

Meeting: Corporate Parenting Panel

Date: Tuesday 15 October 2024 (commencing at 2:00pm)

Membership:**COUNCILLORS**

Sinead Anderson (Chairman)

Anne Callaghan BEM
Francis Purdue-Horan
Mike Introna – **Apologies**

OTHER COUNCILLORS IN ATTENDANCE:

Councillor Tracey Taylor

OFFICERS IN ATTENDANCE:

Sarah Ashton	-	Democratic Services Officer
Heather Bennett	-	Executive Officer for Children and Families
Amanda Collinson	-	Service Director for Care, Help and Protection
Beth Downing	-	Group Manager for Placements and Commissioning
Sophie Eadsforth	-	Group Manager for Looked After Children
James Lavender	-	Democratic Services Officer
Davinia Lawton	-	Service Manager for Residential and Contact Services
Stephanie McGill	-	Assistant Head of Virtual Schools
Pip Milbourne	-	Business Support Administrator
Paul Thomas	-	Service Manager Secure Accommodation
Matt Wesson	-	Service Manager Fostering Services
Jenny Whiston	-	Group Manager for Fostering, Residential and Secure Accommodation
Ty Yousaf	-	Group Manager for Strategic Safeguarding

ALSO IN ATTENDANCE:

Lauren Monaghan - Notts TV

1 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies were received from Cllr Introna with Cllr Taylor substituting.

2 DECLARATIONS OF INTERESTS BY MEMBERS AND OFFICERS

There were no declarations of interest.

3 MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING HELD ON 2 JULY 2024

The minutes of the meeting held on 2 July 2024, having been circulated previously, were confirmed as correct and signed by the Chairman.

4 FOSTER CARERS LIAISON GROUP UPDATE

Amanda Collinson, Service Director for Help, Protection and Care, and Jenny Whiston, Group Manager for Fostering, Residential and Secure Accommodation, presented the Panel with a regular update on the recent meetings of the Foster Carers Liaison Group (FLAG). The following points were discussed:

FLAG meet every two months; it continues to go well with good attendance and contribution from carers and partners. This has been a significant change in recent months and one that carers are happy about.

The Foster carer Hubs are held regularly and the new Childrens Service Manager has been attending these around the county. Feedback about Foster carers being listened to and included has been positive from recent events held and been acknowledged at FLAG.

RESOLVED 2024/029

That the update be noted.

5 CHILDREN IN CARE COUNCIL UPDATE

Sophie Eadsforth, Group Manager for Looked After Children, provided an update on the work of the Children in Care Council (CiCC). The following points were discussed:

The last CiCC meeting didn't go ahead due to the young people having other commitments and so the next meeting is scheduled for 2nd December but that professionals continue to seek the views of the children in care Council when needed. The Local Offer for Care Leavers has been launched and is available for anyone to view via the Notts Help Yourself webpage; [Nottshelpyourself](#). We have been working on a specialist Health Local Offer which is currently with the

design and print team and so more information can be shared at the next Corporate Parenting meeting.

RESOLVED 2024/030

That the update be noted.

6 UPDATE ON NOTTINGHAMSHIRE CHILDREN'S RESIDENTIAL HOMES AND SECURE ACCOMMODATION SERVICE

Davinia Lawton, Service Manager for Residential and Contact Services, and Paul Thomas, Service Manager for Secure Accommodation, presented an update on the status of children's residential homes and secure accommodation within Nottinghamshire. The following points were discussed:

Ofsted visited at CFH received a 'Good' judgement, with special mentions with regards to the health and protection experience. The inspectors highlighted areas that needed to be improved but these were already in our forward plan, they will continue with regulatory visits going forward. Members recognised the improvements.

CWH, the Registered Manager has retired and the Deputy Manager is temporarily taking on the role, unfortunately they haven't had any success in filling the position permanently. Interviewing early November 2024. They are receiving positive reports from the Regulation 44 (Reg 44) inspectors visits. Members who had visited acknowledged a feel-good factor; the care given was exceptional.

TBH, they are waiting for a further inspection. Their children have bespoke care packages, they have a stable staffing team to deliver their needs. The Registered Manager will be retiring in April 2025, recruitment is ongoing. Members who had visited commented that the staff were wonderful.

OH, following a recent Ofsted visit, the inspectors were very positive.

Members were concerned on how difficult the homes were finding it to recruit people to these demanding roles.

It was discussed that minutes should be formatted in line with Ofsted safeguarding guidelines; therefore, we will continue with abbreviations for our residential homes. It was acknowledged that this was a discrete way to protect the homes.

The Chair had visited several of NCC's residential homes over the Summer:

CWH – was impressed on how individual children's needs were catered for eg raised beds, sensory objects, and the interaction with staff you could see there was a real connection.

LNH – a real nice, homely feel, you wouldn't know it was a residential home it was just like a normal home.

OH – nice home.

RESOLVED 2024/031

That there were no further actions required at this time, that the report be noted.

7 INSPECTION GRADINGS OF 'EXCLUSIVE USE' CHILDREN'S RESIDENTIAL HOMES – SEPTEMBER 2024

Beth Downing, Group Manager for Placements and Commissioning, highlight various elements of the report, updating the Panel on the current performance of homes.

EC is a recently added home.

All NCC homes have a good or outstanding Ofsted rating.

RESOLVED 2024/032

That the report be noted.

The Panel asked that their thanks were re-laid back to the staff, that they appreciate their commitment to achieve these high standards, what they give every day to Nottinghamshire children in our care is inspirational.

8 PROGRESS OF THE PARTNERSHIP STRATEGY FOR NOTTINGHAMSHIRE LOOKED AFTER CHILDREN AND CARE LEAVERS 2022-2025

Amanda Collinson, Service Director for Help, Protection and Care, delivered the report into the Partnership Strategy for Looked After Children and Care Leavers 2022-2025, which included the progress and some of the key achievements of the partnership to date since July 2024. The following points were discussed:

The Board have seen a significant increase in the number of children having their health assessments within the designated time periods.

The NTU Annual Conference received excellent feedback, with lots of schools buying into the trauma informed practice.

RESOLVED 2024/033

That there were no further actions required at this time, that the report be noted.

9 ANNUAL REPORT OF THE INDEPENDENT REVIEWING OFFICER SERVICE: APRIL 2023 – MARCH 2024

Ty Yousaf, Manager for Strategic Safeguarding, highlighted the reports content into the performance and activities of the Independent Review Officer (IRO). The following points were discussed:

The number of unaccompanied asylum-seeking minors has seen a rise, the local authority can apply for monies for accommodation and support. The Home Office funds the 1.5 full time posts we have who are responsible for the workload involved.

RESOLVED 2024/034

That there were no further actions required at this time, that the report be noted.

10 VIRTUAL SCHOOL HEADTEACHER'S ANNUAL REPORT

Stephanie McGill, Assistant Head of Virtual Schools, delivered the report on the work and impact of virtual schools for the academic year 2023/2024. The following points were discussed:

Personal Education Plans (PEP) are done 3 times a year, this year has seen the number of completed PEP's within the designated timescale has increased. The capturing of our 'children's voices' within the plans was recognised by Ofsted as a strengthening of the plans.

Members acknowledge the fixed term suspensions up to the September 2024 term and seen a reduction.

The literacy programme 'The Letterbox Club' has proved to be valued and well received by both the children and carers.

RESOLVED 2024/035

That there were no further actions required at this time, that the report be noted.

11 FOSTERING SERVICE ANNUAL REPORT FOR APRIL 2023 TO MARCH 2024

Matt Wesson, Service Manager Fostering Services delivered the report on the performance and activities of the Fostering Service from April 2023 to March 2024. The following points were discussed:

Concerns were expressed over the decreasing number of foster cares, caring for Nottinghamshire children. Members discussed the possible reasons

behind this: personal reasons, retirement, becoming 'Special Guardians' difficulties and complexities of the recruitment process, poaching by other authorities who offer a higher fostering allowance. Not helped as there is a national shortage of foster carers.

Nottinghamshire are reviewing their processes to speed up recruitment and are talking to our local authority neighbours about offering the same fostering allowances.

RESOLVED 2024/036

That there were no further actions required at this time, that the report be noted.

12 LOCAL OFFER FOR CARE LEAVERS, SIX-MONTHLY UPDATE

Sophie Eadsforth, Group Manager for Looked after Children Service Director for Help, Protection and Care, updated the committee:

Ofsted did an inspection in May 2024 they were impressed with our Local Offer, they wrote in their report; *The Local Offer is ambitious, accessible and well promoted. It details clearly the support care leavers can receive.*

The Local Offer for care leavers in custody or those who are parents or who were unaccompanied asylum-seeking children ensures they receive clear information and support in line with their specific needs. Care leavers are helped to understand their rights and entitlements by their PAs, who actively promote the services available to them.

RESOLVED 2024/037

That the verbal update be noted.

13 WORK PROGRAMME

Amanda Collinson, Service Director for Help, Protection and Care, presented the Work Programme.

The Government response to the Independent Review of Children's Social Care, would be removed from the work programme as a standard item, to be added if needed in the future.

The report from Borough & District Councils on their corporate parenting responsibilities and how they are meeting them had been moved to the January 2025 meeting.

RESOLVED 2024/038

- 1) That the Work Programme be noted.

There being no further business, the Chair closed the meeting at 3:55pm.

Chair: