

## **NOTTINGHAM CITY COUNCIL**

### **CORPORATE PARENTING BOARD**

**MINUTES of the meeting held at Loxley House on 3 JUNE 2013 from 2.30 pm to 4.07 pm**

- ✓ Councillor David Mellen (Chair)
- Councillor Ginny Klein (Vice-Chair)
- Councillor Georgina Culley
- ✓ Councillor Emma Dewinton
- ✓ Councillor Glyn Jenkins
- ✓ Councillor Carole McCulloch
- ✓ Councillor Eileen Morley
- Councillor Jackie Morris
- ✓ Councillor Wendy Smith

- ✓ indicates present at meeting

#### **Colleagues, partners and others in attendance:**

Miss Heidi Watson - Business in the Community  
Gill Moy - Nottingham City Homes

Elise Darragh ) Analysis and Insight ) Children and  
Kwesi Williams ) ) Families  
Sharon Clarke ) Children in Care )  
Paul Wilkinson ) )  
Lynn Pearce - 15 + Team )  
Dorne Collinson ) Safeguarding )  
Caroline Riley ) )

Evonne Rogers ) Business Strategy & Support ) Resources  
Lewis Fearon ) )  
Catherine Ziane-Pryor - Constitutional Services )

#### **1 APPOINTMENT OF VICE CHAIR**

**RESOLVED to appoint Councillor Ginny Klein as Vice-Chair for the municipal year 2013/14.**

#### **2 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Councillor Ginny Klein ) Other Council Business  
Councillor Jackie Morris )  
Councillor Georgina Culley  
Lorna Beedham  
Helen Blackman  
Paulette Thompson-Omenka

### **3 DECLARATIONS OF INTERESTS**

None

### **4 MINUTES**

#### **a) Confirmation**

The Board confirmed the minutes of the meeting held on 18 March 2013 as a correct record and they were signed by the Chair.

#### **b) Matters Arising**

With regard to the Performance indicators, Councillors requested that the figure referring to BME young people reflect the percentage of young population in the City. Colleagues assured the Board that this will be achieved within the new format of the report which will be available at the next meeting.

### **5 CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE'S PARTICIPATION**

Dorne Collinson and Caroline Riley from the Safeguarding Team presented the report which informed the Board of the proportion of children and young people , by age, who participated at some level in their looked after reviews, and the proposals to increase participation.

It was noted that since February 2012, when a programme to improve participation was applied, the participation rate had increased. The service had given further consideration to how best to engage children and young people in reviews by giving them a say in how they are held and having more discussion between meetings.

The figures for participation of Children in Care (CiC) were the same for both internal and external (outside the City) reviews, in spite of some distance issues. As expected, older children tended to participate more in person in their reviews.

Colleagues made the following points and responded to questions from the Board:

- (a) an IRO (Independent Reviewing Officer) is independent of the Local Authority with a role of monitoring and scrutinising the care of young people in Local Authority Care. They have a legal duty to raise issues if they believe that care is not of the highest standard and the children and young people are not receiving the service they deserve;
- (b) there is an expectation that, right from the start, Social Workers will discuss and explain with CiC, the expectations and process of reviews, including where they might be held ,who should sit where, and how they will be conducted;
- (c) it is important that CiC have a say in how the review takes place and feel that it is theirs. When they understand how it can benefit them, their engagement improves;
- (d) young people have contributed to a new leaflet for CiC which explains the role of the IRO;

- (e) the young person's preparation for the review is also important so it is vital that a good relationship was built between them and the IRO with open communication routes. Meeting regularly face to face often forges a stronger relationship;
- (f) where the IRO has concerns, they meet with the Social Worker to discuss the issues but if the young person is practice based, the IRO raises them with the Team/Principle Manager;
- (g) there was a target of 90% for the participation of CiC. It is not necessary that all participation takes place on a one to one basis, it is acceptable for other methods of communication to be considered, including over the telephone or by video/DVD. The service is giving further consideration to including other methods which applied modern technologies, such as web-cam conferencing, which young people are familiar with.

Members of the Board welcomed the progress achieved and expressed interest in receiving the IRO leaflet.

## **RESOLVED**

### **(1) to note:**

- (i) the current levels of performance in relation to child participation;**
- (ii) the suggested improvements in relation to performance, as follows:**
  - (a) reducing Independent Review Officer caseloads;**
  - (b) distributing 'Your IRO' leaflet to children and young people in care;**
  - (c) ensuring that young people in care who are remanded by youth justice courts, have a voice in their plans that aims to divert them from re-offending;**
  - (d) using evidence base tools from solution focused therapy as a means of capturing the child or young person's voice regarding their care;**

### **(2) to request Dorne Collinson to provide copies of the IRO Leaflet to the Board once it is produced.**

## **6 PERFORMANCE INDICATORS**

Elise Darragh, of Analysis and Insight, presented the monthly performance information, including March 2013, of both nationally and locally required indicators, enabling comparisons to be drawn against previous months and statistically comparable local authority neighbours.

The performance statistics are summarised below:

<b>Short Name</b>	<b>Outturn 11/12</b>	<b>Target 12/13</b>	<b>March '13</b>
Number of Children in Care	541	524	<b>556</b>
Rate per 10,000 of Children in Care	86.6	83.8	<b>89</b>
Number of Admissions to Care	243	No target set	<b>20</b>
Number of Discharges from Looked After	221	No target set	<b>26</b>
Representation BME Children in Care to BME population	9.6%	No target set	<b>6.2%</b>
Stability of placements of Children in Care: length of placement	73.1%	67.0%	<b>68.0%</b>
Children in Care cases which were reviewed within required timescales	94.6%	97.0%	<b>94.8%</b>
Participation in Reviews	85.9%	90.0%	<b>92.6%</b>
% of Children in Care for 3 months or more with an up-to-date health assessment	77.6%	80.0%	<b>79.6%</b>
% of Children in Care after for 3 months or more with an up-to-date dental check	82.7%	80.0%	<b>82.7%</b>
% of Children in Care after for 3 months or more with an up-to-date Strengths and Difficulties Questionnaire	90.0%	100.0%	<b>83.1%</b>
% CiC with a completed Personal Education Plan	98.0%	98.0%	<b>92.0%</b>
Percentage of eligible CiC who have a Pathway Plan commenced (age 15 <sup>3</sup> / <sub>4</sub> - 17)	New from Sep 12	100.0%	<b>69.8%</b>
% CiC allocated to a named social worker	100.0%	100.0%	<b>100.0%</b>

<b>Short Name</b>	<b>Outturn 11/12</b>	<b>Target 12/13</b>	<b>Q1</b>	<b>Q2</b>	<b>Q3</b>	<b>Q4</b>
Adoptions of CiC (including Special Guardianship Orders)	9.9%	13.0%	1.4%	6.1%	10.5%	<b>14.6%</b>
Timeliness of placements of Children in Care for adoption following an agency decision that the child should be placed for adoption	62.1%	68.5%	33.0%	71.4%	48.0%	<b>58.0%</b>
Stability of placements of Children in Care: number of moves (based on rolling 12 months)	11.5%	12.0%	9.8%	10.1%	10.9%	<b>11.2%</b>

Care leavers in suitable accommodation	80.4%	95.0%	100.0%	95.2%	95.2%	<b>92.3%</b>
Care leavers in employment, education or training	60.7%	60.0%	77.8%	52.4%	45.2%	<b>48.2%</b>

The Board noted that the information in the report relating to the 'Statistical Neighbour' was effectively a year out of date. As this could not be avoided, it should be used only as an indication for comparison.

The Board were informed that since the publication of this report, a family of 11 had unexpectedly entered the system.

Colleagues made the following points responded to questions from the Board:

- (a) the activity of young people in care is recorded until they reached the age of 21. Four young care leavers are currently placed within apprenticeships within the City Council;
- (b) with regard to 'timeliness of placements for adoption', the Government sets targets for each stage but it is for the Local Authority to determine where each child is in the process. There are a variety of reasons why delays occurred;
- (c) adoption reforms will ensure that there are no periods where time drifts between stages. Staff are fully committed to the welfare of the children and young people and acknowledge that there are financial implications but safeguarding duties remain paramount;
- (d) the investment in increasing the number of home finders has greatly improved the service but further work is still required;
- (e) monitoring, including reasons, for NEET (not in education, employment or training) could take place, and further information on introductions to work distributed to the relevant young people;
- (f) consideration could be given to help with travel costs for young people who attend work experience, apprenticeships and training as the cost of travel had been a deterrent for several young people;
- (g) when the welfare reforms are implemented in September, there was predicted an impact on 105 care leaver households due to the benefit cap.

**RESOLVED to note the report.**

## **7 PATHWAY PLANNING 15 PLUS SERVICE**

Sharon Clarke, Children in Care Service Manager, presented the report which explained the current issues regarding the legislative duties required of Nottingham City Council in respect of Pathway Planning for Care Leavers, and the importance of robust quality Pathway Plans in ensuring a smooth transition to adulthood.

The following points were made and responses given to questions of the Board:

- (a) the target for young people in care having an effective pathway plan must be 100% and there is a possibility of prosecution if this duty was not achieved. 90% of young people leaving the care of the Local Authority now have pathway plans. However, the figure is reported as being nearly 70% as the government has recently classified young people in custody as being in care. It is acknowledged that young offenders aged 16 to 18 are not likely to have a pathway plan if they are on remand for less than 13 weeks, although they are eligible for care services. 6 young people were remanded in the past week making a total of 15 since December 2012;
- (b) in addition to young offenders entering the pathway planning process at a late stage, asylum seeker young people have also been included within the statistical calculation which added to slippage in achieving the 100% target;
- (c) at the age of 16, question and answer meetings are held with social workers and managers when the pathway plan was complete to ensure that all information and contacts which may be needed to the age of seventeen and a half years is available to support the young person through the next stage;
- (d) for young people in residential care, there is a dedicated advisor as they are considered more vulnerable;
- (e) the Youth Offending Team (YOT) and 'Futures' worked hard within a protocol with the CiC team and try hard to prevent young people entering the care and/or offender system.

## **RESOLVED**

- (1) to offer commitment to and acknowledgement of the importance of Pathway Planning for young people;**
- (2) to recognise the work undertaken by Personal Advisors/Social Workers in the 15 Plus Service in ensuring quality robust Pathway Planning.**

## **8 NEET/EET CARE LEAVERS**

Lynn Pearce of the 15+ Team presented the report which informed the Panel of the current situation regarding care leavers both Not in Education, Employment, of Training (NEET), and those who are in Education, Employment, of Training (EET).

48.2% of care leavers are in EET, which is believed to be a reflection of the National economic picture of the age group. Efforts are being made to try and engage young people in more interesting ways, with meetings taking place every 3 months. The National Care Advisory Service Board (NCAS) have extended the virtual school to include care leavers as it is recognised that they needed support.

The apprentice scheme in Nottingham has been very successful. Further work is underway to try and encourage young people to access the information and advice available. A young care leaver, Lewis, is leading on this issue and, along with the Children in Care Council, has been very active in the 'Face Up' campaign. There is

potential for a 'Rise Again' campaign for the older age group of care leavers, but this is yet to be confirmed.

The Board noted that currently there are 7 young care leavers attending university, with more expected to enrol in September.

## **RESOLVED**

- (1) to continue to be the lead body in driving action across Nottingham City Council in respect of Education, Employment and Training for Care Leavers;**
- (2) to continue to offer commitment to the multi-agency focus group to drive opportunities for care leavers;**
- (3) to request Lynne Pearce to provide the Board with statistical data regarding NEETs and EETs for 16 and 19 year old care leavers.**

## **9 ACCOMODATION FOR CARE LEAVERS**

Gill Moy, Director of Nottingham City Homes, presented the report which updated the Board on the legislative duties of the City Council in providing sufficient accommodation for care leavers.

She made the following points:

- (a) it is important to ensure that young people have the necessary skills to maintain their tenancy, and partners need to help identify and resolve any issues where tenancies are at risk;
- (b) for semi-independent care leavers, it is believed that supported accommodation will be the most beneficial type of accommodation in assisting some young people with the transition to independence;
- (c) 'staying put' with foster careers is also potentially an option which will be promoted. However, once the young person turns 18, they became a lodger with their foster parents as landlords, which often complicates the situation;
- (d) as part of the pathway plan for each young person, discussions are held with the young people regarding what sort of accommodation would best suit each individual and support their needs. Support options included accommodation with partner social housing organisations;
- (e) preparation for moving on started well in advance of the event and supported/semi-independent living is a preferred option as this ensures that the young people are equipped for eventual independent living;
- (f) the target for care leavers in suitable accommodation is 95% and not 100% as it is predicted that there will be a small percentage who will remain in or enter custody and this cannot be considered 'suitable accommodation';

- (g) on the rare occasions where the young person has tried independent living but it hasn't worked, there is always a contingency plan. It is not always possible to place them with a foster carer so some, where appropriate, are placed in semi-independent living accommodation;
- (h) once reaching the age of 18, the majority of young people prefer independent living but it is predicted that there may be issues for some young people with regard to the welfare reforms;
- (i) there is a very small number of young people who, once leaving care, severed contact, often as they no longer want Local Authority involvement, even though the Local Authority continue to have a duty of care;
- (j) if young care leavers want accommodation in the area in which they grew up and the network with partners existed, it is sometimes possible to achieve. However, Nottingham was considered the propriety location.

**RESOLVED to continue to:**

- (i) offer commitment to ensuring , as Corporate Parents , that Care Leavers from Nottingham City receive sufficient and appropriate housing;**
- (ii) commit to the protocol between Nottingham City Homes and the Children and Families Service implemented as a partnership to improve outcomes for Care Leavers.**