

CORPORATE PARENTING BOARD

MINUTES OF MEETING HELD ON TUESDAY 10 DECEMBER 2024

Present: Cllrs Bridget Bolwell (Chair), Matt Bell, Andrew Parry, Jane Somper and Andy Todd

Present remotely: Cllrs

Apologies: Cllrs Duncan Sowry-House and Byron Quayle

Also present: Cllr Clare Sutton

Also present remotely:

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

Paul Dempsey (Executive Director of People - Children), Megan Rochester (Democratic Services Officer), David Webb (Manager - Dorset Combined Youth Justice Service), Kaye Wright (Youth Voice Manager), Megan Cameron-Brown (Head of Quality Assurance and Partnerships), Tina Ironside (Strategic Commissioner), George Dare (Senior Democratic Services Officer) and Antony Nash (Senior Democratic Services Officer)

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

1. **Welcome and Introductions**

The Chair opened the meeting and welcomed those present.

2. **Apologies**

Apologies of absence received from Cllrs Sowry-House and Quayle

3. **Minutes of previous meeting**

The minutes of the meeting held on 20th June 2024 were confirmed and signed.

4. **Declarations of Interest**

There were no declarations of interest.

5. **Public Participation**

There was no public participation.

6. **Corporate Parenting Dataset**

The Executive Director for Childrens Services presented the Corporate Data Set and spoke to some of the key details.

Following the presentation the committee discussed a few areas;

- The demographics of children in care including the proportion of unaccompanied asylum seekers.
- The role of the Harbour Service to provide support before children reach care and the retrospective analysis conducted on those who do reach care
- The investment in Aspire and the proportion of adoptions in the data set delivered by Aspire and the role of Harbour service in preventing placement breakdown.
- Initial health assessment and annual health check completion raised as a concern and some of the limiting factors such as out of county placements were shared

The Chair and Cllrs Parry and Somper supported by the Executive Director for Childrens to raise the profile of the issue around health assessments and checks to David Freeman.

7. **QARO (IRO) Annual Report 2023-2024**

The report was presented by the Quality Assurance Service Manager and highlighted some of the key data to draw out of the report and positive feedback received and the areas to work on.

Following the presentation the Committee discussed a few key areas;

- Discussion on the events stated in the report and the impact of them on future practice.
- Improvements to practice from Childrens feedback
- Report practice to make sure Risk assessments and other key areas are completed ahead of Cabinet discussion
- A discussion around the use of Advocates including; how the child's voice is heard in the processes and expressing their choice.

8. **Advocacy and Independent Visitor services update**

The Strategic Commissioner presented the report that focused on advocacy for issue based cases, the matching process, and emphasising the importance of choice.

The committee discussed a few key areas;

- The availability of advocacy and the engagement with the service.
- Demographics of those using advocacy services
- unaccompanied asylum seekers data and use of advocacy including barriers

The committee welcomed a deeper investigation into the issues around unaccompanied asylum seekers and out of county placements.

9. **Virtual School Head Annual Report 2023-2024**

Head of Children Thriving in Education presented the report of the virtual school sharing its impacts and summary of the key details in the report.

The committee recognised the value of the virtual school and discussed a few key areas

- The proportion of children to teachers and staffing changes to provision
- School exclusions and the impact on services including partnership working with educational psychologists and capacity issues.
- The importance of early intervention.

10. **Designated Officer Annual Report**

The Head of Quality Assurance & Partnerships presented the report, which highlighted the changes and improvements in relation to referrals and the impact on timeliness when there is police involvement.

The committee had a discussion around the capacity and staffing of the LADO's is currently sufficient to meet demand.

11. **Children in Care at Risk of Offending and Custody**

Head of Service, Dorset Combined Youth Justice Service presented the report and framed the considerations that are considered with the over representation of Children in care in the justice system.

The Committee had a discussion that covered a few areas of consideration

- The prevalence of Speech and Language needs being unidentified until engagement with the youth justice system.
- The role of the Harbours service.
- The correlation between serious absence and the value in tracking young peoples journey

12. **Complaints Annual Report 2023-24**

Senior Assurance Manager Complaints presented his report and the committee noted the details described.

13. **Annual Report for Children in Care and Care Experienced Young People 2023-24**

This item was declined unanimously by the Committee due to Health Partners being unavailable to attend the meeting. The report will be deferred to a future meeting.

14. **Date of Next Meeting**

Next formal meeting on 19th June 2025.

15. **Urgent items**

There were no urgent items.

16. **Exempt Business**

There was no exempt business.

Duration of meeting: 3.00 - 4.52 pm

Chairman

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