

## CORPORATE PARENTING BOARD

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Tuesday, 3 September 2024

### **CORPORATE PARENTING BOARD**

A meeting of the Corporate Parenting Board was held on Tuesday, 3 September 2024 at the Civic Centre, Redcar.

**PRESENT** Councillor K King (Chair)  
Councillors M Ovens (Vice-Chair), C Curr, U Earl,  
N Hargreaves, Weastell and A Brook.

**OFFICIALS** D Swainston, D Malone, F Oliver, A Hames,  
P Douglas, L Mason-Crowe and L Robinson.

**IN ATTENDANCE** S Weastell, L Mitchell, M Janes, V Cotter and  
M Markin.

#### **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors L Robson,  
C Cawley, C Hannaway, L Pallister, D Powlay and B Suthers.

65 **TO CONFIRM THE MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 22 JULY 2024 AND TO NOTE THE ATTENDANCE MATRIX FROM THE LAST MEETING**

**RESOLVED** that the minutes of the Corporate Parenting Board held on Monday 22 July 2024 be confirmed and signed by the Chair as a true and accurate record, and the attendance matrix be **NOTED**.

66 **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

There were no declarations of interest.

67 **EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF CHILDREN'S & FAMILIES - INTRODUCTION AND UPDATE**

The Executive Director of Children's and Families was welcomed to their first meeting of the Corporate Parenting Board and gave a brief introduction of their working history, experience and vision for the directorate going forward.

Members of the Corporate Parenting Board made introductions to the Executive Director.

Tuesday, 3 September 2024

68 **HYSG/CARE LEAVERS UPDATE**

The Chair briefly gave the Board an overview from the Have Your Say Group discussion which took place on the 22 July 2024 and the actions that were **NOTED** in the circulated minutes.

The Service Manager for Supporting Children and Young People Through Care gave the Board an update from the National Benchmarking Care Leavers Forum including:

- The forum included young people and Local Authorities from across the country who were invited to share best practice and key issues; accommodation was one key issue as a priority for many local authorities.
- Young People were given the opportunity to share life experiences and what support they believe would help a young person in care or leaving care.
- Local Authorities across the country are establishing hubs for young people in care to access 'drop in' support sessions which include access to mental health support and pantries to name but a few.

Redcar Council are planning a Care Leavers Awards Evening on the 01 November 2024 to celebrate their achievements. The young people themselves are working hard to plan this event however due to budget restraints, the Board were asked to reach out to any businesses able to sponsor an award.

The Board also received the following updates:

- Care Leavers Week is week commencing 28 October 2024 and the theme chosen by the young people is 'All of us, we are one' connecting with communities.
- The cost of living remains to be a concern for care leavers living independently and the service area are writing to the Combined Local Authority to advocate for care leavers to receive subsidies towards the cost of food, petrol for driving, utilities and rent.
- One care leaver is due to receive an award and has been invited to the Palace of Westminster to receive it.
- The Have Your Say Group young people have written a song and prepared a video which will be performed at a future meeting, **NOTED**.

A Councillor queried if the Local Authority is able to support young people with regards to the cost of rental properties if in social housing. The Service Manager responded that young people in care or care leavers are given priority for access to rental properties and access to a registered

Tuesday, 3 September 2024

handyman service. However, young people are in a mix of private rentals and social housing rentals, therefore rental pricing can vary significantly; **NOTED.**

69 **QUARTERLY PERFORMANCE DATA**

The Executive Director for Children's and Families presented the Quarterly Performance Data reporting to July 2024 noting that in their new role they are undertaking a review of what data is captured and reported upon stating all data must be meaningful and actionable.

As part of the ensuing discussion, the following questions and comments were noted:

- The number of children in care is being reviewed regularly, particularly the number of high-cost placements and will be presented this Board as part of the quarterly reporting.
- The Executive Director is reviewing the approach to foster carer recruitment to understand if improvements can be made to the offer. However, the Directorate is also a member of the North East Fostering Hub and are reviewing the impact of this work.
- The Department for Education expects each region to develop a fostering hub, the Executive Director will be mindful of this within the review.
- Key indicators the Executive Director will be focusing upon include the stability of placements. This will include a review of young people who have endured 3 or more placement moves. Interestingly, the indicator for 2 or more years is positive, the Directorate are understanding the differences between the two indicators.
- Young people in care who are in education, employment or training is critical data and another key performance indicator which contributes to a young person having positive experiences which are key to leading a thriving adult life.
- There is ongoing work to ensure that Separated Migrant Young People have access to suitable accommodation.
- A Board member queried if there is a particular age range which require additional support more so than another age range. The Executive Director replied that the data indicates a higher number of children aged between birth and 4 years old being looked after. The initiation of the pre-birth assessment team is working hard to support these families, and the initial work is delivering positive outcomes. The highest costing age range currently is adolescent's due to several high-cost placements.

## CORPORATE PARENTING BOARD

---

Tuesday, 3 September 2024

- A Board member noted that data from Darlington Borough Council appeared positive and queried if any lessons can be learned by reaching out to discuss best practice. The Executive Director or a Service Manager will reach out to Darlington Council as an **ACTION** and report back to the Board; **NOTED**.

The Virtual School Head provided an update to the Board informing members that their role is to work alongside children in our care/social care and educational establishments, to ensure all areas work together for the best interests of the young person in care. A Personal Education Plan (PEP) is devised for every young person which the Virtual School manage and monitor this process.

As part of the ensuing discussion, the following questions and comments were noted:

- The PEPs are quality assured internally by the Virtual School Team. The team established a PEP quality group which includes officers from service areas outside of the Virtual School to add an additional layer of scrutiny ensuring a thorough and robust review of each PEP. The quality and completion rate of PEPs is close to 100%.
- Attendance at secondary up to the end of July was positive. The team have worked closely with the Head of Post 16 Progression and Careers and upskilled all staff within the Virtual School giving them the skills to challenge schools regarding a young person in care's school attendance. This has led to a significant improvement in attendance across reception to post 16 of 3%.
- Secondary Schools and Academies across the borough do not have a standardised attendance end date. Therefore, the Virtual School established a data cut off point of the 25 June going forward to ensure all data is comparable.
- Concerns have been raised regarding the number of 'lost learning days' due to suspensions, these are either Fixed Term Exclusions (FTEs) or Permanent Exclusions (PEXs), brief details were shared with the Board. The Virtual School work closely with schools to mitigate any PEXs where possible and overall PEX rates in this borough are low compared to national data. Schools are undertaking lots more positive work to support young people in care such as identifying the need for trauma support.
- The Chair asked for an explanation of what is meant by the 'Quality of PEP' ranking system. The Virtual School Head explained the system ranks the robustness of each PEP and the timeliness of its completion. For example, a gold PEP would be completed within deadlines and include smart targets that are measurable and achievable.
- A Member further queried if this robust quality assurance system

Tuesday, 3 September 2024

can be cross referenced to the young person's outcomes, to establish if the new system has any impact upon their outcomes/results. It was noted that this could be analysed after this academic year however the system is more focused upon best practice to ensure systems and processes are working effectively. The Virtual School Head will report at the next meeting upon the number of PEPs within each ranking, **ACTION**.

- The Virtual School Head informed the board about current vacancies within the team and movement of positions internally, this includes the appointment of a Data Manager which will support the team with more robust collection and analysis of data.
- The portfolio of the Virtual School has expanded to include Children in Kinship Care.
- The Vice Chair queried what work is taking place to support young people in care when they transition from primary to secondary school. Historically a young person's Year 6 Primary School transition plan was well supported but was not monitored from Year 7 Secondary school to ensure support continued. Therefore, the Virtual School Head is working closely with colleagues in secondary schools to ensure those young people continue to be monitored, supported and any interventions required are actioned early. This is now included within each PEP, **NOTED**.

70

#### **CIOC HEALTH UPDATE**

The Service Manager for the Tees Valley Children in Care Team at Harrogate NHS Trust tabled a paper to the Board detailing dental practices participating in an incentivised access scheme providing clinical appointments for patient with the highest medical needs, this included children in care and care leavers. However, it is only the IHA paediatrician or Children in Care nurses that can refer to the guaranteed dentists. The paper is time sensitive and changeable, therefore Board Members and Social Worker Teams were advised to contact the service direct for an up to date list of participating practices via this email: [hdf.tescic@nhs.net](mailto:hdf.tescic@nhs.net)

A Member of the Board queried if this information could be shared with all Redcar Social Workers and further noted concern regarding the lack of dental practices within the East Cleveland Area, which is not easily accessible for children in care or care leavers who cannot drive. The Service Manager for Supporting Children and Young People Through Care took an **ACTION** away to circulate this information to all Social Workers in Redcar and Cleveland. The Service Manager for the Tees Valley Children in Care Team at Harrogate NHS Trust took an **ACTION** to feedback this concern to the Trust, **NOTED**.

The Designated Safeguarding Nurse for the NHS North East and North Cumbria Integrated Care Board (ICB) provided an update to the Board

## CORPORATE PARENTING BOARD

---

Tuesday, 3 September 2024

from the ICB noting that Children in Care are a priority within the service.

As part of the ensuing discussion, the following comments and questions were noted:

- The ICB has a joint priority towards Children in our Care (CiC) with a priority group set up looking at any issues. One area being considered is free prescriptions for care leavers which is being progressed.
- The group are reviewing how to code GP records to flag that a child has previously been in the care system. 'Care Experienced' is the current wording to be considered.
- GP services undertaking medicals for fostering services was raised due to issues with GPs 'working to rule' and safeguarding concerns. Some GPs have requested a fee per medical report which may impact upon recruitment of foster carers if this financial burden is theirs to bare. A member queried if another service could carry out the medical. The Executive Director responded that this could not take place under regulations that it has to be performed by a registered GP.
- There will be a data report presented at future Board meetings which will contain Tees Valley and localised data. This will be an agenda item at the next meeting, an **ACTION** was taken for the Designated Safeguarding Nurse to submit this to the next Board meeting, **NOTED**.

### 71 **ROTA VISIT UPDATE**

A Members informed the group about a rota visit which took place over summer with a family who are fostering two children. The visit went well, both the carers and children in care were present, engaging and positive feedback was received from all, **NOTED**.

### 72 **ACTION PLAN UPDATE**

The action log was discussed by Board Members and updates given verbally. The updates will be added onto the log and circulated after the meeting, **NOTED**.

### 73 **MEETING DATES 2024/25**

Board Members were reminded about future meeting dates noting changes to the December meeting and date to be confirmed for the May meeting, **NOTED**.

CORPORATE PARENTING BOARD

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Tuesday, 3 September 2024

74 **ANY OTHER BUSINESS THE CHAIR CERTIFIES AS URGENT**

There were no items raised that the Chair certified as urgent, **NOTED**.