

Lancashire County Council

Corporate Parenting Board

Minutes of the Meeting held on Thursday, 7th December, 2017 at 6.00 pm in Committee Room 'C' (The Duke of Lancaster Room) - County Hall, Preston

Present: Members

County Councillor Ian Brown	- Lancashire County Council
County Councillor Andrew Gardiner	- Lancashire County Council
County Councillor Julie Gibson	- Lancashire County Council
Catherine	- representing Adoption
Amanda Hatton	- Director of Children's Services, LCC
Iqra	- LINX Representative
Nicole	- LINX Representative
Michelle	- LINX Representative
Kris	- LINX Representative
Erin	- LINX Representative
Bradley	- LINX Representative

Co-opted members

Nicola Bamford	- Designated Doctor and Consultant Paediatrician, representing CCG
Mia Leyland	- Barnardo's
Audrey Swann	- Headteacher, Vulnerable and Looked After Children
Amanda Mansfield	- Independent Reviewing Officers
Francis Ashcroft	- Agency Residential
Roxanne McAllister	- Lancashire County Council
Lynda Pearson	- Leaving Care, LCC
Dylan Williams	- Barnardo's

Other Attendees

Jane Hylton	- Leaving Care, LCC
Barbara Bath	- Fostering, Adoption, Residential and YOT Team, LCC
Sam Gorton (Clerk)	- Democratic Services, LCC
Hannah Peake	- Participation, LCC
Sarah Jones	- Halton Council
Jane Jones	- Safeguarding, Morecambe Bay CCG

1. Introductions and Apologies

All were welcomed to the meeting and apologies were received and noted from County Councillor Philippa Williamson, County Councillor Stephen Clarke, Jane Simpson, Debbie Ross, Mark Cartridge, Debbie Duffell and Annette McNeil.

The Chair also welcomed Sarah Jones from Halton Council and a member of their Corporate Parenting Board who had come to observe the meeting.

2. Notes of the Meetings and Matters Arising from 27 July and 7 September 2017

The minutes of the meetings held in July and September were agreed as an accurate record and there were no matters arising from them.

3. LINX Activities

LINX carried out an Education activity with the Board and asked the questions attached. The answers are also given for reference on the attachment. Another part of the activity was to show the Board what it felt like to be removed from lessons at school for meetings with social workers/IROs and the impact this has when they return to the class. Unfortunately this part of the activity was postponed to the next meeting due to time constraints.

4. What our Elected Members have been doing

CC Brown informed the Board that he had undertaken three residential home visits, been along to Barnardo's and met with Child Action North West and the Children's Society. He had also visited the Sincerely You exhibition which had toured across Lancashire where letters from Care Leavers to their former selves had been on display. There had also been the Game Changer Conference held on Saturday 4 November 2017 that CC Brown had attended also.

Action: At the next meeting it was agreed that there would be a brief discussion on what the Corporate Parenting Board had achieved over the last six months. CC Brown will lead this discussion.

CC Gardiner re-iterated the need for young people to be able to contact somebody out of hours should the need arise to assist in every day matters, ie a puncture, lost key.

CC Gibson reported that it was nice to see different young people from LINX attending the meetings as well as the usual ones.

5. Update from Children's Services

Not in Education, Employment or Training (NEET), Education, Employment and Training (EET), GCSE Results for Children Looked After (CLA) and Care Leavers at University

Audrey Swann spoke to the presentation attached and reminded the Board about the changes in measurement to Key Stages 1 and 2 as well as GCSEs. There is still a big gap between attainments in children who are looked after and those that are not. However, the attainments that are measured at Key Stage 4 can differ greatly because it will not necessarily be the same cohort of children that were measured at Key Stages 1 and 2 and figures state that there are quite a number of young people who come into care in Year 11 (GCSE year). Key points for all attainments are detailed in the presentation. Lancashire attainments against National attainments for 2017 are not available until March 2018.

With regards EET, all Year 11 CLA are able to access career information, advice and guidance from a qualified support worker from the Children and Family Wellbeing Service.

The Employment Support Team are currently actively working with 172 young people.

There are 37 young people following higher education (University) studies – aged between 18 and 26.

Going forward actions were as follows for the education of CLA in Lancashire:

- Clarifying the learning offer for LCCs CLA/Care Leavers.
- Working with young people to make sure it fits their needs and aspirations.
- Strengthen links with colleges, universities, training providers and employers.
- Strengthen links with district councils.
- Raise expectations and aspirations of young people, carers, education and ourselves.

Local Offer for Care Leavers

Jane Hylton informed the Board about the Local Offer for Care Leavers and gave the presentation attached. Jane said that this was a fantastic opportunity to look at services in Lancashire County Council that can support Care Leavers in preparation for adulthood and independent living. The Local Offer will replace the Rights and Entitlements Guide and all information will be in one place. Young people will be consulted on what they want it to look like and it should be available to all Care Leavers by June 2018.

There are 881 Care Leavers in Lancashire and a small working group for the Local Offer has been set up to take this forward including how best to communicate with them all.

This is a big piece of work and will be looking for support from the Corporate Parenting Board on this.

Increasing Numbers of Children Looked After

There has been lots of different reviews taking place recently within Children's Services, the DFE Review, Peer Review, Monitoring Review and SEND Review and in six weeks the inspections will start again. The reports for the reviews are not available yet, however, what has come out of them is how inspirational the young people are whom the inspectors met and that they are a credit to Lancashire. It was also reported on how genuine the social workers are and speak with care and compassion about our young people. Things that need to improve are talking about what we do well and are getting right eg care leavers, as Lancashire are one of the best in the Country with indicators good/outstanding and this is down to the young people and as their parents we are very proud of them. Challenges faced are writing down and recording all the good work that is carried out and our young people have done a video about this.

With regards increasing numbers of children looked after, this is an area that needs to be looked at thematically.

The question was also raised by young people about how Brexit will affect them. This will be discussed at a future meeting.

Residential Strategy

Barbara Bath shared the Residential Strategy PowerPoint as attached. All of the residential establishments except one are good/outstanding and the three overnight break units are good/outstanding also. Barbara shared the background to the previous strategy and the significant changes that have resulted in the need to revise a new strategy going forward, this includes a significant increase in the numbers of CLA and the spend in Children's Social Care agency placements since October 2015 and without action to address this, spend are predicted to continue to rise.

The aim of the strategy is to specifically seek to:

- Reduce numbers of CLA in residential placements.
- Ensure that appropriate placements are available to best meet the needs of our CLA.
- Ensure that best use is made of available resources and best value for money is achieved.

An Adolescent Support Unit will open in the New Year as a pilot and if this works, will look to possibly open others and offer respite weekends at the Crisis Unit to manage emergencies and prevent placement breakdowns. The Crisis Unit will open in April 2018. Barbara asked the young people to be involved in designing the Units and would contact LINX to arrange this.

Sincerely You

Roxanne McAllister and Jane Hylton introduced the film that was shown to the Board.

The following items, Mind of My Own – Hannah Peake and Care Leavers Facebook – Roxanne McAllister will be carried forward to the next meeting.

Actions: Sam Gorton to ensure that Mind of My Own and Care Leavers Facebook are on the next agenda.

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

What LINX Have Been Doing

LINX presented the attached slide detailing what they had been doing since the last Board meeting.

Michelle spoke about the British Youth Council Awards where LINX had won the Best Campaign Category for Council Tax Exemption for Care Leavers and had brought the award to show to the Board. The award would also be presented to representatives of LINX at Full Council on 14 December 2017. There were no matters arising from it.

Iqra gave detail about the Game Changer Conference that LINX had attended with CC Brown.

Bradley informed the Board that LINX and Participation had been shortlisted for three awards. 14 young people went to the awards ceremony in London where unfortunately they did not win an award however, to be finalists was amazing. One young person wrote a poem about this experience and it was shared with the Board and is attached.

Nicky Bamford commented that she had attended the Sincerely You exhibition and suggested that the letters be turned into a book. Roxanne McAllister and Jane Hylton informed the Board that this is something that is being researched and are collating the letters along with further comments and letters from the post box that travelled with the exhibition.

As part of Takeover Day, Iqra became the Director of Children's Services and attended various meetings with Amanda Hatton. At the Children's Services Improvement Board meeting, Iqra presented some slides to them on the vision of a young person in care and left them with a very powerful message "You have all done it – why can't I" and the last slide stating "Remember, you work for me". Iqra also talked about the CPB having a Unicorn vision on the Board giving the meaning of being magical and having high aspirations for our Children in Care.

7. Any Other Business

The Chair thanked everybody for their contributions this year and wished all Board members a Happy Christmas and Happy New Year.

8. Date and Time of Next Meeting

Thursday, 25 January 2018 at 6.00pm in the Duke of Lancaster – Committee Room 'C', County Hall, Preston, PR1 8RJ. (Refreshments from 5.30pm).

9. Performance Report

This item was for information and had been discussed separately with LINX and Amanda Hatton.