

**Minutes of a meeting of the Corporate Parenting Panel  
held on 26 February 2018**

**Present:**

**Councillors:**

Jeff Morgan (Chair), Jerry Roodhouse, Chris Williams and Pam Williams

**Officers:**

John Coleman, Interim Head of Service – Children and Families

Satwant Kohar, Service Manager – Initial Response

Ben Patel-Sadler, Democratic Services Officer

Steve Pendleton, Head of the Virtual School for Children Looked After

Ramandeep Sandhu, Development Team Manager

Sharon Shaw, Service Manager, Corporate Parenting

**Other attendees:**

Jackie Channell, Designated Nurse (Child Protection) - NHS

Councillor Chris Saint, Leader – Stratford-on-Avon District Council

**1. General**

**(1) Apologies**

Apologies had been received from Councillor Caroline Phillips.

**(2) Disclosures of Pecuniary and Non-Pecuniary Interests**

None.

**(3) Minutes of the meeting held on 9 January 2018**

The minutes of the meeting held on 9 January 2018 were agreed as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

**Matters Arising**

Sharon Shaw, Service Manager, Corporate Parenting informed the Panel that Mark Riddell MBE was a service manager at Trafford Council. Under Mr Riddell's leadership, Trafford had been rated as providing an outstanding service for care leavers. Mr Riddell had been appointed by the Department for Education (DfE) as National Implementation Adviser for care leavers and would work closely with local authorities as they drive forward the new duties introduced through the Children & Social Work Act (2017). Mr Riddell would be visiting Warwickshire County Council in May 2018 to work with officers and members to discuss how improvements to the care leaving process in Warwickshire could be made.

With regards to accommodation inspections being undertaken by young people,

Sharon Shaw informed the Panel that the issues they had identified had been remedied quickly by undertaking minor building works to the properties in question.

Councillor Jeff Morgan (Chair) informed the Panel that he would like to be made aware of the positive work being undertaken by Warwickshire's children in care. Councillor Morgan expressed a view that it was important to acknowledge the contributions being made by these children – he would write letters of congratulations where appropriate.

John Coleman, Interim Head of Service – Children and Families informed the Panel that the MOSAIC system was now becoming embedded in the working of officers and was improving.

Sharon Shaw explained that development work was continuing with regards to the MOSAIC system's production of reports that were considered at the Fostering Panel.

Members requested that an update be brought to a future meeting which would outline the process of using the MOSAIC system, specifically around care leavers.

The Panel noted that all development work in relation to the MOSAIC system was scheduled to be completed by June 2018.

Sharon Shaw informed the Panel that an update would be provided at the next meeting that would outline the reasons as to why the number of children looked after was not decreasing. Members noted that this area of work had been identified as a priority by officers.

The Panel agreed that an agenda item would be included at the next meeting which would enable members to determine the future work programme of the Panel.

John Coleman and Councillor Morgan presented flowers and expressed thanks to Norma Wilson, a former member of staff, who had voluntarily made up hundreds of hampers over many years to give to care leavers in Warwickshire. All members of the Panel gave thanks and expressed their appreciation to Norma who had undertaken this selfless work for such a long period of time.

## **2. Discussion session – Missing Children**

Satwant Kohar, Service Manager – Initial Response and Ramandeep Sandhu, Development Team Manager provided a presentation to the Panel in relation to missing children.

During the presentation, the following points were noted by members:

- The physical location of the Warwickshire CSE, Missing and Trafficking Team and how a range of partners including the police, Barnardos, the CSE Service and the Missing Children's Service all work together at the same location.
- The Panel noted that more than half of CSE incidents involved young people who had either been reported missing from home or care.

- Members noted the ways in which the Warwickshire CSE, Missing and Trafficking Team operated in practice, including their roles and responsibilities to children and young people.
- John Coleman informed the Panel that criminal convictions in relation to CSE were varied in terms of their success. Whilst there had been criminal convictions secured in relation to some CSE cases, others had collapsed and some alleged perpetrators had been acquitted. Members noted that the Warwickshire CSE team provided comprehensive support to children and young people who were involved in the court process. If convictions were not secured, then there were a range of civil injunctions that could be applied for and implemented to disrupt the activities of those who sought to facilitate and take part in CSE.
- With regards to unaccompanied asylum seekers, the Panel noted that the Warwickshire CSE team always sought to establish trust – as did all other agencies involved with protecting children from CSE. The aim of all organisations was not to provide a blanket service, but to treat each child and each case on an individual basis. Members noted that officers always worked to determine if there were links between missing children, CSE and trafficking.
- The Panel noted that a young person practitioner would work with each unaccompanied asylum seeking child in order to better understand the journey which they had taken. This helped to build trust and to understand why and how these children had been trafficked. Members noted that trafficking was not just an international issue – children could be trafficked within very local areas.
- The Panel noted how the CSE team utilised the National Referral Mechanism (NRM).
- This was a framework for the identification of trafficked children and a mechanism to collect data. The mechanism was in place to ensure that children were safeguarded and that professionals were working together for this aim. Public authorities had a duty to notify under section 52 of the Modern Slavery Act (2015) if any individual was suspected to be a victim of slavery or trafficking. Children did not need to consent to enter the NRM. The NRM sought to improve the identification of victims and build a more comprehensive picture of the nature and scale of modern slavery.
- The Panel noted that officers were utilising the NRM on a regular basis.
- All NRM notifications were recorded by the Home Office and added to a national database which could be accessed by all agencies.
- The Panel noted that the average number of unaccompanied asylum seeking children arriving in Warwickshire was around four per month, although the number does fluctuate, with numbers rising during the spring time.

- Only a very small percentage of children arriving in the county will go missing permanently after being placed with foster parents/carers.
- Members noted that unaccompanied asylum seeking children were placed with foster carers who possessed the appropriate skills.
- The Panel noted that interpreters were used to communicate with unaccompanied asylum seeking children. The costs for this service were reimbursed to the Council by the government.
- The missing persons service was always seeking to apply for additional funding to provide additional support and resource to this area of business.
- Members noted that all children who had gone missing (irrespective of if they were in care or not at the time) were provided with a return to home interview.
- The Panel noted that attempts were always made to register vulnerable individuals with a GP. By doing this, the NHS could track individual children if they ever accessed health services in the future. If there were any markers on a child's file, it would be visible at a national level.
- Members noted that there had been a reduction since April 2017 around the number of missing episodes for children looked after.
- The Panel noted that the parenting worker provided by Barnardos to support parents and foster carers was having a positive impact – not all local authorities used parenting workers.
- Members noted that the missing children team were seeking to reduce the number of missing episodes along with the number of children going missing.

**Resolved:**

The Panel noted the contents of the presentation and agreed to write to the Local Government Association (LGA) to encourage data sharing between local authorities to assist in identifying any CSE hotspots (in terms of geographical locations).

The Panel also agreed to write to district and borough licensing committees to express a view that additional CSE training could be offered to increase awareness of the issues associated with it.

**3. Any Other Business**

**None**

**4. Date of Next Meeting**

The next meeting of the Corporate Parenting Panel has been scheduled for 1<sup>st</sup> May 2018, commencing 16.00 p.m. in Committee Room 2, Shire Hall, Warwick.

The meeting closed at 11.30 a.m

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Chair