

Corporate Parenting Panel

Meeting of held on Thursday, 22 March 2018 at 5.15 pm in F9 - Town Hall

MINUTES

Present: Councillor Alisa Flemming (Chair);
Councillors Maria Gatland, Bernadette Khan, Shafi Khan and Andy Stranack

PART A

8/17 **Minutes of the previous meeting**

The minutes of the meeting held on 10 January 2018 were agreed as an accurate record.

9/17 **Disclosures of interest**

There were none.

10/17 **Urgent Business (if any)**

There was none.

11/17 **Educational Outcome - Interim Update**

The Chair explained that the update report was in response to request from the Board following the Virtual School annual report presented at the previous Panel. It was noted that unfortunately the Head Teacher of the Virtual School had sent her apologies due to ill-health but it was agreed that comments made by the Panel would be feedback.

The Panel discussed the low level of mentoring support and wished for further information regarding the performance of children with SEND and EHCPs and how the Virtual School was supporting them. The Panel requested to have a report presented to the next Panel regarding Independent Visitors (IV) and noted that it would be useful to have an IV present at the meeting.

The Panel noted that there needed to be more information available to foster carers and children in care regarding the leaving care service and the transition. The Chair suggested that it would be useful to have a care leaver present at the meeting or a video link organised so the Panel could ask them further questions.

The Foster Carer present expressed concern for the lack of vacancies within higher education and requested that the Virtual School put pressure on the

colleges to increase their capacity as the young people in care were of a high priority and needed additional support.

Councillor B. Khan suggested that a booklet could be produced outlining the opportunities and routes available for young people and it would be useful for the young people in care, care leavers, foster carers and relevant organisations. It was noted that Croydon's Local Offer focussed primarily on social aspects rather than employment and education.

The Panel raised concerns for the high level of exclusion and requested further information on what the virtual schools were doing on it and how the needs of the young person was being met.

It was requested that there was future report regarding Personal Independent Payments (PIP) with further information regarding the delay in payments and the backlog.

The Foster Carer noted that it was important that the completed Education Health and Care Plans (EHCPs) were correct as they could impact on the available funding for the individual. It was noted that the foster carers could not advise when the EHCP was being completed as it was the responsibility of the social worker.

12/17 **Staying Put Update**

The Head of Looked After Children and Resources introduced the report and explained that a review of Staying Put had been brought for the Panel's consideration at the previous Corporate Parenting Panel after the Ofsted report had identified it as an area for improvement. Since the previous meeting a plan had been drafted and if the Panel was in agreement then the officers would begin the review. It was explained that some of the work had begun tentatively, including engagement with foster carers through an online survey. It was added that there would be further consultation with the foster carers and young people.

The foster carers and officers raised concern that there were foster carers who were unaware of the Staying Put policy and it was highlighted that further training was needed on this. It was also noted that children between 16-17 years old with pathway plans were very low and that this was a concern of the authority.

At 18.20 Councillor B. Khan left the meeting.

13/17 **Children in Care Performance Scorecard**

The Director of Children Family Intervention and Children's Social Care introduced the report and explained that there would be a standing item on the future Corporate Parenting Panels with updated data.

The Panel raised concern regarding the high number of missing episodes and requested that future reports included how many individuals were going missing. It was explained that the number of missing episodes was significantly higher than previous years; however, a lot of this was due to the determination for missing periods and unauthorised episodes being nationally changed, which had impacted the data. It was noted that there was a weekly Missing Panel meeting who focussed on the top ten missing children of concern. The Panel agreed to have a future report on missing children in autumn 2018.

In response to queries raised by Councillor Gatland it was explained that there were delays with young people having their initial health assessments as they should be completed within 20 working days and the health services were not being contacted promptly. It was noted that this had been recognised and additional help within the team had been sought to rectify the problem.

14/17 **Exclusion of the Press and Public**

This was not required.

The meeting ended at 7.01 pm

Signed:

Date:

.....
.....