

Minutes of the CORPORATE PARENTING PANEL held on TUESDAY 12 July 2016 at 6.30 pm

Present: Councillor Miles (Chair)
Councillors Betteley, Cannon, Clancy, Crooks, Green and V Hopkins.

Officers: N Rayner (Service Director, Children and Families), K Lockwood (Head of Corporate Parenting), J Hooper (Head of Safeguarding), E Hosking (Participation Youth Worker - Children's Social Care), M Mellor (Virtual School Head-Teacher) and T Milner (Committee Manager).

Also Present: Dr N Barrett (Executive Principal [Stephenson Academy])

CP01 DISCLOSURES OF INTEREST

None received.

CP02 MINUTES

RESOLVED -

That the Minutes of the meeting of the Corporate Parenting Panel held on 22 March 2016 be approved and signed by the Chair as a correct record, subject to the inclusion of Councillor Betteley being in attendance.

CP03 ALTERNATIVE EDUCATION FOR LOOKED AFTER YOUNG PEOPLE IN MILTON KEYNES

The Panel received a presentation and oral update in respect of Alternative Education for Looked After Young People in Milton Keynes from the Virtual School Head-Teacher and Executive Principal of the Bridge Academy.

The Panel heard from the Virtual School Head-Teacher (VSHT) that the Bridge Academy (link: http://www.bridgeacademy.org.uk/BA_School_Brochure_.pdf) works across 3 geographic sites in Milton Keynes. It is part of the Stephenson Trust, a Multi-Academy Trust. Dr Barrett is the Executive Principal of the Bridge Academy and the Stephenson Academy, a Social, Emotional and Mental Health Special School.

The most recent Ofsted inspection in October 2015 judged the Bridge Academy to be good. The Academy's aim is to be judged to be outstanding at its next Ofsted inspection.

The Panel also heard that the Executive Principal is keen to support the Council's Corporate Parenting service to ensure that Milton Keynes children and young people in care who access alternative education achieve the best possible outcomes. Specifically:

- The VSHT attends the Milton Keynes Alternative Education Panel, which allows the VSHT an additional opportunity to challenge mainstream schools at a Looked After young person's point of referral to the Bridge Academy;
- The VSHT gave the detailed example of a plan which was recently devised at a professionals meeting between Bridge Academy Central, the Virtual School and Children's Social Care regarding how a key stage 3 student could be best supported by both organisations;
- A further example was given of an education planning meeting between the VSHT, Social Worker and the Bridge Academy Senior Leadership Team which collaboratively devised a plan to re-integrate a student who was returning to Milton Keynes from a distant care placement.

The Executive Principal informed the Panel that both the Bridge Academy and Stephenson Academy are well placed to deal with changes and increasing pupil numbers projected to the year 2020; however, he believed further work is required to ensure adequate future education provision for young people who need to access these schools in 2021/22 and beyond.

The Chair, on behalf of the Panel, thanked the Virtual School Head-Teacher and the Executive Principal for the informative presentation.

RESOLVED –

That the presentation and oral update be noted.

CP04

CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE'S PARTICIPATION, CHILDREN IN CARE COUNCIL: TODAY'S CHILDREN TOMORROW'S FUTURE ("OUR VOICE")

The Service Director (Children & Families) introduced the report on Children and Young People's Participation, Children in Care Council: Today's Children Tomorrow's Future.

The Panel heard that 198 children and young people were nominated for awards and that 45 awards were presented at the successful True Triumph Awards evening held on 1 July 2016. The evening was particularly effective as even more young people were involved in the planning and delivery of the event than in previous years.

The Panel also heard that, following a consultation with children and young people, the Children in Care Council has been renamed as 'Our Voice'. Additionally, the Panel heard that:

- The Children in Care Council was developing new 'Coming into Care Packs', including looking at what other councils offer children and young people entering their care;

- There has been a positive response to the 'New2UK Project', that commenced in February 2016, to help and support asylum seeking young people aged 15-20;
- Although there have been positive responses and outcomes from the Children In Care Survey, some key areas required further work and scrutiny; and
- Work was underway with the Council's IT department to look at social media and data options, with the view to potentially using SKYPE to provide an additional means of communication with young people placed outside Milton Keynes.

Councillor Crooks commented that the Survey responses to question 7 in the Annex required further clarity, as the data referred to question 1 in respect of the change of Social Workers and expected outcomes for young people.

Panel members commented there were opportunities to look at how best to communicate the work and involvement of the Corporate Parenting Panel, e.g. via the Council's internal Weekly News to Councillors, and also to pursue other communication routes.

It was reported that further details about the Foster Fun Day, scheduled for 14 July 2016, would be circulated to members. Further events which members would be welcome to attend were being planned later in the year.

RESOLVED –

1. That the report be noted.
2. That the Participation Youth Worker - Children's Social Care be requested to update the Annex, relating to question 7.

CP05

REGULATION 44 AND MEMBER'S VISITS – MARCH, APRIL AND MAY 2016

The Head of Safeguarding presented the report on Regulation 44 and Councillors' visits to the council's children's homes from March to May 2016.

The Panel welcomed the news that NYAS (Link: <https://www.nyas.net/>), had been awarded the contract from 1 June 2016 to undertake Regulation 44 visits, as required by the Children's Home Regulation Act 2015, to the Council's 3 Children's Homes: Furze House, Walnuts and Westminster House.

The Panel heard that the new working arrangements with NYAS would be in place in due course, and that NYAS will be scrutinising the 3 Children's Homes' processes and providing feedback, which will be shared in summary form with the Panel following the independent visits. The NYAS mission statement is 'A society where every child, young person or vulnerable adult's voices are

heard and their rights are respected and where they can achieve their potential’.

Panel members made reference to Sir Martin Narey’s independent review ‘Children’s Residential Care in England’, and requested that the web-link be circulated to the Panel members for information.

Link: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/childrens-residential-care-in-england>

RESOLVED -

1. That the report be noted.
2. That the Service Director (Children & Families) be requested to provide the Committee Manager with the web-link to the Narey report for circulation to Panel members.
3. That the Service Director (Children & Families) be requested to provide the Panel with an update in respect of the Narey report to the meeting in September 2016.

CP06

VISIT ARRANGEMENTS

The Panel heard from the Head of Safeguarding that although there were no recent visits by Councillors to report on, visits to Children’s Homes during the summer were being planned, including a number of Open Days being organised. The Head of Safeguarding reminded the Panel that reports should be completed following visits by Councillors to any of the three Children’s Homes.

RESOLVED –

1. That the oral update be noted.
2. That panel members be informed by email of organised visit dates being scheduled during July and August 2016.
3. That the Head of Safeguarding be requested to update and circulate the report Template to Panel members and Officers.

CP07

ANNUAL REPORT OF THE WORK OF THE MILTON KEYNES CORPORATE PARENTING PANEL 2015/16

The Chair introduced the Annual Report of the Corporate Parenting Panel and indicated that the report had been previously submitted to Council on 8 June 2016 for approval.

The Panel heard from Councillor Crooks, who commented that the report was well received by Council, who were also reliably informed of the importance and work of the Corporate Parenting Panel.

RESOLVED -

That the report be noted.

CP08

DATES OF NEXT MEETINGS

The Panel noted that the remaining meetings scheduled for 2016/17 were to be held on Tuesdays at 6.30pm on the following dates:

20 September July 2016;

15 November 2016;

17 January 2017; and,

21 March 2017.

The Panel also noted that the Committee Manager would prepare a draft Forward Plan and circulate for the Service Director (Children and Families), Head of Corporate Parenting and the Head of Safeguarding to aid future planning of reports during 2016/17 with the Chair.

THE CHAIR CLOSED THE MEETING 8.03 PM

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