

NOTTINGHAM CITY COUNCIL

CORPORATE PARENTING BOARD

MINUTES

of meeting held on **15 MARCH 2010** at the

Council House from 2.30 pm to 3.55 pm

Councillor Mellen	(Chair)
Councillor Ibrahim	(Vice-Chair)
Councillor Collins	
Councillor Griggs	
Councillor Klein	
Councillor Marshall	
Councillor Morley	
Councillor Urquhart	

indicates present at meeting

Also in attendance

Mr D Cooke	-	Business in the Community
Ms C Brudenell)	
Ms S Cain)	
Mr S Gautam)	Children and Families
Ms J Lewis)	
Ms K Marron)	
Mr N Blinston)	Communities
Mr S Johal)	
Ms S Flint	-	Nottinghamshire Police
Mr M Leavesley	-	Resources
Ms E Brown)	
Ms J Mullins)	Vivian Avenue Residential Unit
Ms K Sutt)	

ACTION

39 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Collins (on other City Council business), Klein and Morley and from Kevin Banfield (Resources), Katrina Curnow (Communities) and Gill Moy (Nottingham City Homes).

40 DECLARATIONS OF INTERESTS

No declarations of interests were made.

41 MINUTES

(a) Confirmation

RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting held on 18 January 2010, copies of which had been circulated, be confirmed and signed by the Chair.

(b) Matters arising

(i) Small Group Homes

Further to minute 32(2), the Director of Specialist Services stated that investigation of whether a ‘flatter’ hierarchy was appropriate had been undertaken, the conclusion of which was that the proposed hierarchy was in line with other comparable authorities;

(ii) Oral feedback – Business in the Community

Further to minute 33(d), the representatives present reported that, to date, no volunteers had come forward to be part of the ‘Buddy’ Scheme, but that they were continuing to enquire with departments and would report back to a future meeting on progress;

(iii) Educational attainment of children in care

Further to minute 37(2), it was reported that the investigation was still ongoing and a report would be submitted to a future meeting.

A Downing

42 SOUTH AFRICAN VISIT

The Board received a joint presentation, including a DVD of their experience, from Janette Mullins, Ellie Brown and Kay Sutt, Vivian Avenue Residential Unit, informing the Board of a visit they undertook to a women’s refuge in South Africa in November 2009.

During discussion, the following comments were made:

- they had fund-raised prior to the visit and presented the refuge with £1,000 (approximately 12,000 SA Rand), which was partly utilised for the purchase of Christmas presents for the children of women living at the refuge;
- looking at the life the children had in South Africa, it made you appreciate how much we, in this country, took our lives for granted and how simple our lives were;
- consideration could be given to possibly utilising the Lord Mayor’s Charity Fund for future assistance and visits to this and other refuges.

RESOLVED that the thanks of the Board for the informative presentation by Ms Brown, Ms Mullins and Ms Sutt be recorded.

43 REDUCING THE CRIMINALISATION OF CHILDREN IN CARE

The Board received a presentation from Julie Lewis, Head of Children in Care, detailing ongoing action to reduce the criminalisation of children in care (CiC).

The main points were as follows:

- numbers used to be high due to separate organisations with separate agendas not communicating, high levels of calls from residential care homes to the police reporting absences of CiC (even if only late returning to the unit) and a lack of knowledge and understanding of the roles of CiC staff;
- the problem had been addressed through:
 - introduction of a Children in Care Police Officer and of shared statistical evidence;
 - creation of the Reducing Offending Behaviour of Children in Care Planning Group;
 - introduction of annual Reducing Offending Behaviour Multi-agency events, including quarterly area based multi-agency meetings and a Reducing Offending Behaviour Multi-agency Good Practice guidance document;
 - additional training of Children in Care staff in Restorative Justice approaches;
 - building relationships with the Placement Service;
 - introduction of a joint protocol for Children Missing from Care;
 - identification of senior officers from each agency to champion the reduction of the criminalisation of CiC;
- Key influential factors were:
 - a multi-agency commitment to improving outcomes for CiC;
 - improved and shared understanding of the roles of partner organisations;
 - shared accountability;
 - trust and relationship building;
 - sharing practices at the 'Reducing Offending and Restorative Justice Networking Group – Midlands';
 - ongoing liaison and relationship building with private placement providers;
 - development of the Children in Care Police Officer role;
- the initiatives above had led to a 34% reduction in the numbers of calls made by residential care home staff to police control and a reduction in the numbers of notifiable events;
- a sample of the months of December 2008 and December 2009, showed a reduction from 66 to 8 children reported missing and 5 to zero notifiable incidents.

During discussion, the following comments were made:

- there would, hopefully, be a further reduction with the introduction of small group homes;

- as the cost of the reporting of a ‘missing’ was approximately £1,000, the reduction was welcomed by all agencies involved;
- there were quarterly meetings held between Beat Managers and Residential Unit staff.

RESOLVED the presentation be noted.

44 ADOPTION CHALLENGES AND SUCCESSES

Consideration was given to a report of the Director of Specialist Services, copies of which had been circulated, informing the Board of the intention to form a dedicated Adoption Casework Team, to improve the process of adoption for all those involved.

During discussion, the following comments were made:

- delays in the process were due to many factors, such as the courts or the completion by social workers of reports;
- there was a need to raise awareness of what adoption entailed, especially among black and Asian communities;
- whether people applied via an Adoption Agency or through the Council, there was no real difference, as both had to follow national guidelines. The only possible difference may be that applications via the Council could be actioned more rapidly as it already had the children in its care.

RESOLVED that the report be noted.

45 CHILDREN IN CARE POPULATION AS AT 31 JANUARY 2010

RESOLVED that, further to minute 27 dated 21 September 2009, the report of the Director of Specialist Services, copies of which had been circulated, detailing the children in care population as at 31 January 2010, be noted.

46 WORK PROGRAMME 2010

RESOLVED

- (1) that the Board’s work programme matrix, copies of which had been circulated, be noted;
- (2) that as she was leaving the authority shortly, the thanks of the Board to Ms Lewis for her work with regard to the Corporate Parenting Board be recorded.

47 DATE OF NEXT MEETING

RESOLVED that the next meeting be held at 2.30 pm on Monday 24 May 2010 not, as stated on the agenda, Wednesday 24 May 2010.