

Corporate Parenting Panel

Meeting of Corporate Parenting Panel held on Wednesday, 10 November 2021 at 5.00 pm. This meeting was held remotely.

MINUTES

Present: Councillor Alisa Flemming (Chair);

Councillors Maddie Henson, Bernadette Khan, Pat Clouder, Mike Bonello, Sue Bennett and Maria Gatland

Co-optee Members

Shelley Davies (Virtual School)
Angela Christmas (Foster Carer Representative)
Manny Kwamin (Foster Carer Representative)
Dr Julia Simpson (LAC Nurse/Doctor)
Porsha Robinson (EMPIRE)
EMPIRE (EMPIRE)
Roneeta Campbell-Butler (Health Commissioner)

Also

Present:

Roisin Madden (Interim Director of Early Help and Children's Social Care)
Derek Dyer (Service Manager for Children Looked After)
Dawn West (Service Manager, Quality Commissioning & Performance Improvement)
Adam Feron-Stanley (Independent Reviewing Officer & Independent Visiting Service Manager)
Jo George (Head of Systemic Clinical Services, Workforce Development & Principal Social Worker, Childrens Social Care)
Hendrix Hammond (Lead Family Therapist, Childrens Social Care)
Ann Guindi (Named Nurse)
Shaun Hanks (Head of Child Protection & Review, Quality Commissioning & Performance Improvement)
Veronika Yaricheva (Young Director)
Maret Arselgova (Young Director Apprentice)

PART A

13/21 Minutes of the previous meeting

The minutes of the meeting held on Wednesday 13 January 2021 were agreed as an accurate record.

14/21 Disclosures of interest

There were none.

15/21 Update on actions agreed at previous meeting(s)

There were none.

16/21 Urgent Business (if any)

There was none.

17/21 EMPIRE Presentation

Councillor Michael Bonello arrived at the meeting at 5:19pm.

A presentation by EMPIRE was presented by the Service Coordinator for EMPIRE, Porsha Robinson who shared an update with the Panel of what EMPIRE had been up to since the last Corporate Parenting Panel and also a video in relation to the health assessments.

Since the last Panel meeting, EMPIRE had hosted a youth hub session with over twenty people present delivering a variety of activities, creativities and learning. They had weekly sessions that included Barnardo's informing of their service; t-shirt printing sessions; cooking sessions and learning of the portal system.

The Panel watched a video that saw young people have a conversation and voiced their understanding of what health assessments meant to them including looking after self, emotionally, mentally and physically; understanding what a review health assessments was for Children Looked After; how they were affected by the pandemic lockdown and what resources they would require from the Corporate Parenting Panel to support health needs.

Additionally, the Director of Education, Shelley Davies highlighted that EMPIRE was awarded the Team of the Year Award at the Staff Awards; and Maret Arselgova was awarded the Children Families and Education Staff Award for working with Children and Young People.

The Panel welcomed the presentation from EMPIRE and thanked them for all the work that they were doing, further Panel Members congratulated members of EMPIRE where their achievements had been highlighted.

18/21 Initial Health Assessments and Review Health Assessments for Looked After Children Emotional Wellbeing and Mental Health offer for Children Looked After

The Corporate Parenting Panel considered the Initial Health Assessments and Review Health Assessments for Looked After Children & the Emotional Wellbeing and Mental Health Offer for Children Looked After reports which explained the current performance and pathways for the Initial Health Assessment and Review Health Assessments (Part 1); and provided an update on Emotional Wellbeing and Mental Health offer for Children Looked After (Part 2). The Panel received a detailed overview from the Lead Commissioner for Health, Roneeta Campbell-Butler; the Service Manager for Children Looked After, Derek Dyer; the Designated Looked After Children Doctor, Dr Julia Simpson; the Lead Family Therapist, Childrens Social Care Hendrix Hammond; the Named Nurse, Ann Guindi; and the Head of Systemic Clinical Services, Workforce Development & Principal Social Worker, Jo George.

In response to queries raised by the Panel the following was clarified:

- The health assessment was to assess good health screening tests for preventable illnesses, and to ensure all immunisations were up to date, further, the assessment provided the opportunity to discuss any emotional well-being, schooling and aspirations.
- Explicit consent was also appropriate to start the health assessments.
- The Service's objective was to complete assessments within four weeks with monthly updates, and provide additional training for further support.
- Subjects such as sexual identity, sexual health, drugs and alcohol and emotional difficulties with the right support was also provided to the young people.
- Unaccompanied and separated children were also reviewed during their assessments for any anxiety they may have.
- The voice of the child and carer's feedback was paramount to quality control prospects for young children and foster carers, these were part of the audit. The health action plan was to be smart and identify a person to action giving specific timeframe.
- Physical, emotional and mental health were holistic with time spent on the health assessments which supported young people experiencing difficulties. There was also an interpreter to assist those with a language barrier to further express themselves. Young people were often always signposted to what would best suit and benefit their needs. Further, it was essential for emotional health to be discussed at supervisions.
- Emotional Wellbeing referred to mental health, experiencing changes in thoughts and moods; and mental health was also on a spectrum.
- There was a waiting list for many of the services including CAMHS. There were five qualified staff across the service to provide systemic programme to the young people. There were also front line staff being trained at foundation level which provided a therapeutic understanding in a child's life to carry out assessments.

The Chair thanked officers for their report.

The Panel **RESOLVED:** To

1. Review and note the performance of the initial and review health assessments and the actions that have been undertaken to reduce the risks associated with delivering these statutory assessments.
2. Review and note the Emotional and Wellbeing Offer for Children Looked After

Councillor Maddie Henson left the meeting at 6:36pm

19/21 Independent Reviewing Officer Service

The Corporate Parenting Panel considered the Independent Reviewing Officer Service presentation which provided an overview of the service. The Panel received an overview from the Independent Reviewing Officer & Independent Visiting Service Manager, Adam Feron-Stanley.

Independent Reviewing Officers (IRO) were recognised for their support to young people as they had received personal messages of thanks from their Looked After Child.

The work of the IRO involved reviewing a young person(s) care plan with them, and therefore being part of the conversations and network to Staying Put; carers that seek a Special Guardianship Order or adoption; or an assessment for a child returning home. IROs look further at the quality of plans ensuring procedures and policy were adhered to, additionally strengthening the quality assurance of relationships.

The Panel welcomed the presentation and the admiration Independent Reviewing Officers had for the young children including the different deliverance of service provided to young children.

In response to queries raised by the Panel, the Service Manager, Quality Commissioning & Performance Improvement, and the Independent Reviewing Officer & Independent Visiting Service Manager clarified the following:

- Following the figures in the report of the children's commissioner regarding the accommodation children were found in, the service reflected on the practice of listening; listening to children; and for services to ask questions and listen to each other; thinking out loud together to provide better responses to the children in care.
- Additionally, a lot of work with Barnardo's had undertaken, though the work was slow paced, there was a lot of work based on concerns raised for young people leading up to their 18th birthday. Also developing a 16 plus was also important for a young person's lead up in transition. With regards to placements, there was a process of

ensuring the young person was in the correct accommodation for their need.

- Bespoke training in letter writing for the IROs helped better communication with children through stories and their experience.

The Chair thanked officers for their report and highlighted the challenges and great work of the IRO which was well received by the Panel.

The Panel **RESOLVED**: To note the report

20/21 Children in Care Performance Scorecard

The Corporate Parenting Panel considered the Children in Care Performance Scorecard which provided an overview of the October month. The Panel received an overview from the Interim Director of Early Help and Children's Social Care, Roisin Madden who highlighted the following:

- There were still concerns for the children in care plans which was currently 84% in 6 months. The number of children by aged 0-5 had a smaller percentage than children aged 16-18 which was low. This was also an overlap with confusion for care plan and pathway plans. Care plan was for Looked After Children. Overall 84% of children aged 0-18 had a plan within 6 months. Upon the review into the backlog of plans, there were around twenty cases from January who had a delayed plan.
- There were 656 care leavers (or experienced care) who were eligible for a plan. 77% of young people aged 18-20 had a plan within time. Some young people aged 21-24 may not require a pathway plan, and the active monitoring and 6-monthly review may not be required, resulting in a reduced number of active plans (as independence was growing).
- 94% was the target for care plans, and 85% was the target for pathway.

In response to queries raised by the Panel, the Interim Director of Early Help and Children's Social Care clarified the following:

- The service had seen an improvement in the quality of the assessment plans with further training provided for meaningful plans, and it was intended for targets to be maintained.

The Chair requested for a breakdown of the background, which would provide a narrative to why there was a delay for the twenty cases in January.

The Chair thanked officers for the report.

21/21 How has the Panel helped Children in Care today?

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There were positive feedback throughout the meeting on how the Panel had helped the Children in Care today, with a meaningful insight into the young children.

22/21 Work Programme

The Work Programme was received with no amendments.

23/21 Exclusion of the Press and Public

This was not required.

The meeting ended at 7:46pm

Signed:

Date:

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