

AT A REMOTE MEETING of the Children and Families Advisory Panel of
HAMPSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL held on Tuesday, 13th October, 2020

Chairman:

* Councillor David Keast

* Councillor Pal Hayre
Councillor Martin Boiles
* Councillor Ann Briggs
* Councillor Fran Carpenter
* Councillor Peter Edgar MBE
Councillor Floss Mitchell

* Councillor Jackie Porter
* Councillor Malcolm Wade
* Councillor Zilliah Brooks

*Present

84. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies were received from Councillors Martin Boiles and Floss Mitchell.
Councillor Zilliah Brooks was in attendance as the Conservative deputy member.

85. 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 2 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.

86. MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

The minutes of the meeting held on 4 February 2020 were agreed as a correct record.

87. DEPUTATIONS

There were no deputations.

88. CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Chairman did not have any announcements on this occasion.

89. **ANNUAL FOSTERING REPORT**

The Panel received a report of the Director of Children's Services providing an overview of fostering activity, detailing statistical performance data and highlighting some focus areas for 2020/2021.

In response to Members' question it was confirmed that:

- A legal training workshop organised through the County Council's Legal Services had taken place to assist social workers in understanding court proceedings and challenges.
- Independent agency support was provided to all foster carers who are undergoing any complaint investigation. The County Council's fostering service also makes weekly visits to foster carers who were undergoing this process. Members noted that a number of complaints and allegations were generally received in the context that parents were unhappy with their child being in foster care.
- In terms of recruiting new foster carers, targeted programmes were in place to seek new and transferred carers with previous care experience.
- Emotional and wellbeing support was in place for both foster carers and social workers in a variety of ways and that each set of circumstances were managed on an individual basis to ensure that the correct nature of support was always provided.

RESOLVED:

That the Children and Families Advisory Panel notes the report.

90. **HAMPSHIRE YOUTH OFFENDING TEAM ANNUAL UPDATE**

Councillor Porter declared a Personal Interest in that she has a role as the Chairman of the Winchester Community Safety Partnership.

The Panel received a report of the Director of Children's Services giving an update on the Hampshire Youth Offending Team (YOT).

In response to Members' questions it was confirmed that:

- The YOT continued to work closely with Hampshire Constabulary to ensure appropriate information sharing in terms of tackling anti-social behaviour amongst young people in Hampshire. Community Safety Partnerships were also key partners in terms of developing partnership responses and solutions across organisations.
- If and when any child or young person was taken into custody they would always be assessed for vulnerability and that there are a variety of facilities which could be utilised namely secure children's homes, secure training centres and youth offending institutes.
- Hampshire currently has two 0.5 FTE probation officers and that the recruitment of these officers was part of a national programme and not something that was within local control.

- In terms of service improvements going forward and looking ahead to the 2022 service inspection, key areas of focus would be developing leadership, consistency, participation with children and planning.

RESOLVED:

That the Children and Families Advisory Panel note the report.

91. **CHILDREN AND FAMILIES BRANCH - MANAGING THE SERVICE THROUGH THE PANDEMIC**

The Panel received a presentation of the Director of Children's Services setting out the way in which the Children and Families services had responded to the Covid-19 pandemic.

Members praised the work that had been undertaken by officers in tackling the significant challenges presented by the pandemic and thanked them for their efforts.

RESOLVED:

That the Children and Families Advisory Panel notes the presentation.

92. **CHILDREN & FAMILIES OCCUPATIONAL THERAPY UPDATE**

The Panel received a report of the Director of Children's Services with an update on the Occupational Therapy Service (OT Service).

In response to a Member question it was confirmed that:

- The OT Service worked closely with the County Council's private sector partner, Argenti, to explore innovative technical solutions for children and adults with disabilities across the county and that this partnership had proven very successful in doing so thus far.

RESOLVED:

That the Children and Families Advisory Panel note the report.