families Advisory Panel of  
HAMPSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL held at the Castle, Winchester  
on Wednesday, 7th June, 2023

Chairman:

\* Councillor Arun Mummalaneni

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| * Councillor Ann Briggs           | * Councillor Malcolm Wade      |
| Councillor Prad Bains             | * Councillor Steven Broomfield |
| * Councillor Christopher Donnelly | Councillor David Drew          |
| Councillor Juliet Henderson       | Councillor Tim Groves          |
| * Councillor Wayne Irish          | Councillor Sarah Pankhurst     |
| * Councillor Adam Jackman         | Councillor Jackie Porter       |
| * Councillor Stephen Parker       | Councillor Andy Tree           |

\*Present

Also present with the agreement of the Chairman:  
Councillor Edward Heron, Executive Lead Member for Children's Services  
Steve Forster, Executive Member for Education

**43. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies were received from Cllrs Bains and Henderson. Cllr Broomfield was the Conservative deputy for Cllr Henderson.

**44. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

Members were mindful that where they believed they had a Disclosable Pecuniary Interest in any matter considered at the meeting they must declare that interest at the time of the relevant debate and, having regard to the circumstances described in Part 3, Paragraph 1.5 of the County Council's Members' Code of Conduct, leave the meeting while the matter was discussed, save for exercising any right to speak in accordance with Paragraph 1.6 of the Code. Furthermore Members were mindful that where they believed they had a Personal interest in a matter being considered at the meeting they considered whether such interest should be declared, and having regard to Part 5, Paragraph 5 of the Code, considered whether it was appropriate to leave the meeting whilst the matter was discussed, save for exercising any right to speak in accordance with the Code.

No declarations were made.

**45. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING**

The minutes of the previous meeting were reviewed and agreed as a correct record.

46. **DEPUTATIONS**

No deputations were received.

47. **CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS**

The Chairman opened the meeting by making a statement and drawing the Panel and officers' attention to National Inclusion Week.

48. **ADOPT SOUTH ANNUAL REPORT 2022-23**

The Panel received a report from the Director of Children's Services outlining the activity of Adopt South, the Regional Adoption Agency for Hampshire, Isle of Wight, Portsmouth and Southampton local authorities for the financial year 2022-2023. The Panel were shown a video (link included in the published report) detailing the key achievements of Adopt South since its launch in 2019 and for year 4 (2022/23).

In particular, the Panel heard that in year 4:

- 763 enquiries had been received, which was 8% above target.
- 185 families had progressed to assessment, 30% above target.
- 94 new adopters were approved.
- 119 children have been formally linked to 97 families. Just two of these had not been placed in house.
- There has been a 12% increase in Children's Plans referred to the Decision Maker.
- Just under £3m had been received into the Adoption Support Fund since its launch, making a difference to the work that Adopt South can do.
- Government targets for timescales for both stage 1 and 2 had been met.

In response to questions from Members of the Panel, officers explained that:

- In terms of scale, last year in Hampshire, 80 Children's Plans had been referred, with 78 Placement Orders granted.
- The Team is planning to expand publicity to encourage prospective adopters, using adopters' experience.
- The key challenges are to make sure we get adopters through the door, who can 'parent for life'.
- The Team constantly challenges itself to consider what 'good matching' looks like and make it welcome for everybody. There is a changing profile of adopters, but standards are never compromised for the children.

- A dedicated Child Adoption Team works directly with children to help them with the understanding of a 'growing up family' and that every family looks different.

Resolved:

The Annual Report 2022-2023 for Adopt South, was noted by the Children and Families Advisory Panel.

#### 49. **STRENGTHENING PARENTAL RELATIONSHIPS**

The Panel agreed to defer this item until a future meeting.

#### 50. **HAMPSHIRE APPROACH UPDATE**

The Panel received a report from the Director of Children's Services with an overview of the Hampshire Approach practice framework and an update on its continuous improvement.

The Panel heard that:

- The Framework had been embedded since its launch in 2018 and that the approach had been recognised by Ofsted in its last inspection in which the Council was rated Outstanding across all areas.
- The four areas worked on are to:
  - Respond to risk and keep children safe
  - Develop positive relationships
  - Identify and build on strengths
  - Grow and strengthen support networks.
- In practice, the language being used has changed, giving more ownership to the family and a cultural shift builds on strengths.
- A stocktake with staff last year resulted in a plan which helped create new branding and a SharePoint site with resources and guides.

In answer to Members' questions, officers explained that:

- Although the approach had changed, risks are not glossed over and Teams are clear with families without using jargon. The primary responsibility is to identify and manage risks to children.
- There is a robust quality assurance framework to ensure that improvements can be measured and thematic and regular peer inspections which include looking at childrens' records and letters written

to them and families etc. There are KPI's and managers are expected to go and observe social workers.

Resolved:

The Children and Families Advisory Panel noted the update on the Hampshire Approach.

**51. WILLOW - SPECIALIST MISSING , EXPLOITED AND TRAFFICKED TEAM (MET)**

The Panel received a report from the Director of Children's Services, updating them on the progress of the 'Willow Team', Hampshire Children's Service's specialist Missing, Exploited and Trafficked Team.

The officer introduced the report and explained that the Willow Team had changed, and become larger was stable. She explained that it is co-located with children's Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH), supporting decision making with new cases with local partners and teams.

The Panel heard that project work was continuing with a Young Woman and Girls Worker and gang related interventions and with the Violence Reduction Unit, including education programme for teacher of year 6 and 7 pupils who are transitioning from primary to secondary school.

In answer to a question from a Member, the panel heard that there has been an increase in the number of children seeking asylum. A Section 47 enquiry is always instigated and social workers always consider whether the child could have been trafficked for financial gain.

Willow is leading on training, education and early intervention, getting out into schools.

Resolved:

CFAP recognised the work undertaken by The Willow Team.

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Chairman,