

Minutes of the meeting of the CORPORATE PARENTING PANEL held on TUESDAY
16 MARCH 2021 at 6.30 pm

Present: Councillor M Bradburn (Chair)
Councillors K Bradburn, Brown, V Hopkins (Vice-Chair), Marlow, Miles
(Vice-Chair) and Townsend

Officers: M Heath (Director - Children's Services), S Heer (Head of Corporate
Parenting), R Lee (Team Leader - Youth:MK), M May (Group Head -
Children's Social Care), N Phillips (Adoption Team Manager), J Roberts
(Team Manager - Children and Families), N Sankey (Relief Fostering
Manager), R Williams (Virtual School Headteacher) and J Crighton
(Committee Manager)

Also Present: Councillor Nolan (Cabinet member for Children and Families) and
C Baines (CNWL)

CPP29 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

None disclosed.

CPP30 MINUTES

RESOLVED -

That the Minutes of the meeting of the Corporate Parenting Panel
held on 9 December 2020 be approved and signed by the Chair as a
correct record.

**CPP31 ACTION PLAN ADDRESSING RECOMMENDATIONS FROM THE
OFSTED FOCUSED VISIT - SEPTEMBER 2020**

The Panel, having considered the recommendations from the Ofsted
visit, which had taken place during September and October 2020, at
its meeting held on 9 December 2020 (Minute CPP23 refers),
considered a Development Plan developed as a result of the Panel's
request.

M Heath (Director - Children's Services) informed the Panel that
conversations had taken place with Ofsted and progress had been
made in the last year.

RESOLVED -

1. That the recommendations in the Development Plan be noted.
2. That an update be provided to the Panel at its meeting in December 2021.

CPP32

REVIEW OF RECRUITMENT AND RETENTION OF FOSTER CARERS

The Panel received a report on the review of recruitment and retention of foster carers.

S Heer (Head of Corporate Parenting) informed the Panel it was the Council's intention to ensure children remained at home with their families and the 'Golden Triangle' approach played a key factor; an alternate family option; i.e. foster care, adoption and supported living, were considered.

The Panel noted the number of children in care was currently 388, with 73% placed in local foster care, 18 adoptions had been granted, there had been 34 special guardianship orders and 43 children had left care at the end of December 2020.

It was further noted that 98 children had been matched with carers and 24 children had been in foster placements for less than twelve months.

It was reported that that, due to the Pandemic, recruitment had been a challenge and, from April 2020 to January 2021, there had been 107 enquiries regarding fostering which had led to 20 visits taking place.

The Panel was advised that there were currently 94 mainstream carers. During the Pandemic, because of the difficulties of holding face to face meetings, support had been provided to children and carers by means of virtual meetings and regular telephone calls.

The Panel was also advised that the way the Council recruited mainstream carers could be improved and how social media platforms were used would be reviewed.

It was noted that it had been necessary to place children up to 20 miles away from Milton Keynes as a result of the increase in children in care due to the Pandemic.

RESOLVED -

1. That the report be noted.

2. That data on how many Milton Keynes children and young people are placed outside the area be provided to the Chair.

CPP33

UPDATE ON ADOPTION CONNECT

The Panel received an update on the Adoption Connect Adoption Agency used by the Council to source and support adoptive families.

The Panel noted the Adoption Agency had provided a service remotely to ensure the recruitment of prospective adopters continued during the Pandemic and, following the National Recruitment Campaign held in September 2020, there had been a significant increase in enquiries and applications to adopt.

It was noted that, during 2020/21, 25 children had been matched with adoptive families, compared to 19 in the previous year.

RESOLVED -

That the update be noted.

CPP34

PROGRESS ON CARE LEAVERS EDUCATION, EMPLOYMENT AND TRAINING

The Panel received a report on progress on care leavers education, employment and training.

S Heer (Head of Corporate Parenting) informed the Panel that, as of December 2020, 63.7% of care leavers had obtained employment.

The Panel noted a good level of education, employment and training had been secured for looked after children and care leavers and this considerably enhanced their employability.

It was noted that an Education, Employment and Training Panel (Operational Group) had been developed to achieve improved outcomes for the most vulnerable and challenging children and young people.

RESOLVED -

That the report be noted.

CPP35

PROMOTING HEALTH AND WELLBEING OF LOOKED AFTER CHILDREN - DATA IMPROVEMENTS

The Panel considered an update on data improvements for promoting the health and wellbeing of Looked After Children.

C Baines (CNWL) informed the Panel that, during the Pandemic, Looked After Children had received support in relation to health assessments, dental appointments and mental health issues.

RESOLVED -

That the update be noted.

CPP36

REFERRAL FROM CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE SCRUTINY COMMITTEE - 2 DECEMBER 2020

The Panel considered a referral from the Children and Young People Scrutiny Committee arising from its meeting held on 2 December 2020, requesting the Panel to review the content and delivery of Pathway Plans.

M Heath (Director - Children's Services) informed the Panel that the Ofsted inspection had found the quality of the pathway plans to be inconsistent and an audit and review of the Pathway Plans was due to be held in May 2021.

RESOLVED -

That, following an audit and review of the Pathway Plans in May 2021, feedback be provided to the Children and Young People Scrutiny Committee and a future meeting of the Panel.

CPP37

EXCLUSION OF PUBLIC AND PRESS

The Panel considered excluding the public and press from the meeting by virtue of Paragraph 2 (Information likely to Reveal the Identity of an Individual) of Part I of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972, in order that the Panel might consider Item 9 (Voice of the Child and Participation - Views of the Children in Care Council) and Item 11 (Champion Model Update).

RESOLVED -

That the public and press representatives be excluded from the meeting by virtue of Paragraph 2 (Information likely to Reveal the Identity of an Individual) of Part I of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972.

CPP38

VOICE OF THE CHILD AND PARTICIPATION - VIEWS OF THE CHILDREN IN CARE COUNCIL

The Panel received a presentation on the views of the Children in Care Council in respect of the 'voice of the child and participation', which contained an update from Corporate Parenting Week.

RESOLVED -

That the presentation be noted.

CPP39

CHAMPION MODEL UPDATE

The Panel considered the Champion Model update.

R Lee (Team Leader - Youth:MK) informed the Panel that the areas of the Model had been reduced from 15 to 10 and seven member champions had been engaging within the following areas of work:

- (a) education;
- (b) permanency, fostering and adoption;
- (c) SEND;
- (d) housing;
- (e) children in care;
- (f) health; and
- (g) a child's perspective is everyone's business.

RESOLVED -

That the update be noted.

CPP40

COUNCILLOR NORMAN MILES, VICE-CHAIR

The Chair, on behalf of the Panel, thanked Councillor Miles, who would not be standing for re-election in May 2021, for all his hard work on the Panel and wished him well for the future.

THE CHAIR CLOSED THE MEETING AT 8:37 PM