

NOTTINGHAM CITY COUNCIL

CORPORATE PARENTING BOARD

MINUTES

of meeting held on **21 NOVEMBER 2011** at

Loxley House from 2.30 pm to 4.30 pm

- ✓ Councillor Mellen (Chair)
- ✓ Councillor Culley
- ✓ Councillor Dewinton
- ✓ Councillor Heaton
- ✓ Councillor Jenkins
- ✓ Councillor Klein
- ✓ Councillor McCulloch
- ✓ Councillor Morley
- ✓ Councillor Morris

✓ indicates present at meeting

Also in attendance

- Mr K Banfield)
- Mrs L Beedham)
- Ms E Darragh) Children and Families
- Mr S Gautam)
- Ms S Nicholls)
- Ms T Nurse)
- Ms P Thompson-Omenka)

- Mrs H May - Communities

- Miss R Mottram) Resources
- Mrs E Rogers)

- Ms G Moy - Nottingham City Homes

- Ms H Watson - Business in the Community

- Ms P Brackenbury - Nottingham Citycare Partnership

17 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

An apology for absence was received from Imoegen Denton, North Area Manager.

18 DECLARATIONS OF INTERESTS

No declarations of interests were made.

19 MINUTES

RESOLVED that the minutes of the last meeting held on 19 September 2011, copies of which had been circulated, be confirmed and signed by the Chair.

20 FOSTERING INSPECTION

Paulette Omenka Thompson, Head of Children in Care advised the Board of an announced fostering inspection taking place between 13-15 December 2011 with feedback being provided on day 4, 16 December 2011. Two inspectors would meet with foster carers, focus groups looking at themes of support for foster carers and also with the Chair of the Board, Councillor David Mellen. The inspectors would look at various aspects of the service including how foster carers were recruited, trained and retained.

A report would be submitted to the next meeting of the Board in January 2012 to provide feedback received from the inspection.

21 CHILDREN IN CARE PROFILING TOOL

Tracy Nurse, Service Manager, Social Care and Shelley Nicholls, Service Manager, Youth Offending Team, gave a presentation on the Profiling Tool for Children in Care.

The following key information was provided:

- following a serious case review, it was established that there was a need to have a process for identifying the most vulnerable children in care;
- all Children in Care (CiC) had vulnerabilities but a small group presented significant challenges to a number of agencies since they had multiple vulnerabilities that placed them at greater risk;
- the profiling tool was developed by the Task and Finish Group and was being piloted to see how effective it was in profiling risk and targeting intervention in order to reduce the risk;
- guidance had also been produced to assist professionals in completing the profiling tool;
- key indicators of risk included suicide attempts, absconding, substance abuse, not eating/over eating and sexual exploitation, arson, gender issues and children who had witnessed extreme levels of violence;
- benefits of using the profiling tool included contributing to the provision of a more effective service for the most vulnerable young people in care and assisting in reducing and managing professional anxieties since the multi agency group would be part of the process;
- the profiling tool would be used when the social worker or member of the professional group believed the risks to the child were high and could be triggered at the following meetings:
 - 72 hour review
 - 20 day review
 - 3 and 6 monthly reviews;
 - discharge planning meetings;
 - strategy meetings;
 - secure panels;
- once completed the tool would be shared with all relevant agencies and reviewed at all the Looked After Reviews in order to determine if the risks had been effectively

managed and reduced as a result of targeted intervention and support;

- multi agency meetings chaired by a Service Manager or equivalent would be held every 2-3 months to ensure senior managers from all partner agencies were aware of the child and the high risk nature of the case;
- a small number had been profiled and reviewed by senior management with a small number that triggered and met the criteria for ongoing profiling that had ensured that regular meetings took place and helped to improve working relationships and had created a shared sense of the risks.

In the discussion which followed, a number of further points were made:

- reasons for using welfare secure, whereby a young person at significant risk would be placed in a secure facility for their safety would be for a number of reasons including placing themselves in great danger and persistent absconding from other places of care;
- accident and emergency departments were provided with lists of CiC and also those on Child Protection Plans to enable them to alert the relevant agencies;
- significant efforts were made to dovetail with other review meetings;
- from the moment a child is placed in care they have access to and are monitored by a number of professionals, the 72 hour review brings professionals together to complete that child's plan;
- regular in care reviews were carried out to identify if additional resources were required;
- the Independent Reviewing Officers quality assured the work being done with senior management having the responsibility to make sure progress was achieved.

RESOLVED

- (1) that the thanks of the Board for the informative presentation by Tracey Nurse and Shelley Nicholls be noted;**
- (2) that a further report be submitted to the Board at the end of the pilot.**

22 CONNECTING WITH CHILDREN IN CARE NSPCC PROJECT – FACE TO FACE

Consideration was given to a report of the Director of Safeguarding, copies of which had been circulated.

Paulette Omenka Thompson, Head of Children in Care explained that the report set out details of a project ran by NSPCC to support children in care with issues of wellbeing. Nottingham had been selected as one of only seven local authorities who had been approached to be involved in this innovative project.

The following key information was provided:

- NSPCC carried out a scoping exercise in 2010 that identified that a significant group of children and young people did not know how to access help and struggled to get access to help at any early stage;
- the service would offer six to eight one on one sessions of direct work using a 'brief resolution focused approach';
- key principles would be that it was the child/young person led and they would be offered help in finding solutions to problems affecting their safety and wellbeing;
- the service aimed to offer brief interventions so that problems did not escalate and

further harm to their emotional and mental health was prevented.

In the discussion which followed, a number of further points were made:

- children as young as 6 may access the service;
- the service could be used to help support care leavers;
- evaluation would be carried out by Loughborough University who would speak directly to the young people who had accessed the service;
- the project was fully funded by NSPCC and would run until 2016;
- knock on resource implications for other services such as health may be a concern but it was anticipated that this kind of project would avoid higher costs later on.

RESOLVED

- (1) that an update report be submitted to the Board in July on the Connecting with Care in Care NSPCC Project;**
- (2) that the Boards concerns regarding resource implications for other services be fed back to NSPCC through the Head of Children in Care.**

23 PERFORMANCE REPORT

Consideration was given to a report of the Director of Safeguarding, copies of which had been circulated. Due to the timing of the meeting, an updated report was tabled that had the most recent performance information as of October 2011.

The latest report was presented by Paulette Omenka Thompson, Head of Children in Care and highlighted the following indicators:

- the number of Children in Care, CSS101(a) was fairly stable at 535 in October and 540 as of 21 November 2011;
- the number of Admissions to Care, CSS114 and the number of Discharges from Looked After, CSS115 had not increased or decreased significantly although large sibling groups were still a real challenge;
- NI63 – Stability of placements of Children in Care: length of placement had improved to 72.1%;
- NI66 – Children in Care cases which were reviewed within required timescales was performing well with a year to date figure of 98.5%;
- PAF C63 – Participation in Reviews – Independent Reviewing Officers would be invited to a future meeting of the Board to establish why this area continued to be challenging;
- CSS159 and CSS160 - % of Children in Care after 3 months or more with an up to date health assessment and dental check respectively had fallen slightly;
- CSS160 - % of Children in Care after 3 months or more with an up to date Strengths and Difficulties was still a challenge but this was expected to increase in January 2012 following a session with foster carers to explain the importance of completing the questionnaires.

In the discussion around the performance report, the following further points were made:

- a number of issues had contributed to the increase in large sibling groups including economic pressures and immigration from European countries;
- 69% of referrals were due to neglect;
- immigrants from the European union who arrived in Nottingham became the local authorities responsibility when they arrived.

RESOLVED

- (1) that the figures in the performance reports for September and October 2011 be noted;**
- (2) that information on Children in Care from outside the City be provided to the next meeting of the Board;**
- (3) that training be provided to Councillors on the Board on Child Protection.**

24 PERSONAL EDUCATION PLANS (PEPs) AND EDUCATION OUTCOMES CHILDREN IN CARE

Consideration was given to a report of the Director of Schools and Learning, copies of which had been circulated.

Key information was highlighted as follows:

- the percentage of completed PEPs within the City had significantly improved and was consistently over 90%;
- the strongest contributions came from young people but contribution from foster carers and they way that was recorded could be improved;
- Key Stage 2 figures within Nottingham were the highest performing in the East Midlands.

RESOLVED

- (1) that the figures in the performance report for October 2011 be noted;**
- (2) that education outcomes be provided to the next meeting of the Board.**

25 ADOPTION AND PERMANENCY

Paulette Omenka Thompson, Head of Children in Care introduced the report that set out Nottingham City Children and Families 2011 Children in Care and Adoption Performance Tables.

Key information was highlighted as follows:

- special guardianship orders tended to be family members but still had the same legal standing as adoption;
- the figures for adoption were cumulative and the outturn for the year end was good at 10.4%.

In the discussion around the performance report, the following further points were made:

- in cases where it was clear during a pregnancy that a child would have to be taken into care as soon as it was born, the assessment process started at 22/23 weeks;
- adoptive parents could take on dual status to become foster carers before the adoption process was complete but if the adoption process was unsuccessful it was acknowledged that this could be very difficult for the those carers due to the attachment they would have established with the child;
- in Nottingham 93% of children were adopted within 12 months (quarter 2 of 2011);
- there were 65 children in Nottingham waiting to be adopted.

RESOLVED that the information provided on adoption and permanency be noted.