

CORPORATE PARENTING BOARD

MINUTES OF MEETING HELD ON THURSDAY 29 APRIL 2021

Present: Cllrs Kate Wheller (Chairman), Richard Biggs (Vice-Chairman), Ryan Holloway, Stella Jones, Andrew Kerby, Cathy Lugg, Andrew Parry and Molly Rennie

Apologies: Cllrs

Also present: Cllr Carole Jones

Officers present (for all or part of the meeting):

Theresa Leavy (Executive Director of People - Children), Mark Blackman (Corporate Director - Education and Learning), Claire Shiels (Corporate Director - Commissioning, Quality & Partnerships), Matthew Chislett (Service Manager - Corporate Parenting Board and Permanence), Kate Critchel (Senior Democratic Services Officer), Megan Rochester (Democratic Services Officer Apprentice), Sarah Jane Smedmor (Corporate Director - Care & Protection), Lisa Linscott (Principal Teacher), Karen Elliott (Head of Quality Assurance & Partnerships) and Louise Drury (Quality & Assurance)

1. **Welcome and Introductions- 17:00**

The Chairman opened the meeting and welcomed those present. Apologies were received from Simon-Fraiz Brown.

2. **Minutes**

The minutes of the meeting held on Thursday 21st January 2021 were agreed as a correct record and they would be signed by the chairman in the future.

3. **Declaration of Interest**

There were no declarations of interest to report.

4. **Public Participation**

There was no public participation.

5. **Fostering annual report including update on the modernising fostering plan- 17:10**

The board considered the Fostering Annual Report. They were informed of the ever-growing family and since last year, more families have come forward for extra support in an unprecedented year. It was confirmed that health assessments are

on track, but the emotional support needs some work. They also discussed how they were discussing arrangements for family-based events run by foster carers.

The board asked some questions relating to some of the following discussion points:

- Recruitment campaign- Are there any targets in place for recruitment of foster carers and is there an equal demand for full time and part time carers?
- Collaboration with regional sites to focus on fostering teenagers and siblings as they are the least likely to be placed easily.
- The numbers of carers lost in the year- Is this due to the pandemic or is it an average.
- Are there enough spaces for respite care and how long are they typically there for? Are there enough foster carers to suit this need?
- A suggestion was made to spend more time with those who are unhappy as this will help to get a better reflection if they are gathering younger people's views.
- Personal education has had a better outcome. There has been a small number not returned to schools, but they are getting back suitably.
- Mockingbird system- Creating a natural family support network. If children are struggling, they can go to other family members.

Decision

The board agreed that the Mockingbird system would be beneficial within the care system, a suggestion to consider would be rolling it out to other areas. They were also assured that there is a checklist seen by managers before going to panel. This avoids repetitive information and ensures that the right families are going to panel at the right time. They will continue to collaborate with their foster carers to give our children the best chance and support.

6. Dorset Foster Carer Association Verbal update- 17:40

The board received a verbal update from the Chair and Vice Chair Dorset Foster Care Association. They raised some of the following discussion points:

- They discussed the importance of working as a team. Therefore, they were reaching out to more foster carers. Discussing the different professions within the fostering system to see how these may benefit the children.
- 30 foster carer association- fundraising for foster carers and spreading awareness about what they do and how they may impact a child's life. They expressed their hope for this to become a charity status in the future.
- Fostering champions were for those who speak up for the needs of children. They have ongoing and shared objectives. The good and bad will

be discussed as they were all just as important. Each year a foster champion will be voted as a form of encouragement.

- It was also discussed that there is not a shortage of foster carers but a higher demand for those fostering older children.
- The board was asked about any personal experiences that they could share regarding the fostering system.
- Researched other associations to learn from their success and mistakes.
- An AGM to be held in September 2020 and it was hoped to launch the association within Fostering Fortnight.

The Chairman thanked Mr and Mrs Hill for their presentation and the Corporate Parenting Board indicated that they fully supported the development of the Dorset Foster Care Association.

7. Aspire Adoption Annual Report- 17:50

The board considered a report from the Executive Director of People and Children. They discussed the report and asked several questions in relation to:

- The number of disruptions within homes and is adoption more stable. The children have more legal rights within adoption. There was also a discussion regarding if there was anyone that was difficult to place. Larger sibling groups are more challenging. It was also discussed if there was a demand for stepfamilies.
- It was discussed how Aspire needs development, but it is good value for money and is being reviewed to ensure it provides the best outcomes for the financial commitment. The board was reassured that staff and quality of work is good. However, they wanted to know how they are making improvements and how does the feedback get fed back in to make a positive change.
- The board also asked questions about breakdown's within placements. It was discussing that they would have a meeting, look at the feedback and see what needs to be changed or improved. The child may go to another placement, but they'll work together to get the best outcome for all of those involved.

Decision

The board agreed that adoption worked well but suggested to look at performance joint data. They also agreed to continue with reviews and to be added to the data set in the future for regular updates.

8. Report on the Harbour Service for adolescents and children on the edge of care- 18:20

The board received an update regarding Harbour Services from Louise Drury, Performance Quality Assurance Consultant and David Parr, (Dorset Police). The following talking points were raised:

- Two PSO's from the neighbourhood policing had been located to the harbour
- Considering recruitment to support risk packages.
- Engaging with young people on a one-one basis daily rather than just in a crisis. Keeping them on the right path and to offer them more support, especially in the darkest hours.
- The board was reassured that positive feedback had been received regarding the service that was being provided
- The board were also informed of a 28-day pathway. Relating to those children returning home after a potential period in care
- Reported on collaborating with housing teams for those aged between 16 and 25 to discuss more permanent arrangements for when they want to have more independence and responsibility within their own homes.
- There has been a significant reduction in the number of missing person's reported. Since March 2021 there have been no missing persons to report. In April 2021 there has been one case, but they had successfully returned home.
- The Harbour aimed to work with young people to reduce crime and avoid the risk and create a brighter future and better outcomes
- Members also discussed outdoor education facilities, outreach, and youth centre arrangements.

Decision

That the progress in the implementation of the Harbour and the impact in improving outcomes for young people who were on the edge of care, in care and leaving care, be noted. Reducing cost for NHS, Criminal justice and Children's social care.

9. **Corporate Parenting Strategy Update- 18:35**

The Service Manager for Corporate Parenting and Permanence gave a verbal update on the Corporate Parenting Strategy covering the following areas:

- Health assessments for February and March 2021 have had a 100% completion rate within 20 days.
- They are creating pathway plans and working on workshops for care leavers. Having a discussion point of what it is like to be a child in care? They are looking to extend membership of our young people through our youth services.
- For formal update to board for future
- In response to a question about a questionnaire to foster carers, members were advised that Ofsted ask the council to send out questionnaires to foster carers and an in-house version is also circulated

10. **Corporate Parenting Dataset- 18:45**

The board considered the report on the Corporate Parenting Dataset. The Service Manager for Corporate Parenting and Permanence also raised some concerns.

- Due to the ongoing covid-19 pandemic, there have been problems with dental appointments. The panel was reassured that they are working with partnering agencies to get these back on track. This issue is seen nationally.
- The board welcomed all the hard work that had been done in the recent year and would like to continue being updated to improve the services.

11. **Date of Next Meeting and extension of membership to the Corporate Parenting Board- 18:55**

Decision

That the next informal meeting to be held on 10 June 2021.

That the date of the Corporate Parenting Board formal meeting be held on Thursday 22 July 2021.

That the following to be invited to attend future meetings on the board: -

David Webb (Youth Offending Team) or in his absence Nicky Deny
Kim Rickford (Headteacher for the forum centre and Virtual School Governor)
Stuart Dipple (Dorset Police)

Meeting closed 7.05pm

Duration of meeting: Times Not Specified

Chairman

.....