

NOTTINGHAM CITY COUNCIL

CORPORATE PARENTING BOARD

MINUTES of the meeting held at Loxley House, Nottingham on 19 November 2018 from 2.30 pm - 4.04 pm

Membership

Present

Councillor David Mellen (Chair)
Councillor Ginny Klein (Vice Chair)
Councillor Jim Armstrong
Councillor Glyn Jenkins
Councillor Wendy Smith
Councillor Marcia Watson
Councillor Cate Woodward

Absent

Councillor Nicola Heaton
Councillor Sue Johnson
Councillor Neghat Khan

Colleagues, partners and others in attendance:

Gillian Black	- SOVA
Clive Chambers	- Head of Children in Care
Gabriel Hall	- The Children's Society
Kathryn Higgins	- Greater Nottingham Clinical Commissioning Group
Kelise Knowles	- Care Leaver representative
Alison Smith	- The Children's Society
Claire Tagg	- Greater Nottingham Clinical Commissioning Group
Jordan Whatman	- Project Officer, Children in Care
Phil Wye	- Governance Officer

30 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Councillor Nicola Heaton – work commitments
Councillor Sue Johnson - unwell
Councillor Neghat Khan – leave
Helen Blackman, Director of Children's Integrated Services
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31 DECLARATIONS OF INTERESTS

None.

32 MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting held on 17 September 2018 were confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

33 THE HEALTH OF CHILDREN IN CARE OF THE LOCAL AUTHORITY 2017/18

Kathryn Higgins and Claire Tagg introduced the report providing the second Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG) Children in Care annual report providing assurances that Nottingham City CCG is fulfilling its statutory responsibilities to children as outlined in the Children Act 1989 and associated guidance. The following information was highlighted:

- (a) the CCG continues to commission two providers to undertake medical assessments of Children in Care in the city. Medical services are provided by the Nottingham University Hospitals NHS Trust and nursing services are provided by Nottinghamshire Healthcare NHS Foundation Trust. CAMHS services are jointly commissioned by the CCG and Nottingham City Council;
- (b) the CCG also has responsibility for the medical and nursing needs of Looked After Children that are in the care of other local authorities but placed in Nottingham City;
- (c) the Nottinghamshire Children in Care Service Improvement Forum was established in December 2016. It has developed an action plan to look at risks, service gaps and improvements with agreement from city and county local authorities, CCGs and health providers;
- (d) a project is underway to improve the collection and reporting of data on Nottingham City and Nottinghamshire Children in Care, following a successful bid to NHS England for funding;
- (e) a Care Leaver workshop was held in July 2017 to review support around health, with a Care Leaver working group being established to review and implement recommendations from the workshop;
- (f) in 2018/19 a priority will be to ensure quality assurance of medical assessments for all Children in Care placed out of the city. There will also be further work to consider young people who do not engage, unaccompanied asylum seeker children and those in secure accommodation.

The following points were raised during the discussion which followed:

- (g) care for Children in Care placed out of area can vary across the country and Nottingham has no jurisdiction over this. In Nottinghamshire and Nottingham City it has been agreed that all children will receive the same standard of care regardless of who the placing authority is;
- (h) there are many factors when deciding where a Child in Care will be placed, not only medical care. However, more robust data will be useful to identify any problem locations so that the council can take a proactive approach to addressing any issues.

RESOLVED to

- (1) note that health providers supported by the Designated Professionals will continue to work with the Service Improvement Forum and associated working groups with the aim to improve the health outcomes for Children in**

Care;

- (2) note that revised CCG pathways for out of area placements and other local authority placements in the city are to be implemented in 2019;**
- (3) note that health providers supported by the Designated Professionals will continue to work with the Local Authority, other partner agencies and Commissioners in planning for and ensuring adequate health provision for Care Leavers.**

34 THE CHILDREN'S SOCIETY: INDEPENDENT ADVOCACY ANNUAL REPORT 2018

Alison Smith and Gabriel Hall introduced the report providing an update on the children's advocacy services provided by The Children's Society on behalf of the council. The following information was highlighted:

- (a) The Children's Society is a national charity that works with the country's most vulnerable children and young people and lobbies for national policy change;
- (b) the advocacy service for Children in Care has been jointly commissioned to by Nottingham City and Nottinghamshire Councils. The Children's Society provide Advocacy, Residential Visiting Advocacy, Issue Based Advocacy and Independent Persons services;
- (c) across the county and city there is one manager and 5 advocates. All residential units should be visited no less than once every eight weeks. During June, July and August 2018 a total of 79% of all residential homes were visited within this timeframe and this figure is improving;
- (d) there has been an increase in the number of issues raised by young people, such as issues around placements, lack of support from social workers, requests for placement changes and lack of reviews;
- (e) the advocates have been allocated homes to ensure continuity for the young people, and advocates remain the same when a young person is moved between placements, where possible.

The following points were raised during the discussion which followed:

- (f) the reason that young people may want to change placement is that they have been placed outside the city and want to come back. There are also issues with young people feeling that social workers are not seeing them often enough;
- (g) the advocacy is always led by the young person and based on wishes and feelings which may not always be in their best interest;
- (h) if a child wants a new advocate they can be provide, and there is a complaints procedure if they are unhappy;

- (i) referrals are triaged by the manager and allocated appropriately to the advocates. Children and young people should be ideally visited within 72 hours, though this is not always possible if they live far away;
- (j) one of the advocates specialises in children with disabilities and special educational needs.

RESOLVED to note the contents of the report.

35 INDEPENDENT VISITOR SERVICE – SOVA

Gillian Black introduced the report introducing the Board to SOVA as a service provider, updating the Board on the Independent Visitor Service since the contract began in November 2017. The following information was highlighted:

- (a) Independent Visitors (IVs) are adult volunteers who serve as positive role models for Children in Care. They meet monthly and take part in activities, chosen by the IV and child together;
- (b) there are currently 19 active matches in place, with 10 children awaiting a best match.

The following points were raised during the discussion which followed:

- (c) if an IV has to stop volunteering due to personal circumstances they are asked to contact the child themselves to discuss and explain the situation;
- (d) volunteers are observed during their training to highlight their areas of interest and they are matched to children by SOVA accordingly. Views of social workers and foster carers are taken into account but it is ultimately the child's decision;
- (e) it would be helpful if the child received an information sheet with a photograph and some basic likes and dislikes prior to meeting their IV.

RESOLVED to note the contents of the report.

36 CHILDREN IN CARE AND CARE LEAVERS STRATEGY 2018 – 2020

Clive Chambers introduced the report providing an update on the Children in Care and Care Leavers Strategy which sets out how the council will meet its responsibilities as the Corporate Parent for Children in Care. Seven strategic priorities (or promises) have been identified that represent areas that require improvement in order to achieve the best possible outcomes for Children in Care and Care Leavers. The following points were raised during the discussion which followed:

- (a) the promises themselves could be made clearer within the document, and in bold. It could also include contact details for Advocacy and Independent Visitor services;

- (b) the introduction could include more information on how the council aspires to for children and young people in its care;
- (c) the promises are mapped against directorate priorities, what young people have told the council, and statutory guidance.

It was suggested that assessments and Personal Education Plan meetings during school hours can be disruptive to education and cause problems at school.

RESOLVED to

(1) agree the strategic priorities, and accepting them as 'corporate parenting objectives;

(2) endorse the Children in Care and Care Leavers Strategy 2018-2020.

37 CHILDREN IN CARE SERVICE PERFORMANCE REPORT: QUARTER 1 / QUARTER 2 2018 - 2019

Clive Chambers introduced the report providing the Board with the most up to date Children in Care performance data covering the first and second quarters of the 2018-19 financial year.

RESOLVED to acknowledge the current performance position of the Children in Care service.

38 CHILDREN IN CARE COUNCIL

Kelise Knowles and Jordan Whatman gave a verbal update on recent and upcoming meetings and events of the Children in Care Council. The Council has recently spoken to Ofsted and worked on the Local Offer for Care Leavers. The Big It Up awards will take place soon, and a Christmas meeting is planned with the Sheriff.

39 CHAIR'S UPDATE

A report will be published on Nottingham and Nottinghamshire following the Independent Inquiry into Child Sexual Abuse early next year, with the overall thematic report, focussing on the role of local authorities generally, being published at a later date.

The Local Offer for Care Leavers will be shared with Board Members for their comments and is attached to these minutes.

40 FORWARD PLANNER

The forward plan was noted.