

8 July 2013**Agenda Item: 7****REPORT OF THE SERVICE DIRECTOR, CHILDREN'S SOCIAL CARE****ROTA VISITS TO CHILDREN'S HOMES: FEBRUARY AND MARCH 2013****Purpose of the Report**

1. To inform the Committee of the outcome of six-monthly rota visits to Nottinghamshire County Council's children's homes that took place in February and March 2013.
2. To seek approval for the Chair of the Corporate Parenting Sub-Committee, with the Group Manager, Access to Resources, to manage the arrangements for six-monthly rota visits by councillors and ensuring that those councillors undertaking rota visits receive an appropriate induction.

Information and Advice

3. **Lyndene** children's home was visited on 11 March 2013 Councillor Ged Clarke. The visit was very positive, with Councillor Clarke able to see the improvements made in the working partnerships with Child & Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS), offering a consultative resource for the carers within the home. All young people have their own bank accounts, and there were good education packages evident. Young people are involved in interviews for carers, and attend their own reviews. He also noted the home has a good, co operative working relationship with the police on matters of safeguarding. There were no recommendations.
4. **Caudwell House** was visited on 12 February 2013 by Councillor Allen Clarke. This was also a very positive visit. Councillor Clarke commented that "All bedrooms are personalised with young people having access to a TV and music". Health colleagues provide robust packages of training on health issues with yearly refreshers. All young people have residential plans that address the five outcomes in Every Child Matters, and they are involved in decisions at all levels, dependent on their abilities. Young people can request a short break with their peers, to develop friendships. There was one recommendation: *"IT equipment needs updating. Suggest an urgent assessment takes place"*. This is a continuing debate with IT resources.
5. **Minster View** was visited on 12 February 2013, also by Councillor Allen Clarke. He recorded that the internal rooms in the home are all maintained to a very high standard, recognising the hard work and dedication of the carers and handyperson. All young people have regular health appointments, clear behaviour management plans and robust safeguarding processes. There is a range of activities available to promote positive behaviours, friendships and learning. The home also works very closely with special schools. Councillor Clarke observed that the guttering on the building is leaking and is

affecting the electrics, and this needs replacing. This is currently on the list with Property Services, and has been for the last year. There was one recommendation: "To discuss with highways regarding access to Minster View in severe weather". This is being addressed in preparation for this winter.

6. **Oakhurst** was visited on 25 February by Councillors Fiona Asbury and Bob Cross. Councillor Asbury was able to see the refurbished bathroom, which was a recommendation from her last visit. All young people have clear residential plans detailing behaviour management strategies and risk assessments, which are reviewed at least monthly. The home is well decorated and maintained. There was one recommendation: "Upgrade the children's computers' memory". This is being addressed by the manager.
7. **West View** was visited on 4 March 2013 by Councillor Bob Cross. He noted that young people were being kept safe, and the home had good links with CAMHS. Young people have clear care and residential plans, and are encouraged to develop independent living skills. There were two recommendations: "Bay roof leaking and needs attention. Saniflow toilet is dirty/smelly/unhygienic and needs replacing". This work is still outstanding. The bay window work is due to take place soon, since being reported in December 2012. .
8. **The Big House** was visited on 18 February 2013 by Councillors Ged Clarke and John Allin. It is again noted that the current building is in poor condition, and not fit for purpose. Councillors record "Staff are of the highest standard" and young people have robust care plans which address all their care, leisure and health needs. There were no recommendations.
9. **Clayfields House**: there was no report available for Clayfields House.

Other Options Considered

10. As this is a report for noting, it is not necessary to consider other options.

Reason/s for Recommendation/s

11. The report is for noting only.

Statutory and Policy Implications

12. This report has been compiled after consideration of implications in respect of finance, public sector equality duty, human resources, crime and disorder, human rights, the safeguarding of children, sustainability and the environment and those using the service and where such implications are material they are described below. Appropriate consultation has been undertaken and advice sought on these issues as required.

Equalities Implications

13. Due regard has been given to the Public Sector Equality Duty.

RECOMMENDATION/S

That:

- 1) the outcome of six-monthly rota visits to Nottinghamshire County Council's children's homes that took place in February and March 2013 be noted.
- 2) approval be given for the Chair of the Corporate Parenting Sub-Committee, with the Group Manager, Access to Resources, to manage the arrangements for six-monthly rota visits by councillors and ensuring that those councillors undertaking rota visits receive an appropriate induction.

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Constitutional Comments

14. As this report is for noting only, no Constitutional Comments are required.

Financial Comments (KLA 20/06/13)

15. There are no financial implications arising directly from this report.

Background Papers

None.

Electoral Division(s) and Member(s) Affected

All.

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