

Lancashire County Council

Corporate Parenting Board

Minutes of the Meeting held on Thursday, 15th June, 2017 at 6.00 pm in Cabinet Room 'C' - The Duke of Lancaster Room, County Hall, Preston

Present: Members

County Councillor Ian Brown (Chair)	-	Lancashire County Council
County Councillor Andrew Gardiner	-	Lancashire County Council
County Councillor Phillippa Williamson	-	Lancashire County Council
County Councillor Stephen Clarke	-	Lancashire County Council
Catherine	-	representing Adoption
Amanda Hatton	-	Lancashire County Council
Kris	-	LINX Representative
Shantel	-	LINX Representative
Michelle	-	LINX Representative
Sam W	-	LINX Representative
Mark	-	LINX Representative
Lisa	-	LINX Representative

Co-opted members

Mia Leyland	-	Barnardo's
Amanda Mansfield	-	Independent Reviewing Officers
Francis Ashcroft	-	Agency Residential
Mark Cartridge	-	Agency - Fostering

Other Attendees

Shagufta Khan	-	Lancashire Children's Rights Society
Lisa Farrell	-	Health
Cath Brooks	-	Lancashire County Council
Roxanne McAllister	-	Lancashire County Council
Ionie Calderbank	-	Barnardo's
Sam Gorton (Clerk)	-	Lancashire County Council

1. Appointment of Chair

The Board noted that County Councillor Ian Brown was the Chair of the Board for the municipal year 2017/2018.

2. Appointment of Deputy Chair

The Board agreed that County Councillor Phillippa Williamson would be the Deputy Chair of the Board for the municipal year 2017/2018.

3. Introductions and Apologies

All were welcomed to the meeting and apologies were received and noted from County Councillor Julie Gibson, Debbie Ross, Andreas Feldhaar and Annette McNeil.

CC Brown thanked the previous Chair, on behalf of the Board, for her dedication and commitment to the young people and contribution to the Board. He also thanked Sam Gorton for all her hard work for the Board also.

4. Notes of the Meeting and Matters Arising from 20 April 2017

The minutes were agreed as an accurate record and there were no matters arising from them.

5. Membership and Terms of Reference

The Board felt that the membership was sufficient and the terms of reference were clear and precise. The Board needs to establish how it takes business forward and who to ask – establish authority and how to link in with other Committees ie Children's Services Scrutiny. It needs to have a clear route when taking concerns forward and clear outcomes.

Action: County Councillors Brown, Williamson and Amanda Hatton to meet and discuss ways forward for the Board, reporting mechanisms, who to approach and which Committees the Board needs to link in to and update County Councillor Charles, Cabinet Member for Children, Young People and Schools on what the Board are doing.

CC Brown informed the Board that if there were any issues around corporate parenting, these should be raised with himself as Chair of the Board and that he would follow them through to a conclusion. County Councillor Brown's contact details can be found [here](#).

6. Introduction to our Elected Members

The new elected members gave a brief introduction about themselves to the Board.

County Councillor Brown reiterated the importance of linking in to other bodies and that he will be meeting with the Cabinet Member for Children, Young People and Schools and reporting on the work of the Board.

LINX and POWAR had developed a profile for social workers for the benefit of the young people and it was felt that a profile for members of the Board would be useful.

Action: Amanda Hatton agreed to amend the social worker profile and make one for the CPB. This will then be shared and members of the Board will be requested to complete one.

7. LINX (Lancashire's Children in Care Council)

What LINX Have Been Doing

LINX tabled the attached document to inform the meeting what they had been doing since the last CPB meeting.

With regards the Social Work training, they are informed about the Corporate Parenting Board and what they do.

Action: Mia Leyland agreed to share the video that has been produced by LINX for training the Social Workers with the Board.

Young Inspectors Update

LINX presented the attached powerpoint to the Board.

It was noted that there is a further training session arranged for the Summer holidays to train up more young people. The Board raised as to whether these reports are sent to the LCC Procurement Team and the Assessment and Referral Team. It was agreed that a copy of the questions asked on the inspection visits be shared with the Board at the next meeting.

- Actions:**
- i) Amanda Hatton to ensure that future reports are sent to Heads of Service in all areas of Children's Social Care and Health partners.
 - ii) LINX to bring a set of questions from their inspection visits to the next meeting to share with the Board.

Regulation 44 Visits

It is a requirement that an independent person visits the residential homes either in-house or private where our children are placed. Every month somebody visits a residential home and looks at a range of things and reports back to Ofsted and the Head of Service for Residential Services. The Director of Children's Services also receives a copy of the reports too.

The Board agreed that they wished to continue undertaking visits to residential homes and that if young inspectors wish to accompany them, then they would welcome that too.

Amanda Hatton reported that Trafford Council carry out Governance Visits for in-house and private residential and fostering placements and agreed to look into this further.

- Actions:**
- i) Amanda Hatton will research further into Governance Visits carried out by Trafford Council and see if these could work for Lancashire.
 - ii) LINX to look at an approach as to how young inspectors and County Councillors can carry out some joint visits.

Feedback on Performance Report

The key comments from young people on the report are as follows:

There are a number of reasons as to why there has been a big increase in the number of CLA in the last two years:

- i) Need to ensure that the right support is in place at the right time.
- ii) There is a new Residential Strategy to make homes smaller and look at respite to prevent young people coming into care, however look at different care/support.
- iii) Nationally there is also a big increase and this needs to be looked at to where Lancashire are a comparable.

There are less referrals than the previous year which is good however, the young people are concerned that there is a rise in contacts:

- i) More contact is good as this turns into less referrals which mean there is no social work involvement and the issues have been resolved.

Young people wanted an explanation on what missing meant with regards looked after children missing:

- i) It is not where they should be if they go out and are not back when they should be, then that would be reported as missing.
- ii) Following an episode a missing return interview will be offered to find out if there are any issues with regards why the young person has gone missing.

Suggestions have been made in the past with regards educational attainments and the young people wanted to know what was happening from them:

- i) Young people felt that some pupil premiums were still not being spent right.
- ii) It was suggested that LINX could go and speak to LASH (Lancashire Association Secondary Headteachers) and PHiL (Primary Headteachers in Lancashire) along with Amanda Hatton about pupil premiums.

- iii) It was agreed that Audrey Swann, Headteacher for Children Looked After, should be invited to the next meeting to report on pupil premiums, part-timetables and PEPs.
- iv) County Councillor Stephen Clarke agreed to bring educational attainments to the attention of Children's Services Scrutiny also.

- Actions:**
- i) Sam Gorton to invite Audrey Swann to attend to the next meeting and present a report on pupil premiums, part-timetables and PEPs.
 - ii) County Councillor Stephen Clarke to bring educational attainments to the attention of Children's Services Scrutiny.

There has been a decrease on special guardianship orders (SGO) and an increase in residence orders and young people wondered what the reasons were for this:

- i) There has been a change in the Law and if needed the Board can look further into SGOs and what care young people receive.

Young people asked about the level of care leavers in education, employment and training:

- i) LCC have Future Horizons that offer apprenticeships and they also work closely with the DWP (Department for Work and Pensions).
- ii) It was felt that this was an area the Council could do a lot more work on, ie how do we work with services the Council buy from ie would they be willing to offer an apprenticeship?
- iii) Blackpool Council convened a meeting with local businesses and young people and they pledged to help with apprenticeships.
- iv) Take advantage on Takeover Days.

- Action:**
- i) LINX agreed to have a look further into apprenticeships and how they can link in, at one of their meetings.

Care Leavers Grant for Council Tax

An update was given following the approval by the Deputy Leader on 27 April of the Care Leavers – Support Grant. A process is being developed and there are lots of variables. Once the process is outlined then it will start to be rolled out. It should be available from July. Finance will contact District Councils and ask for invoices for the Council Tax to be send directly to LCC.

This was a piece of work that the previous Chair and the Board had worked to achieve on behalf of Lancashire's Care Leavers and were congratulated on this achievement.

What is a Good Corporate Parent Activity

The Board were then asked what they felt made a good corporate parent. A few of the statements are given below:

Nurturing/caring

Feelings

Treat children and young people fairly and take responsibility for them

Encourage and support

Aspirations and bringing out the best in children and young people

Take ownership when mistakes are made

Have realistic options

Empowering and give choices

Good listening skills

Good communication and feedback

Firm but fair

It was felt that more work needed to be done around making care leavers feel that when they reach 18 they are not on their own.

Blackpool Council have a Friend for Life Scheme for Care Leavers and it was agreed that this is something that should possibly be adopted by Lancashire.

Action: Amanda Hatton agreed to talk to Blackpool Council to see what this involves and look at doing something similar for Lancashire.

8. Role of the CPB and Quality Assurance

Amanda Hatton presented the attached powerpoint to the Board.

It was agreed that the Lancashire County Pledge for looked after children will be revised and piece of work will be done at a future meeting of the Board.

The Board agreed that there should be some statements about what it expects for our children in care.

The Boards priorities need to be reviewed.

The A-Z Guide for Children and Young People Looked After needs updating.

- Actions:**
- i) To revise the Lancashire County Pledge at a future Board meeting.
 - ii) To agree collectively some statements about what it expects for our children in care.
 - iii) To review the Boards priorities at a future meeting.

- iv) Amanda Hatton to speak to officers re updating the A-Z Guide for Children and Young People Looked After.

9. Any Other Business

Facebook for Care Leavers

This will be launched at the end of June and will be called Staycentred (Central Area), Go East (East Area) and Up North (North Area). Information for care leavers will be shared on there along with events and jobs. It will be managed by the areas Leaving Care Teams and will increase the ability to keep in touch with young people and the services they are involved with.

Coventry City Council have a leaving care app and this is something that could be looked at for Lancashire.

The Emergency Duty Team (EDT) is not available out of hours, however it would be useful if there could be an out of hours care leavers team. Possibly look to see if there is any downtime during weekend hours when the EDT are working and see if some support could be given then to care leavers. Also, look at using residential services for out of hours support.

Action: Amanda Hatton to speak with colleagues with regards providing some out of hours support for care leavers.

10. Date and Time of Next Meeting

Thursday, 27 July 2017 at 1.30pm in the Duke of Lancaster Room – Cabinet Room 'C', County Hall, Preston.

3 x Speed Interviews
for new social
workers

2 x Young
Inspectors Meetings

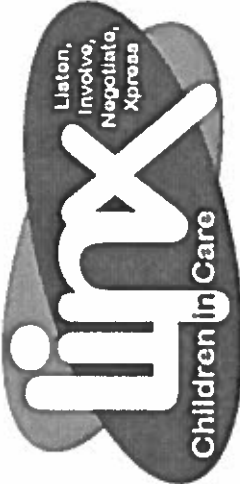
2 x LINX
Primary Group

2 x NHS staff
interviews

Produced a
training film for
social workers

1 x Voice
Over
meeting

2 x YP attended a Garden Party
at Buckingham Palace as guests
of the Office of the Children's
Commissioner



Onside Youth Zone
Consultation for the
new Preston Youth
Zone

2 x Media
Group

2 x NYAS
Filming project
- telling stories
of YP in care

2 x LINX East
group focusing
on Fostering
and Adoption

2 x Care Leaver
Forum

2 x LINX
Combined



Children Looked After Young Inspectors Update June 2017



June 2017

There are currently 16 trained members of the Children Looked After Young Inspectors Team

The Young Inspectors visit

- fostering agencies
- Lancashire County Council residential units
- Private residential units

Since the last Corporate Parenting Board Meeting the young inspectors have all come together to meet twice

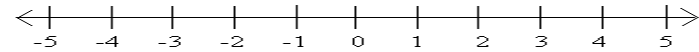


In their meetings the young people have been looking at how they score the reports and have been thinking about how they can make their scoring system simpler



The young people suggested:

Using a number line



Using emoji's



Using stickers



The young people will feed this back to Hannah Peake and will look at creating a standard scoring system for all the Young Inspectors Groups

The young people are currently planning inspections for the next year and are contacting agencies to inspect including:

- Hexagon
- Aurora
- Sandcastle
- Cambian
- ROC
- NW

We will update you on
these at the next
meeting

Corporate Parenting

What does good look like?

Minute Item 8



What young people say...

Lancashire county pledge for looked after children

Rights, responsibilities and participation

- We want people to have high expectations of us. We will support you in school and help you catch up if you fall behind. We will also make sure you know about support available when you enter further and higher education. We will celebrate your success with an annual event.
- We want to get a good start in adult life. We will make sure you know about the financial support and other entitlements available when you leave care and support you into employment.
- We should always be on the radar. We will make sure to involve you in decisions that affect you. If you have a complaint an advocacy service will support you.
- We should have at least one adult to form a long term trusting relationship with us and act as a role model. As well as your named worker and teacher, we also have plans to set up a mentoring scheme.
- We would like the CICC representative to continue promoting participation and representing the views of children who are looked after to decision makers. We would also like them to be trained to review services. We are committed to ensuring that young people are involved in reviewing services.
- We want to be included in decisions. We will involve you in decisions which affect you and take account of your views on the services you receive. You will be involved in regular reviews.
- There should be a participation strategy with a number of ways to enable us to actively participate in service decisions and delivery. This should be made known to all children looked after. A participation strategy is being developed in consultation with young people.
- We want to be able to contact our birth family, if it is appropriate. We will discuss family contact with you as part of the care planning arrangements.
- We should be supported to develop skills and confidence to enable us to actively participate in a variety of ways. We will make sure you are supported to take part in positive leisure activities and through other ways to increase your confidence.
- We want to be healthy. We will make sure you have regular assessments of your health and access to health information.

Reviews and meetings

- We want people to acknowledge us in meetings. We will make sure that you listen to your views and opinions in meetings, use language which you will understand and talk to you directly.
- There should be a smaller number of people at our review meetings. We will only include those people necessary to the meeting.
- We should be given feedback after the meeting in a way we understand. We will give you clear, understandable feedback on how you felt the meeting went.
- We should be in charge of who is at our review meetings and should be able to invite a Children's Rights worker if we want one. You have the right to invite a Children's Rights worker to your meetings but it will not always be possible for you to choose who is there. An Independent Reviewing Officer will ensure your rights are upheld.
- We should be told beforehand what the meeting is about and have the implications of any decisions explained to us so we can make an informed decision. We will make sure you have the right information at the right time and presented in a way that you can understand. We will try to avoid using jargon and abbreviations and will ask for your feedback on the information we give you to make sure it is always clear and understandable.

Placements

- We have a right to feel safe. Move us or other young people quickly when things are going wrong for us, for example if we are being bullied. Your individual needs will be assessed and an up-to-date care plan will be produced. We'll do our best to ensure your placement is the safest and most secure for you and discuss options if you are having problems.
- Social workers should have an ongoing relationship with us and our carers so that we can be supported quickly if things start to go wrong. You will have a named worker, qualified social worker and know how to contact them. Sometimes it may be necessary to have to change your worker but we will tell you when this change has to occur and why. You will also have a named teacher to support you in school. There will be other people you can contact if you need extra support, advice or guidance. We will let you know what other support is available.
- We should be involved in meetings to talk about new people who might be moving in to our placement. We will always seek to involve you in decisions concerning you.
- We should have at least three choices for any new placement. We will ensure you have the most possible choices about any new placements, although it would not be possible to guarantee three.

Training and development

- We should have support to identify our perfect placement and receive information about our options, including, where possible, visits to those options. We will provide you with the information you need to make an informed choice about your placement.
- Carers should receive a full range of training, in areas including active participation, equality and diversity, child development, Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services and emotional health and well being. We will make sure that carers are trained and supervised to provide you with good quality care taking account of your individual needs. We will also recognise your ethnic and cultural needs.

<http://yps.lancashire.gov.uk/cla>

What Ofsted found ...

As where services were effective, they found:

Articulation of the leadership, ambition and objectives for looked after children

These authorities the corporate parenting

and:

Demonstrated a strong cross-party commitment to looked after children, championing their rights

Articulated high aspirations for them and robust monitoring of their progress

Planned for and prioritised the needs of looked after children, resulting in a greater focus on improving outcomes

actively engaged with their young people

What good practice says about the role of elected members

Universal - all councillors should

- Understand the legal/ policy framework
- Know the profile of local children – and how well they are doing
- Consider the needs of looked after children in all decisions

Targeted – councillors with relevant role e.g. member of scrutiny committee or Corporate Parenting

- Consider the effectiveness of local arrangements
- Consider range of evidence in order to identify what needs to change

Specialist – councillors with leadership role should

- Constantly drive improvements to the service
- Make sure that the needs of looked after children are incorporated in all council/ partner strategies
- Keep up to date with research findings and new initiatives

(NCB 2013 Presentation)

What the law says

For looked after children and care leavers....

Act in the best interests and promote the health and wellbeing of those children and young people

To encourage those children and young people to express their views, wishes and feelings

To take into account the views, wishes and feelings of those children and young people

To help those children and young people gain access to, and make the best use of, services provided by the local authority and its relevant partners

To promote high aspirations, and seek to secure the best outcomes, for those children and young people

For those children and young people to be safe, and for stability in their home lives, relationships and education or work

To prepare those children and young people for adulthood and independent living

What does this mean in practice?

Care leavers covenant – or the “local offer” which needs to cover

Health and well being

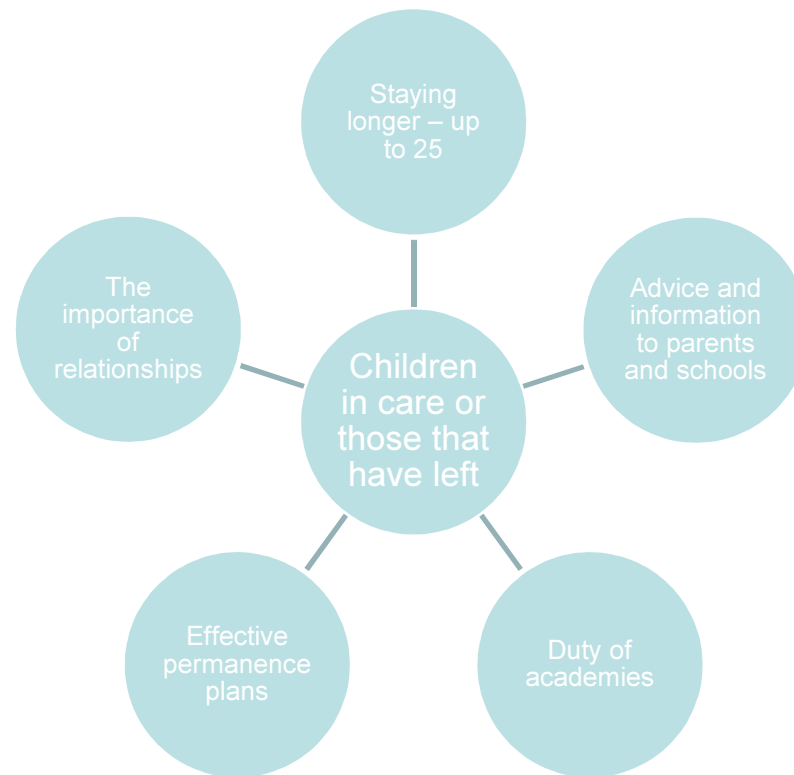
Education and training

Employment

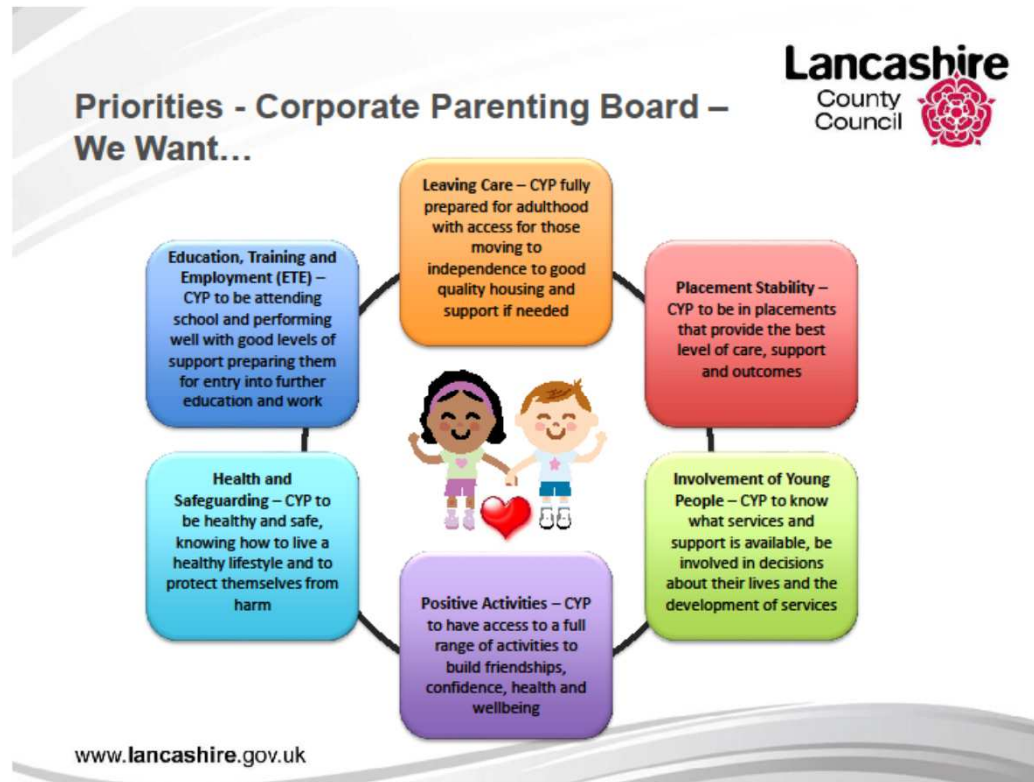
Accommodation

Participation in society

This must be published and produced in consultation with care leavers



Are these our priorities?



Is this still fit for purpose.....

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Does this need updating?



Way forward

