

Minutes of a meeting of the Corporate Parenting Panel held on Wednesday 10 September 2014 in Committee Room 1, City Hall, Bradford

Commenced 1635

Concluded 1810

PRESENT – Councillors

CONSERVATIVE	LABOUR	LIBERAL DEMOCRAT
D Smith	Engel	Leeming
	Arshad Hussain	
	Thirkill	

Also present: Councillor Berry, Portfolio Holder for Children and Young People’s Services; N O’Neill (Bradford NHS); Inspector Pickles (West Yorkshire Police); P Weston (Bradford Achievement Service); and the Chair of the Children in Care Council

Councillor Thirkill in the Chair

1. DISCLOSURES OF INTEREST

In the interest of transparency, Councillor Leeming disclosed that she was a foster carer for Blackburn with Darwen Borough Council.

2. INSPECTION OF REPORTS AND BACKGROUND PAPERS

There were no appeals submitted by the public to review decisions to restrict documents.

3. MINUTES

Recommended –

That the minutes of the meetings held on 22 January and 5 March 2014 be signed as a correct record (previously circulated).



4. **CO-OPTION OF MEMBERS TO THE PANEL**

The Committee was asked to consider the appointment of non-voting co-opted members for the 2014-15 municipal year.

Resolved –

That it be recommended to the Regulatory and Appeals Committee that the appointment of non-voting co-opted members to the Panel, for the remainder of the 2014/2015 municipal year, be confirmed as set out below:-

- **Mr J Pickles - West Yorkshire Police**
- **Mr P Weston - Bradford Achievement Service**
- **Ms N O'Neill - Bradford NHS**
- **The Chair of the Children in Care Council**

ACTION: City Solicitor

5. **REFERRAL TO THE PANEL**

Members were informed that, at the meeting of the Children's Services Overview and Scrutiny Committee held on 11 February 2014, consideration had been given to a report in respect of young carers and the Committee had referred the issue for consideration by this Panel.

Resolved –

That the referral from the Children's Services Overview and Scrutiny Committee on 11 February 2014 in respect of young carers be noted.

NO ACTION

6. **CHILD AND ADOLESCENT MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES (CAMHS) TO LOOKED AFTER CHILDREN**

Previous reference: Minute 14 (2013/14)

Members recalled that, at the meeting of the Panel held on 13 November 2013, they had considered a report in relation to the support available for looked after children in relation to their emotional wellbeing. The Panel had requested, amongst other things, that a further report be submitted to the Panel including comments from residents of children's homes and the Children in Care Council. The Assistant Director – Specialist Children's services therefore presented **Document "B"**.

The Children in Care Council representative read out the comments of the CICC on this issue. These included:

- Although no specific benefits of using CAMHS had been identified those that had accessed it generally described it as being a positive experience.

- The service appeared to be aimed towards younger, pre-pubescent children.
- In a crisis immediate support was required.
- It was important to be able to speak to someone you know and trust.
- Because of these issues young people in the older age range would usually rely on alternative support networks when necessary.

Members expressed their thanks to the CICC for an excellent and very informative contribution to the debate on this subject.

The Assistant Director and the Manager of CAMHS responded to questions from Members:

- Training was being provided to better equip staff in residential homes to deal with issues related to emotional wellbeing and mental health and also to ensure that they were aware of the key points of contact to obtain advice or to make a referral.
- Foster carers were also receiving training to enable them to identify young people who may need additional support and to be able to access specialist support.
- The service was considering different ways of working with the older age range in light of issues raised about the age appropriateness of some of the services provided.
- The waiting time for a referral was currently eleven weeks.
- There was a specialist service to address the needs of particularly vulnerable young people who had been traumatised, perhaps due to events in their home country, before arrival in the district.
- The service had good access to an interpretation service.
- A “trusted adult” model was being developed.

Members made the following comments:

- The educational setting was very important as behavioural issues could often be identified in that situation at an earlier stage. Training should also be provided for education providers. It was noted that the service did work very closely with school nurses.
- One of the issues identified by Members during Regulation 33 visits to residential homes had been that young people had been assessed as ‘not ready’ for CAMHS. However it appeared that no support had been given in respect of assisting them to become ready. This was of concern as the situation could deteriorate in the meantime. The Assistant Director explained that training was now being provided on this particular aspect.
- There could be a problem in identifying issues for those young people not engaged with school.
- Use of the additional funding through the child support pupil premium could be used to access specialist counselling.

Resolved -

- (1) That Document “B” be noted and the Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service (CAMHS) continue to work in partnership with looked after children and young people so they achieve their full potential.**
- (2) That the Assistant Director - Children’s Specialist Services be requested to submit a further report on support to Looked After Children with mental health difficulties to a future meeting of the Panel and that the report include information in respect of:**

- The ‘trusted adult’ model currently being developed.
- Progress in terms of fostering services and young people subject to Special Guardianship Orders.

(3) That the Children in Care Council be commended for the work they undertook on this issue and the valuable contribution made to the Panel’s consideration of this matter and that they be asked to update their report for consideration at the same time as the report requested in (2) above.

ACTION: *Assistant Director - Children’s Specialist Services*

7. OFSTED SINGLE INSPECTION OF CHILDREN’S SERVICES IN THE BRADFORD DISTRICT, FEBRUARY 2014

A report was submitted by the Assistant Director – Children’s Specialist Services (**Document “A”**) which summarised the judgements of OFSTED’s report of the Single Inspection of Children’s Services (comprising: children in need of help and protection; Children Looked After; care leavers; adoption and fostering services and the work of the Local Safeguarding Children Board). It provided an overview of the findings and judgements as they related to Looked After Children: Residential Provision, Fostering, Adoption and Services to those Leaving Care.

In presenting the report the Assistant Director answered questions from Members and explained that:

- The Authority’s performance under the following headings; Children looked after and Permanence, Adoption, Care Leavers, Leadership and Governance and Bradford Safeguarding Children Board had been assessed as being ‘good’.
- An improvement plan had been considered by the Children’s Services Overview and Scrutiny Committee.
- Issues that had been identified were the waiting times for access to CAMHS and clarity on entitlements for care leavers. Work was being undertaken with the Children in Care Council to develop a mobile phone app in respect of entitlements and the waiting times had been reduced by three weeks since that time.
- The Inspectors had been pleased with the governance arrangements and the role being undertaken by this Panel.
- The issue of siblings/adoption had been discussed at the Overview and Scrutiny Committee. The authority did have to address issues associated with large sibling groups in some cases.
- In response to a question about whether any positive effects had been identified as a result of the changes that allowed young people to stay with their foster carer over the age of 18; the Assistant Director said that this was an issue that was worthy of exploration and baseline information could be compiled to try and assess this in the future.

She also undertook to provide Members with a statement in respect of Child Sexual Exploitation.

The Portfolio Holder commented that the recent framework for Inspections had been more challenging and a number of Local Authorities had found that their judgments had been downgraded as a result.

Resolved -

- (1) That the Assistant Director - Children's Specialist Services be requested to submit further reports to future meetings of the Panel in respect of:
- How Bradford deals with the adoption/fostering of sibling groups, particularly larger groups; to include information on arrangements for the maintenance of contact.
 - The arrangements in the district to deal with the issue of Child Sexual Exploitation in respect of Looked After Children; to include the views of the Children in Care Council and input from carers and staff in respect of the support/training offered to enable them to spot the warning signs.
- (2) That the Assistant Director - Children's Specialist Services be requested to include information on care leavers with a disability in the report on Education, Employment and Apprenticeships scheduled to be submitted to the Panel in January 2015.

ACTION: Assistant Director - Children's Specialist Services

Chair

Note: These minutes are subject to approval as a correct record at the next meeting of the Committee.

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THESE MINUTES HAVE BEEN PRODUCED, WHEREVER POSSIBLE, ON RECYCLED PAPER