

**Minutes of the Corporate Parenting Panel meeting  
11 February 2013, 10.00am**

**Present:**

**Members**

Cllr Appleton  
Cllr Fowler  
Cllr Hicks  
Cllr Rickhards  
Cllr Robbins (Chair)  
Cllr Williams

**Officers**

Shinderpaul Bhangal, Practice Leader - Participation & Service Development  
Jenny Butlin-Moran, Service Manager - Safeguarding  
Brenda Vincent, Service Manager - Safeguarding  
Richard Maybey, Democratic Services Officer

**Care Leavers**

Sara Donkin  
John Lamb

**1.1 Apologies for absence**

None

**1.2 Disclosures of Pecuniary and Non-Pecuniary Interests**

None

**1.3 Minutes of the meeting held on 4 December 2012**

Agreed

Responding to a question from a previous meeting, Brenda Vincent reported that two of Warwickshire's Looked After Children (LAC) are currently attending Grammar schools (one in Kent and one in Buckinghamshire) and two are currently attending Princethorpe College, an independent school.

**1.4 Chair's Announcements**

None

**2 Charter for Care Leavers**

2.1 The Chair welcomed Sara Donkin and John Lamb, two young people who had recently left care, who were in attendance to answer questions and provide feedback to members. Shinderpaul Bhangal was also welcomed as their representative from the Local Authority (LA).

2.2 A video was played to the Panel, produced in support of the Charter for Care Leavers, to provide further context around the issues relevant to care leavers. The video is available to view at:

[www.youtube.com/watch?feature=player\\_detailpage&v=yKaAICqj1I](http://www.youtube.com/watch?feature=player_detailpage&v=yKaAICqj1I)

2.3 A discussion then followed about the Charter. The feeling from care leavers was that, while it contains positive messages that care leavers are in agreement with, there is concern over the effectiveness and timeliness of professionals in delivering the Charter. The response rates from social workers and elected members needs to be faster, so young people have confidence that the Charter is meaningful.

- 2.4 Members felt that it was unclear what support they should be providing to care leavers and how they should be delivering that support. It was felt that more awareness and specific direction was needed. Based on the discussion, a series of actions were agreed, set out below.

Resolved

- a) The Charter should be circulated to all Elected Members, and large laminated copies should be placed in each of the political group rooms
- b) Enquiries should be made for seeking endorsement of the Charter by Full Council
- c) Enquiries should be made as to how Corporate Parenting duties will be communicated to Elected Members, especially new members, after the elections in May
- d) Representatives from the Tiffin Club should be invited to a future Panel meeting to gain a better understanding of its work and to discuss methods of raising awareness
- e) Panel members should make efforts to attend future Children in Care Council meetings and Care Leavers meetings (*dates and venues to be circulated*)
- f) Care leavers should be invited to the Panel meetings on a regular basis (2 or 3 meetings per year)
- g) The Children in Care Council should seek the opinions of care leavers, via its upcoming questionnaire, as to the quality of support provided by the LA
- h) A leaflet outlining the purpose and membership of the Corporate Parenting Panel should be produced for distribution to LAC and care leavers

**3 Dartington Project**

- 3.1 Jenny Butlin-Moran joined the meeting and delivered a presentation on the LA's work with the Dartington Project, which is a strategy to safely reduce the numbers of Looked After Children in Warwickshire.
- 3.2 Jenny stressed that this was an evidence-based project using random controlled trials, with a focus on understanding the difference in outcomes from different programmes. For example, from a set group of young people deemed on the "edge of care", some will go into foster care as normal, but some will receive an intervention service such as Functional Family Therapy (FFT) or Triple P instead. The outcomes of both destinations will be monitored, providing an evidence base for future decision making.
- 3.3 Other points noted were:
  - a) This is an invest-to-save model. Interventions such as FFT cost much less than foster care, and the savings generated would be re-invested into the service
  - b) The Dartington Project has a 3-year life span and is currently in year 2. An evaluation will take place at the end of year 3
  - c) Progress is being monitored via Children's Panels, both for those in care and those receiving the alternative interventions
  - d) Independent Reviewing Officers can escalate any issues of concern to senior officers and Cafcass (if necessary), although these issues are usually resolved via social workers and/or practice leaders

- e) The project is at an early stage, and the main challenge to date has been about changing the culture of working arrangements

Resolved

The Panel requested that the annual report of the Independent Reviewing Officers be added to their work programme as a future agenda item

**4 Safeguarding Budget**

The Panel gave consideration to the issue (deferred to them by the Finance and Performance Working Group via the Children and Young People Overview & Scrutiny Committee) and concluded that there was a lack of clarity around the request and no further action was necessary.

**5 Safeguarding Improvement Task & Finish Group – Final Report**

The Panel noted the report, which had received endorsement by the Children and Young People Overview & Scrutiny Committee on 30 January 2013

**6 Other Business**

6.1 Brenda Vincent circulated the latest dataset for Warwickshire's Looked After Children population, noting:

- a) The number of LAC increased by 6 in December, predominantly from the Nuneaton & Bedworth area
- b) The number of external agency placements has reduced
- c) There are currently 19 young people in "Staying Put" placements
- d) Asylum seekers in care are removed from the looked after number when they turn 18, but continue to be entitled to Get Ready for Adult Life Services and support

Resolved

The Panel agreed to look at the figures in more depth and respond with any questions, and to consider if they would like a representative from the Asylum Seeker service to be invited to a future meeting

6.2 The date of the next meeting was agreed as Monday 8th April at 1.30pm in Committee Room 3, Shire Hall, Warwick. Agenda items to include:

- Advocacy Service – introductory report
- Complaints Service – introductory report
- Looked After Children dataset
- Charter for Care Leavers – verbal progress report on agreed actions

Agenda items for the subsequent meeting in June to include:

- Fostering Service annual report
- Fostering and adoption datasets
- Discussion with care leavers

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Chair

The meeting closed at 12.30pm