

Minutes of a meeting of the Corporate Parenting Panel held on 19 July 2017

Present:

Councillors:

Yousef Dahmash, Jeff Morgan, Caroline Phillips, Jerry Roodhouse and Chris Williams

Officers:

Shinderpaul Bhangal, Practice Leader – Children’s Participation
Ben Patel-Sadler, Democratic Services Officer
Brenda Vincent, Service Manager (Central)
Beate Wagner, Head of Children and Families

Other attendees:

None

1. General

Due to a Chair not having been elected, Ben Patel Sadler, Democratic Services Officer opened the meeting and asked members for proposers for the positions of Chair and Vice–Chair of the Corporate Parenting Panel.

Councillor Chris Williams proposed that Councillor Jeff Morgan be elected as Chair of the Corporate Parenting Panel. The proposal was seconded by Councillor Yousef Dahmash.

Councillor Jeff Morgan was elected as Chair of the Corporate Parenting Panel.

Councillor Jeff Morgan proposed that Councillor Chris Williams be elected as Vice-Chair of the Corporate Parenting Panel. The proposal was seconded by Councillor Caroline Phillips.

Councillor Chris Williams was elected as Vice-Chair of the Corporate Parenting Panel.

(1) Apologies

Apologies for absence had been received from Councillors Patrick Davey, Pam Williams and from Steve Pendleton (Head of Vulnerable Groups and the Virtual School) and Andrew Jones (Deputy Chief Executive, Warwick District Council).

(2) Disclosures of Pecuniary and Non-Pecuniary Interests

Councillor Phillips declared a non-pecuniary interest as a governor at Stockingford Early Years Centre.

(3) Minutes of the meeting held on 25 April 2017

The minutes of the meeting held on 25 April 2017 were agreed as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

Matters Arising

None

2. Appointment of Chair and Vice-Chair

Councillor Jeff Morgan was elected as Chair of the Corporate Parenting Panel.

Councillor Chris Williams was elected as Vice-Chair of the Corporate Parenting Panel.

3. Corporate Parenting Panel Terms of Reference

Members noted that the existing terms of reference were outlined at page one of the attached report.

Members expressed a view that although the terms of reference were concise, they did encapsulate all of the functions which the Corporate Parenting Panel undertook.

Brenda Vincent, Service Manager (Central) informed the Panel that page 15 of the Corporate Parenting Policy 2017-2020 also highlighted the role of the Panel in greater detail.

Beate Wagner, Head of Children and Families informed the Panel that all members would also be asked to sign the Corporate Parenting Panel Pledge and the Care Leavers Charter.

The Panel noted that the new Pledge was currently being reviewed and amended – the Children in Care Council (CiCC) would have input to the Pledge before it was formally tabled at a full Council meeting in September 2017 for members to sign.

Resolved:

The Panel agreed that page 15 of the Corporate Parenting Policy 2017-2020 should be amended to reflect that the Panel would be conducting more of a scrutiny and challenge function. It was also agreed that amendments to page 15 be carried out to reflect that the work of the Panel would also be linked to the One Organisational Plan (OOP) 2020. Amendments would also be made to outline how the Panel would be working to address the findings of the recent Ofsted inspection.

4. Corporate Parenting Strategy

Members expressed a view that the Corporate Parenting Strategy was a substantial document which could be shortened.

The Panel queried how effective partnership working was at the present time.

Brenda Vincent, Service Manager (Central) informed the Panel that experiences of

working with partnership agencies was mixed with lots of smaller projects currently being undertaken between the Council and its external partners.

Members noted that partnership working arrangements were regularly assessed and reviewed to ensure that outcomes were positive.

Members queried if health partners should be asked to sign up to the Corporate Parenting Policy.

Resolved:

It was agreed that the Chair of the Panel would write to colleagues in the health sector to request that they formally sign up to the Corporate Parenting Policy.

Beate Wagner, Head of Children and Families informed the Panel that officers would liaise with health partners to ensure that any potential wording to be signed up to was worded correctly.

5. Feedback Following Recent Ofsted Inspection

The Panel was provided with the exact wording from the recent Ofsted inspection which related directly to the Corporate Parenting Panel.

Whilst the Ofsted inspection had highlighted some positive aspects of work undertaken by the Panel, the inspection had recommended that the Panel should take on a more scrutiny focused approach and should more robustly challenge performance through the information presented at meetings.

Members expressed a view that it would be crucial for the Panel to determine its exact role in terms of the level of scrutiny being undertaken and what topics/areas the Panel would want to focus on in the future. Members agreed that the Panel could be utilised to undertake more in-depth scrutiny at the request of the Children and Young People Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

Brenda Vincent, Service Manager (Central) informed the members that the Panel had expanded its membership to include representatives from District and Borough Councils and had also secured representation from the health sector.

Members noted that it had been difficult to secure representation on the Panel from all partners, partly because of staff resourcing issues.

The Panel noted that new government legislation had been published with the purpose of engraining Corporate Parenting work across all sectors. This legislation had placed an increased emphasis on the importance of partnership working and the fact that care leavers would now be eligible for services up to the age of 25.

Resolved:

The Chair agreed that he would write to colleagues at partner organisations (including District and Borough Councils and the health sector) in an attempt to

secure a broader range of representation at Panel meetings.
The Panel requested that the new government legislation with regards to Corporate Parenting be shared with them.

The Panel agreed that any information being considered at future meetings should be linked to the ongoing Council transformation plan (OOP 2020).

Members agreed that Panel meetings should continue to follow the pattern of one agenda based meeting, with the following meeting then being a discussion session with frontline professionals.

It was agreed that Panel members should continue to attend CiCC meetings on a rota basis.

It was agreed that the Panel would receive the Council's Ofsted action plan as soon as it became available.

6. Reporting Requirements

Reporting requirements were discussed as part of the Future Agenda Planning item.

7. Future Agenda Planning

Members had a discussion around what potential future agenda items would be considered at future Panel meetings.

Shinderpaul Bhangal, Practice Leader – Children's Participation informed the Panel that an option to improve engagement with the CiCC might be to have members of the Panel buddy a specific CiCC member. This would mean that these members of the CiCC would have a direct link with a Panel member and a single point of contact to raise any potential issues or concerns. The Chair and Panel members were supportive of this proposal, although members did express a view that an initial ice breaker session be held before members were buddied with their CiCC counterparts.

It was agreed that the agenda based meetings would continue to begin at 16.00 to coincide with CiCC meetings.

It was agreed that a leaflet would be produced which would display the members of the Corporate Parenting Panel and their contact details.

Following discussions, the Panel agreed that the following items would be considered at the September 2017 meeting:

- Dataset report which would be linked to the OOP 2020. The data included in this report would flag areas of highest concern and the story behind the data. If necessary, designated officers would attend future Panel meetings to explain any patterns and trends in the data.

- A report on care leavers and their life chances.
- The Ofsted action plan
- A discussion item with regards to the proposed changes to safeguarding boards (specifically which board/panel deals with certain issues/topics).

8. Any Other Business

Brenda Vincent, Service Manager (Central) made the Panel aware of a future Regional Adoption Agency event which would be held in August 2017. This matter would be presented to Cabinet in October 2017 and so the August event would serve to update members on the progress made in this area of business. A date would be confirmed in the near future.

9. Date of Next Meeting

The next meeting of the Corporate Parenting Panel was scheduled to take place on 5th September 2017 at 16.00 in Committee Room 2, Shire Hall, Warwick

The meeting closed at 15.30 pm

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Chair