

NOTTINGHAM CITY COUNCIL

CORPORATE PARENTING BOARD

MINUTES of the meeting held at Ground Floor Committee Room - Loxley House, Station Street, Nottingham, NG2 3NG on 18 March 2019 from 2:30pm to 3:44pm

Membership

Present

Councillor David Mellen (Chair)
Councillor Ginny Klein (Vice Chair)
Councillor Jim Armstrong
Councillor Glyn Jenkins
Councillor Neghat Khan
Councillor Wendy Smith (items 51-54)
Councillor Marcia Watson
Councillor Cate Woodward

Absent

Councillor Nicola Heaton
Councillor Sue Johnson

Colleagues, partners and others in attendance:

BB	- Foster Carer
Clive Chambers	- Head of Safeguarding and Quality Assurance
Sam Flint	- Children in Care Police Officer
Adrian Mann	- Governance Officer
Tracy Nurse	- Head of Children's Social Work
Racheal Osborne	- CSE Coordinator and Missing Children's Team Manager
Natalie Pink	- Youth Justice Service Lead for Children in Care
Jordan Whatman	- Project Officer, Children in Care

51 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Councillor Nicola Heaton	-	Work commitments
Councillor Sue Johnson	-	Council business

52 DECLARATIONS OF INTERESTS

None.

53 MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting held on 18 January 2019 were confirmed as a true record and signed by the Chair.

54 THE RESPONSE TO MISSING CHILDREN

Racheal Osborne, CSE Coordinator and Missing Children's Team Manager, presented a report on the local arrangements in place to respond to children who go missing from home or care. The following points were discussed:

- (a) the national guidance for dealing with missing children cases changed from March 2018. Children are now defined as either missing at a medium or high risk, or missing at no apparent risk. Missing with 'no apparent risk' is often used when a child has left their designated place of residence without authorisation, but has gone to a known location (such as the home of a friend or relative). The cases of children who do this regularly are re-assessed. The new system had some issues initially, but it is now working well. The new national guidance relates to a Police assessment of risk and the Council still has its own local protocols where approaches all instances of missing children in the same way, with the cases remaining open until the child is found and returned;
- (b) a definition of child criminal exploitation has been introduced due to instances of children going missing and being taken to other areas, but not for reasons of sexual exploitation. A toolkit is available to help workers identify potential cases, which are then screened by managers and discussed at strategy meetings. A Child Criminal Exploitation Panel meets once per month and takes a professional, multi-disciplinary approach to establish what is known about a child and to develop a profile to mitigate against the risk. The Multi-Agency Sexual Exploitation Panel continues to meet monthly. Monthly meetings are also held with the Police to discuss children who go missing repeatedly and the Police now have a coordinator for missing children cases, which provides a point of contact for swift liaison;
- (c) where children are known to gather at specific hotels or other venues, staff are given training on what warning signs to look out for. The hotels receive alerts about missing children and will report cases that concern them to the relevant authorities. A team can be deployed to disrupt these groups, working with the hotel management. Adults booking rooms at these hotels are not able to do so using cash, making the bookings easier to trace.

RESOLVED to note the report on the local arrangements in place to respond to children who go missing from home or care.

55 EDGE OF CARE SERVICES

Tracey Nurse, Head of Children's Social Work, presented a report on the effectiveness of services provided at the edge of care to help prevent family breakdown. The following points were discussed:

- (a) the Edge of Care Panel is a multi-agency meeting that occurs weekly and considers up to five cases where there is a risk of family breakdown. Emergency cases are dealt with through a child's line management system. The panel identifies if a particular service is required to work with a family to help prevent breakdown and has an evidence base to evaluate if the risk of breakdown is imminent, or likely to be at some point in the future, if a service is not provided. This supports the evaluation of the impact of the service;
- (b) of the services available:
 - (i) the Targeted Family Support Team provides an emergency response to families at imminent risk of breakdown. It carries out a brief intervention over

6-8 weeks and convenes wider family network meetings to seek solutions to the challenges facing children and their families. In establishing the networks, checks on the wider family members are carried out and care workers meet with them individually to try and resolve any points of conflict. People who represent a potential risk will not be involved in the network, which is tailored on a case-by-case basis to create the best possible environment for the impacted child;

- (ii) Safe Families for Children is a faith-based organisation that provides trained volunteers to support and befriend vulnerable families. It aims to prevent problems from escalating and provide support to families in crisis. It can provide children with overnight stays, along with mentoring support and resources, to help relieve family pressures;
 - (iii) Multi-Systemic Therapy (Standard) is an intensive family-based intervention that targets the multiple causes of serious antisocial behaviour in young. It operates 24 hours a day, seven days a week, and families can call their therapist at any time. Since 2013, it has worked with more than 200 families. During this financial year, it has helped 41 families with 61 children in total (40 whom were at immediate risk of coming into care) and achieved a 99.5% success rate;
 - (iv) Multi-Systemic Therapy Child Abuse and Neglect is an intensive service for families where children are subject to Child Protection Plans or within Public Law Outline. It also operates 24 hours a day, seven days a week, and families can call their therapist at any time. All families receive family safety planning and other forms of support/guidance. The children supported by this service are on the edge of coming into care through care proceedings and are deemed to be at risk of significant harm. During this financial year, it has helped 10 families with 40 children in total and achieved a 90% success rate (though strategic planning is carried out on the basis of a 40% failure rate);
 - (v) the Edge of Care Hub works with families with multiple complex issues including active and historic domestic violence, mental health, substance misuse, neglect and a range of other issues. The Hub has four years of evidence-based practice that demonstrates that it has been successful addressing many complex issues and in supporting children to remain at home where it is safe to do so. During this financial year, it has worked with 32 families with 71 children in total (40 of which were at imminent risk) and achieved a success rate of 90.4%;
- (c) family issues are in danger of escalating when it is not possible for them to make their rent payments, so there is a close working relationship with Housing Aid, which has a representative on the Edge of Care Panel, and related training is being provided to social care workers. Housing Aid also works positively with care leavers;
- (d) the local priority is to work hard to support children in their own homes so that they can remain with their parents whenever it is possible and safe;

- (e) interested Board members would be very welcome to observe a meeting of the Edge of Care Panel during the upcoming 2019/20 municipal year.

RESOLVED to note the important edge of care services being delivered and the need for new investment in the Edge of Care Hub from March 2020.

56 REDUCING OFFENDING BEHAVIOUR

Sam Flint and Natalie Pink, Children in Care Police Officer and Youth Justice Service Lead for Children in Care, presented a report on the measures in place and progress towards reducing offending behaviour within the Children in Care population, and for reducing the criminalisation of offenders. The following points were discussed:

- (a) the published data for 2017/18 shows that the rate of offending behaviour has been maintained at 6%. However, the aim is to reduce the figure further, with a focus on getting the right people involved with children who enter the care system with a pre-existing record of offending. Funding is provided from both the Police and Social Care services to ensure sustainable Children in Care Police Officer services. A multi-agency protocol to reduce offending is now embedded and stronger working links have been formed with the County Council, which is now also recruiting a Children in Care Police Officer;
- (b) 'The national protocol on reducing unnecessary criminalisation of looked-after children and care leavers' was published in November 2018 and the current local protocol mirrors many of its elements. Service providers met in March 2018 to discuss the new protocol and how best to support children in the criminal justice system through restorative approaches. Training on restorative approaches is being offered free to all Local Authority care homes and at a competitive fee to other private providers. Practitioner forums including Local Authorities, internal and private providers, and foster carers are in place to explore current and raised issues, with sessions so far focusing on managing weapon enabled offending and the effects of the recent General Data Protection Regulation;
- (c) multi-agency networking meetings are held every two months to discuss disruption strategies for child sexual exploitation and more funding has been secured to continue a free girls-only boxing club for female children at risk of this type of abuse;
- (d) there is a national focus on children held in Police cells, which is broader than just children who are in care. Significant work has been undertaken locally to address this issue.

RESOLVED to:

- (1) note the report on the data regarding offending behaviour, and the importance of early identification and intervention to achieve its reduction, within the Children in Care population;**
- (2) recognise the importance of sustaining the work of the Children in Care Police Officers and the benefits of diversification of the Youth Justice Service Lead role in safeguarding children in care.**

57 CHILDREN IN CARE COUNCIL

Nothing to report.

58 FORWARD PLANNER

The Chair introduced the Board's Forward Plan for the next municipal year, which could be subject to change following the outcomes of the full City Council elections in May.

RESOLVED to note the Forward Plan.