

Nottingham City Council

Corporate Parenting Board

Minutes of the meeting held remotely and livestreamed on YouTube on 16 November 2020 from 2.30 pm - 3.32 pm

Membership

Present

Councillor Cheryl Barnard (Chair)
Councillor Jay Hayes (Vice Chair)
Councillor Nicola Heaton
Councillor Phil Jackson
Councillor Maria Joannou
Councillor Neghat Khan
Councillor Rebecca Langton
Councillor Maria Watson
Councillor Cate Woodward

Absent

Councillor Georgia Power

Colleagues, partners and others in attendance:

Gillian Black	- Project Manager, Change Grow Live
Helen Blackman	- Director of Children's Integrated Services
Clive Chambers	- Head of Safeguarding and Quality Assurance
Mark Leavesley	- Governance Officer
Jon Rea	- Engagement and Participation Lead Officer
Patrick Skeete	- Social Care Complaints Manager
Gabriel Hall	- Area Manager) The Children's Society
Alison Smith	- Service Manager)

16 Apologies for absence

Sophie Russell

Helen Blackman - attended for minutes 19 and 20 (items 4 and 5) only

17 Declarations of Interests

None.

18 Minutes

Subject to changing on page 6 'additional *pointed*' to 'additional *points*', the Committee agreed the minutes of the meeting held on 21 September 2020 as a correct record and they were signed by the Chair.

19 Children in Care - social care complaints

Patrick Skeete, Social Care Complaints Manager, presented the report, summarising the statutory Social Care Complaints procedure (SCC), which ensured young people had a robust process to share worries or concerns about the service and/or support they received, and highlighting complaints made specifically by children in care, in

accordance with the SCC. The report also focused on the nature of the complaints made and whether they were addressed within the statutory timescales.

In response to questions, Mr Skeete gave the following information:

- i. the Stage 2 complaint in the report (table in section 2.12, complaint 12) was not upheld as it was due to circumstances out of the authorities control;
- ii. the response time to complaints is now back on track as delays were due to the previous pandemic lockdown, although the average delay was still only 3 days late during those months;
- iii. while the complaints process is a formal one, determined by statute, children can complain informally by text etc if they are not aware of the formal process;
- iv. there is no particular theme arising from the complaints as they tend to cover a range of issues.

Resolved that the Board continues to support effective complaints handling, and acts as corporate parents, in relation to addressing the concerns of young people in care.

20 Independent Visitor Service - Annual Report 2019/20

Gillian Black, Project Manager at Change Grow Live, presented the report, detailing the Change Grow Live Nottingham City and Nottinghamshire County Council Independent Visitor Project Annual Report 2019-20.

Ms Black stated that the project is jointly funded by the Councils and is designed to meet the needs of children irrespective of where their placement is.

In response to a question, Ms Black stated that visitors are matched with a child or young person until they are 18 years old, but this can be extended, currently up to 25, if the young person has additional needs.

It was stated that the independent visitor service was a further important safeguard for children in care and provides them with valuable social experiences.

Resolved to note the Independent Visitor Project Annual Report 2019-20.

21 Independent Advocacy Annual Report 2019-20

Gabriel Hall (Area Manager) and Alison Smith (Service Manager), The Children's Society, presented the Independent Advocacy Service Annual Report 2019-20.

They stated that the Children's Society is jointly commissioned by Nottingham City and Nottinghamshire County Councils to deliver an independent Advocacy Service for all children in their care, promoting children's rights and providing advocacy in line with each local authority's statutory duty, and underpinned by the 'National Standards for the provision of Children's Advocacy Services (2002)'.

It was also stated that across the UK, there had been a reduction in the number of children leaving care in every age band, apart from in the 16-18 year old group, which had increased.

Resolved to note the Independent Advocacy Service Annual Report 2019-20.

22 Children in Care Council update

Jon Rea, Engagement and Participation Lead Officer, updated the Board as follows:

- i. the Children in Care Council (CiC) is currently working on ways to work more closely with Board members and make it more empowering for young people;
- ii. at a recent meeting with Councillor Barnard, a discussion around the number of different issues affecting young people was held, and this will be used as the starting point for future small, informal discussions between members of the Board and young people. The first being a meeting before Christmas to discuss the pressures facing young people, with the outcome being reported to the January meeting of the Board;
- iii. there is an open invitation to members of this Board to attend the CiC monthly meetings;
- iv. the 'Have Your Say' survey is currently live and a link has been sent to young people to complete (via 'Snap Survey'), with a deadline for completion of 11 December;
- v. the 'Mind My Own' app is currently being used to encourage workers to access training. It has also seen a rise in numbers of young people using it to provide feedback and to report concerns;
- vi. a new Principle Social Worker has been recruited and the Young Person's Panel included a current and a past member of the CiC. The Panel were commended for their excellent contribution to the recruitment process;
- vii. the last CiC of the year will be a 'Christmas special' and will be held on 14 December, to which all Board members are invited.

Resolved to note the update.

23 Future meeting arrangements - proposal

The Chair proposed new arrangements for the Committee to support effective Board discussions, prioritising the views of children and young people, and demonstrating the impact of partnerships to support children in care and care leavers in Nottingham City.

Resolved that the new arrangements as per the report be agreed, including:

- (1) having a single, themed discussion at each meeting, commencing with 'Health and Wellbeing' at the next meeting in January 2021;**

- (2) for each 'theme', an identified member of the Board will work with representatives of the Children in Care Council to gather the views of a wider group of children and young people, identify key areas for exploration by the Board, and present their findings to the Board for discussion;**
- (3) changing the start time of meetings from 2.30pm to 5.30pm to support the involvement and attendance of young people by ensuring it takes place outside of standard school/college/work hours;**
- (4) extending the standing membership of the Board by seeking representatives from:**
 - The Independent Reviewing Service;**
 - The Virtual School;**
 - Nottingham City Homes;**
 - Housing Aid;**
 - The Local Clinical Commissioning Group;**
 - Nottingham City Public Health;**
 - The Department for Work and Pensions.**

24 Date of next meeting

Following the decision in minute 23 above, the Committee agreed to meet at 5.30pm, instead of 2.30pm, on Monday 18 January 2021 (either at Loxley House or remotely via Zoom, depending on the pandemic situation at the time).