

Minutes of a meeting of the Corporate Parenting Panel held on 8 September 2014

Present:

Members of the Panel

Councillors:

Dave Shilton

Jenny St John

Chris Williams (Chair)

John Whitehouse (replacing Clive Rickhards for this meeting)

Officers

Shinderpaul Bhangal, Practice Leader - Participation

Wendy Fabbro, Strategic Director

Ann Mawdsley, Senior Democratic Services Officer

Brenda Vincent, Service Manager - South

Children in Care Council

Daniel Kalcutt-Smith

Others

Jo Dillon, Associate Child Health and Maternity, Warwickshire North CCG

Carla Elkins, Patient Experience/Public Involvement Manager, NHS Coventry and Rugby CCG

Dr Jill O'Hagan, GP and Clinical Lead for Partnership -Rugby Locality, NHS Coventry and Rugby CCG

Sue Price, Director of Commissioning, Arden, Herefordshire and Worcestershire Area Team, NHS England

1. General

(1) Apologies

Apologies for absence were received on behalf of Councillor Peter Fowler, Councillor Bob Hicks and Councillor Clive Rickhards (replaced for this meeting by Councillor John Whitehouse).

(2) Disclosures of Pecuniary and Non-Pecuniary Interests

None.

(3) Minutes of the meeting held on 7 July 2014

The minutes of the meeting held on 7 July 2014 were agreed as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

Matters Arising

Page 2 - Councillor Jenny St. John – 3 June

Councillor St. John noted that information on Pupil Premiums would be included in the member training she was working with the CiCC to develop.

Page 2 – Councillor Jenny St. John – 3 June

Shinderpaul Bhangal reported that he had attempted to contact Gina de Marco. She was currently on leave and he was expecting to meet with her on her return.

Page 3 – Councillor Peter Fowler – 1 July 2014

Brenda Vincent reported that Michael Jackson was doing the final amendments to the 'Being in Care' booklet, incorporating the comments that had been received from young people.

Page 4 – 3. Update from Strategic Lead

Brenda Vincent reported back on the training event on Improving the Outcomes of Looked After Children she had attended with Councillor Williams. She noted that there had been a number of organisations involved from across the country, and while there had been no surprises, the key message was the importance of listening to the views of young people, which were based on their own experiences. Councillor Williams said that he felt that Warwickshire were already ahead of the game, and added that there had been a universal scepticism about CAMHS (Children and Adolescent Mental Health Services), and the event had been useful for networking.

There was a discussion about there being no LA residential homes in Warwickshire, and Wendy Fabbro outlined the implications of placing LAC out of county as well as the monitoring process for residential homes WCC used, to ensure the care plans for each individual child was being met. Brenda Vincent added that under the final regulations (The Children's Homes and Looked after Children (Miscellaneous Amendments) (England) Regulations 2013), any LAC placed in required the LA making the placement to consult with the LA where the placement was made.

There was a discussion about the data members had received on LAC in their divisions, and whether this needed to be updated. Wendy Fabbro noted that this data was available and any member visiting a school in their division could telephone her service beforehand to ask for data for specific schools. It was agreed that this should be cascaded to all members.

Sinderpaul Bhangal reported that there was now a standing item on CiCC agendas for members of the Panel to give feedback to the CiCC, and for young people to give key messages to members.

Page 7 – Future meeting dates

Councillor Shilton noted that there was a conflict with other committees for future meeting dates. Ann Mawdsley undertook to sort this out.

2. Children in Care Council (CiCC) updates

The dates and rota for future CiCC meetings were agreed.

Wendy Fabbro confirmed that she would be attending the meeting on 9 September 2014. Councillor Chris Williams undertook to attend of Councillor Bob Hicks was not able to.

Shinderpaul Bhangal reported that Councillor Williams would be attending the Virtual School Awards Ceremony, Coventry University on 13th September 2014. This event was an opportunity for CiCCs to come together and to discuss leaving care.

Shinderpaul Bhangal reported that the first draft of the CiCC Newsletter was almost complete and was expected to be circulated at the end of September and quarterly thereafter.

An update was given on the corporate parenting training for members being developed by the CiCC, which Councillor Jenny St. John was assisting with. Shinderpaul Bhangal noted that this would also be linked in to e-learning. This would be used as training for councillors and other professionals with responsibilities for corporate parenting. Contact had been made with IT, and a date was still to be set for the next meeting.

There was a discussion about the lack of understanding by councillors of their role, and a suggestion made that this training should be mandatory. The Chair noted that there was no mandatory training for councillors, but there needed to be a strong message given to councillors. Wendy Fabbro undertook to offer a further training session, and members agreed this would be best held before a full Council meeting to ensure good attendance.

3. Health related issues for Warwickshire's Looked After Children

The Chair introduced this item, which had arisen as a result of the 'Young People's GP Experience Survey' undertaken by Healthwatch in 2013. He added that there was still a strong perception that nothing had changed, and the Panel were looking for reassurance that the concerns and needs of LAC were being listened to, as there was a strong feeling that some groups such as young people and travellers were not given the same attention by GPs. He also noted that while there was a lot in the report about receptionists, he was also concerned about the relationship between LAC and their local GP.

Dr Jill O'Hagan reported that she had attended the meeting where the report had been launched, and that the Coventry and Rugby CCG had received a presentation on the report. She noted that there were a lot of points raised in

the report that applied to the public more generally than just young people, and made reference to the pressure that GPs were under.

Carla Elkins reported that since taking up her post in March, she had started to work with patient reference groups/focus groups to consider:

- What good GP services looked like
- Mapping different groups
- What the CCG was doing to hear the voice of young people, tailoring the means of engagement to specific groups
- What the barriers were for young people – including the possible use of social media and tools such as augmented reality apps.

She also noted that over the next two years the C&RCCG would be implementing a transformation programme around urgent care and avoidable admissions, which would involve stakeholder events, including young people, who were the highest user group of A&E services.

Sue Price noted that the Healthwatch report had been presented to the Quality Surveillance Group. She stated that whilst NHS England were responsible for commissioning GP services, there was nothing that could be done contractually to make cultural changes. She added the following points:

- i. There was a need to raise awareness by GPs of the actions and reactions to the behaviour of staff.
- ii. There needed to be a better understanding of the services available and what young people (and other user groups) could and should expect.
- iii. NHS England carried out two patient surveys a year, the outcomes of which were fed back to GPs. Young People should be encouraged to engage with this process.
- iv. Different ways of making connections through technology needed to be explored and introduced.

During the discussion that followed these points were raised:

1. In response to a query asking whether young people would have the same comments one year on, it was noted that there was a lot of work going on linking in with the Public Health Annual Report, in order to ascertain what GP care looked like for young people.
2. There had been a lot of criticism about GP receptionists and the Panel were reminded that they had a difficult role in balancing the demands of their GPs and the demands of the public. A pilot was in place in 50% of GP practices in Coventry providing, additional care, support and training to receptionists, and the C&R CCG would look at the evidence from this work before rolling it out to all GP practices.

3. Daniel Kalcutt-Smith noted that when young people attended the GP with their carers, that GPs were more inclined to discuss issues with the carer than the young person. Dr O'Hagan responded that this could be because the carers were taking the lead in the discussion. It was suggested that an e-learning package could be developed by the CiCC setting out some tips for GPs. Shinderpaul Bhangal reported that they were trying to get young people to volunteer and sit on consultative groups, and noted the importance of having an ongoing link between GPs and children in care/care leavers.
4. Members encouraged more work to be done around identifying barriers for young people and exploring the use of new technology.
5. There was a discussion around the limited options available through online booking systems. Sue Price noted that people needed to move away from the idea that all appointments would be face-to-face with the GP. The increase in the volume of demand for GP services without any increase in the number of GPs meant there would need to be more telephone triage work and more consultation with patients to determine where they needed to be in the 'queue'.
6. Jo Dillon reported that she was not aware of any specific pieces of work in relation to the issues highlighted in the Healthwatch report being done by SWCCG and WNCCG. She undertook to report back and to make the necessary connections.
7. Annual health assessments for LAC were reported to GPs, but it was acknowledged that GPs were not always aware of the background of these patients.
8. Carla Elkins undertook to meet with Shinderpaul Bhangal to discuss the engagement of the CiCC.

Brenda Vincent noted the importance of understanding the vulnerability of LAC, which had been evidenced in research, particularly in areas such as early pregnancy and mental health. All corporate parents (including GPs) had to make every contact count and consider all needs and concerns of LAC that may exist, and signposting them to services where these were not offered by the GP. She made reference to the recent NICE guidance on LAC, which would be useful for the CCGs and GPs to consider.

The Chair was pleased that there was the recognition that this was a cultural issue that needed changing. He thanked the presenters for their contributions and it was agreed that a further update would be received from the CCGs at a date to be determined in the spring.

4. Update from Strategic Lead and Performance Dataset

Brenda Vincent introduced this item and reported the following:

Warwickshire County Council had placed their first child under the 'fostering to adopt' scheme. She added that the LA was required to offer this option to all adopters, and as the child was placed with adopters before the legal authorisation was received, this process did introduce a greater level of risk for adopters.

Brenda Vincent noting the following points in relation to the performance dataset:

1. There had been an increase in the number of LAC, particularly in Nuneaton and Bedworth and Rugby, where there were month-on-month increases. This in turn impacted on all services.
2. There was an issue with getting health assessments for LAC placed more than 20 miles or more than an hour travelling from the county. These were supposed to take place within 28 days of placement, but there was a problem getting CCG approval for payment.
3. Resources were kept under tight scrutiny, with regular workload analysis being carried out. Wendy Fabbro reported that the last analysis had been carried out approximately three to four months ago and the workload on staff was at the top end of the normal range, She added that there were teams across the county at either side of this and that any new regulations imposed by the Courts that impacted on staff resourcing would be brought to Councillors for consideration.
4. Members noted the difficulty in looking at short-term data, as this did not show the increases that had been absorbed over the longer term. Brenda Vincent noted that the trend had shown a 9% increase over a three-year period, and that a decrease in the number of fostering placements would be expected alongside the increase in the number of adoptions.
5. It was agreed that while it was a good aspiration to be in the top quartile, it was difficult to know what this was in real terms.
6. Wendy Fabbro noted that an email had been sent to all Members setting out Warwickshire's position in response to the child abuse cases in Rotherham. She noted that Warwickshire was different, but that as a local authority we could not afford to be complacent, particularly in light of the proximity of Coventry and Birmingham.
7. In response to a query regarding exam results it was noted that the next meeting of the Panel would have an education theme, where exam results for LAC would be considered.

The Chair thanked Brenda Vincent for her report.

5. Draft Corporate Parenting Policy and Strategy

Brenda Vincent introduced the draft Strategy, which was being refreshed to produce an overarching document that any social worker, health visitor, Councillor or GP could use to understand what partners should be doing together to improve the outcomes of LAC. The document was currently in the phase of consultation and had been considered by a number of groups, including the CiCC.

Members of the Panel agreed that it would be useful to have an appendix to the document listing all stakeholders with a corporate parenting role.

Brenda Vincent undertook to reissue the draft Strategy once all the comments received had been incorporated.

The Chair thanked Brenda Vincent for her report.

6. Work Programme

The work programme was agreed, including the updates agreed at this meeting, and the following new items:

1. In light of the media item on the Action for Children Report highlighting the national problems with siblings being fostered together, Brenda Vincent agreed to provide an update as part of her update to the 27 October 2014 meeting.
2. Journeys Service – to be invited to the 9 December 2014 meeting to give an update on what they are doing to meeting the needs of children in care.

7. Any Other Business

None.

Future meeting dates

27 October 2014 at 10.00 am

9 December 2014 at 10.00 am

9 February 2015 at 10.00 am

14 April 2015 at 10.00 am

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Chair

The meeting closed at 11:50 pm