

AT A MEETING of the Corporate Parenting Board of HAMPSHIRE COUNTY
COUNCIL held at the Castle, Winchester on Wednesday 15th June 2022

Chairman:
p Councillor Ann Briggs

Councillor Phil North
p Councillor Pal Hayre
p Councillor Wayne Irish
p Councillor Jacky Tustain

p Councillor Fran Carpenter
Councillor Juliet Henderson
p Councillor Arun Mummalaneni
p Councillor Malcolm Wade

12. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Cllr North & Cllr Henderson had given apologies and were not present.

13. 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.

14. MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

The minutes of the previous meeting were agreed and signed by the Chairman.

15. DEPUTATIONS

No deputations were received.

16. CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Chairman shared their recent experiences visiting Hampshire's 'Hives' and noted that a recent training video they had seen on childhood trauma would be beneficial for all members to undertake.

17. BOARD MEMBERS FEEDBACK - ENGAGEMENT AND RECENT ACTIVITIES

Councillors Briggs, Carpenter, Hayre Tustain & Wade recounted recent interactions with social care teams and settings they had.

It was noted that it was equally important for members to see how the organisation operates as it was to meet young people. It was also noted that more engagement events would be beneficial.

18. **CORPORATE PARENTING BOARD PROGRESS UPDATE**

The Board received a report from the Director of Children's Services providing a progress update against the priority areas identified by Ofsted in 2019 in relation to the Corporate Parenting Board (CPB). The report also included an update on the progress made to improve and develop the Personal Education Plan process.

The Committee received an overview of the changes made to the CPB to expand its membership and engagement with external agencies. This included a summary of the various outreach activities board members had undertaken and the items considered by the Board at its meetings.

Members also heard how high-quality PEPs were a key tool for promoting the educational outcomes of Children in Care. They noted the project undertaken jointly between the Children & Families and Education & Inclusion branches of Children's Services to review the process alongside the results and actions taken following it.

As a result of questions members heard that;

- The introduction of the Virtual College and the increase in Districts providing a Council Tax waiver for young people who had been in care have been as a result of the Board's work.

RESOLVED:

That the Corporate Parenting Board note the contents of the report and the positive progress made in respect of the Ofsted recommendation.

19. **CHILDREN IN CARE ANNUAL REPORT**

The Board received a report from the Director of Children's Services providing an overview of the progress of the services provided by Hampshire's Children's Services to children in care.

The Board received an overview of the children in care population, the structure of the Children in Care Teams, the Unaccompanied Asylum Seeking Children (UASC) received through the national dispersal scheme and placement stability.

In addition to the above members noted the progress made in relation to reunification and the modernising placements programme, alongside the efforts made to increase participation.

As a result of questions members heard that;

- All placements, including reunification, are considered with the best interests of the child at the forefront.

- Hampshire's Approach is strength based and allows the family's whole network to be explored. The assessment documents have also been looked at to ensure they meet this aim.
- There has been an increase in the number of children in care but this trend is in line with the national average. There has been a significant increase due to the (UASC).
- Young people are placed out of County when there is a clear need to do so and the department has started to recruit and train Social Workers outside of Hampshire to meet this need.

RESOLVED:

That the Corporate Parenting Board supports the priority areas for Children's Services, Children in Care Teams as being:

- Improving the timeliness of all Health Assessments
- Increasing the number of children who can safely be reunified to the care of family
- Increasing the number of children who are cared for by family and friends via Special Guardianship Orders
- Having a greater understanding of the emotional and wellbeing needs of children in care and ensuring timely access to support

20. PARTICIPATION STRATEGY

The Board received a report from the Director of Children's Services providing an overview of the Participation Strategy for 2022-2025 as agreed by the Children & Families Branch Management team.

Members noted how the department has transformed several aspects of how children and families are interacted with, most notably the introduction of the Hampshire Approach. Members noted the importance of these activities and the priority applied to them in early 2022 when lockdowns were first implemented. This allowed for continued opportunities for support for relationship building between young people and staff alongside opportunities for feedback.

The Board heard how the department were now looking into the establishment of a Children in Care Council and a group for care experienced adults.

As a result of questions members heard that;

- There is a thematic report every three months as part of the strategy alongside individual interventions when needed.
- Young people are encouraged to pursue aspirations, whether that be university, non-academic or extracurricular.

RESOLVED:

That the Corporate Parenting Board:

- Note the contents of the Participation Strategy 2022 – 2025.
- Take particular note of the governance of the strategy, specifically, the roles and responsibilities of the Corporate Parenting Board as laid out within the strategy.

21. **SWANWICK LODGE SECURE CHILDREN'S HOME UPDATE**

The Board received a report from the Director of Children's Services providing an update on Swanwick Lodge Secure Children's Home.

Members received a brief contextual background to the secure estate alongside an introduction to the new operating model and associated staffing structure. There was also an overview of Swanwick Lodge's recent inspection achievements and the next steps in the services development.

As a result of questions members heard that;

- When young people move out of Swanwick Lodge, contact is maintained to support the new placement's stability. This can be virtual.
- There is an ongoing recruitment challenge due to the complex needs of the young people.
- The managers of the 14 secure facilities across England and Wales regularly meet to share best practise. Additionally, Hampshire staff have visited those rated as 'Outstanding' by Ofsted.
- The building itself is under review due to the suitability of its layout and location.

RESOLVED:

That the Corporate Parenting Board note the update on Swanwick Lodge Secure Children's Home.

22. **HAMPSHIRE CHILD AND ADOLESCENT MENTAL HEALTH SERVICE, CHILDREN IN CARE PROVISION**

The Board received a report from the Hampshire Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service providing an overview of its provision for Children in Care. This included the planning approach taken to respond to the increase in demand and the successes and challenges in relation to the provision. Additionally, an overview of the future proposed clinical model in relation to the children in care provision was provided.

As a result of questions members heard that;

- The waiting list is ranked based on the needs of the young people on them.
- There is extra funding being received but this is not matching the increased demand. The additional challenges with recruitment also means that services struggle to march the need.
- There are schemes in place to engage with schools and upskill colleagues from other areas.
- Recruitment focussed on graduates and apprenticeship opportunities have been established but some areas are harder to expand than others due to the skill set required.

RESOLVED:

That the Corporate Parenting Board is asked to consider the report and accompanying presentation and note the priorities for the Hampshire Child and Adolescent Mental health Service in relation to Children in Care.

23. **VIRTUAL SCHOOL UPDATE**

The Board received a report from the Director of Children's Services providing an update on the Virtual school's support to improve educational experiences for children in care.

Members received an overview of the Virtual School's role and the teams structure, alongside the training provided for social workers, foster carers and designated teachers. This included the new Personal Education Plan toolkit.

The Board heard how the Virtual School collaborates with Hampshire Futures on the Virtual College alongside a number of other initiatives with other organisations. These provide services and support for children in care to work towards removing the inequality in educational outcomes between children in care and the wider population.

RESOLVED:

That the Corporate Parenting Board note and agree the content of this report.

Chairman, Corporate Parenting Board