

## **Lancashire County Council**

### **Corporate Parenting Board**

**Minutes of the Meeting held on Wednesday, 14th March, 2018 at 6.00 pm in Committee 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 |
| County Councillor Julie Gibson         | - Lancashire County Council |
| Catherine                              | - representing Adoption     |
| Graham Nelson                          | - Fostering Forum           |
| John Readman                           | - Lancashire County Council |
| Michelle                               | - LINX Representative       |
| Lisa                                   | - LINX Representative       |
| Sandra                                 | - LINX Representative       |
| Sinead                                 | - LINX Representative       |
| Gina                                   | - LINX Representative       |
| Paige                                  | - LINX Representative       |
| Iqra                                   | - LINX Representative       |
| Sam R                                  | - LINX Representative       |

**Co-opted members**

|                  |   |
|------------------|---|
| Michelle Davies  | - National Fostering Agency                   |
| Karen Buckley    | - Aurora Care Young People's Services Limited |
| Amanda Mansfield | - Independent Reviewing Officers              |
| Lorraine Moody   | - Barnardo's                                  |
| Lynda Pearson    | - Leaving Care, LCC                           |
| Lisa Farrell     | - Health                                      |
| Michelle Dawson  | - Barnardo's                                  |
| Lee Jolleys      | - Barnardo's                                  |

**Other Attendees**

|              |  |
|--------------|--|
| Jane Hylton  | - Leaving Care, LCC                                  |
| Barbara Bath | - Fostering, Adoption, Residential and YOT Team, LCC |
| Mark Ormerod | - Lancashire County Council                          |

|                    |  |
|--------------------|--|
| Natasha Wright     | - National Care Leavers Benchmarking Form Representative |
| Sam Gorton (Clerk) | - Lancashire County Council                              |
|                    | -  |

## **1. Introductions and Apologies**

All were welcomed to the meeting and apologies were received and noted from Jane Simpson, Debbie Ross, Roxanne McAllister and Kirsty Clarke. John Readman, Interim Executive Director of Education and Children's Services attended on behalf of Amanda Hatton.

The Chair welcomed Karen Buckley, Aurora Care Young People's Service Ltd and Michelle Davies, National Fostering Agency who were the new Agency Provider representatives from fostering and residential. Graham Nelson, foster carer was also introduced to the Board as this was his first meeting too.

## **2. Notes of the Meeting and Matters Arising from 25 January 2018**

The minutes of the meeting held on 25 January 2018 were agreed as an accurate record and there were no matters arising.

## **3. What our Elected Members have been doing**

County Councillor Brown attended the PROUD Children Looked After and Care Leavers awards that was held on 23 February 2018 and congratulated all award winners and the Task and Finish Group that co-ordinated the event. This year there was over 200 nominations which was an increase of around 100 from last year, making the judging process even harder.

Following on from the last meeting where young people raised concerns about being taken out from lessons in school to meet with Social Workers/IROs, Amanda Hatton has written to all colleagues concerned and requested that meetings with children and young people do not take place during lessons unless it is for educational reasons. If this is still happening, please let CC Brown know and he will report this back to Amanda/John Readman.

CC Brown asked that Barnardo's contact Sheffield City Council and Halton Council following their visits to Lancashire's Corporate Parenting Board (CPB) last year and ask for an update on their experience and whether it had had any effect on their Boards.

**Action:** Barnardo's to contact Sheffield City Council and Halton Council for an update on their visit to Lancashire's CPB meetings and report back at the next meeting.

Following an issue that had been raised by a young person who had lost his key and did not know who to ring for help as it was out of hours, CC Brown stated that he had made an initial telephone call to Timpsons asking for support and to

work with Lancashire County Council in supporting their care leavers when this happens.

CC Brown had recently had a 1:1 meeting with somebody who has raised an issue regarding the Care Leaver Policy. Details of this meeting had been sent to John Readman and he will feedback at the next meeting regarding this.

**Action:** John Readman to feedback back to the Board on the Care Leaver Policy issue that had been raised by CC Brown.

County Councillor Gibson apologised for not making the PROUD event, however congratulated the young people who were award winners and is very supportive of all our children and young people in care.

County Councillor Gardiner commented that the issue raised with regards young people being withdrawn from class for reviews/assessments was raised at Children's Services Scrutiny Committee earlier on today.

CC Brown reminded the Board that if there were any issues they wanted to raise to contact an Elected Member from the Board and they will try their best to sort it out. Also if anybody has any items for future agendas to forward them Sam Gorton.

#### **4. What our Young People have been doing**

##### **What LINX Have Been Doing**

LINX presented the attached PowerPoint to the Board on all the activities they had been involved with since the last meeting in January.

In addition, there were also two young people at an event in London tonight and another young person attending a different event in London on Saturday.

Two young people attended the Social Work Academy where young people advised new Social Workers on how they wanted to be treated by them and what they wanted from their Social Worker. Young people felt this is an ideal opportunity to air their views and put their opinions across as they have been involved with Social Workers already and can relay their experiences good or bad. Social Workers also commented that they feel this is the most powerful tool with regards to learning as they are hearing it from the young people who have had experience of working with Social Workers and because of what they did, this happened for the young person.

#### **5. What our Board Members have been doing**

At the Board meeting on 7 December 2017, those present made pledges as a Corporate Parent.

Some of the Board members gave an update on their pledge and a revised version is attached. If there are any further updates please send to Sam Gorton (email: [sam.gorton@lancashire.gov.uk](mailto:sam.gorton@lancashire.gov.uk)) and she will update the Pledge as requested.

The Pledges will be reviewed again at a future meeting.

**Action:** Board members who made pledges to send an update to Sam Gorton for further review at a future meeting.

## **6. Update from the Interim Executive Director of Education and Children's Services**

### **PROUD**

John Readman echoed CC Brown's comments on the PROUD awards evening and added that it was an amazing, classy night and very professionally organised. He had received great feedback following the event which we can build on for future awards evenings.

### **Update on Director of Children's Services**

John Readman had received an update from Amanda Hatton, saying she was recovering well from her operation and she asked John to say "Hi" to the Board this evening. CC Brown asked if LINX would like to write to Amanda and maybe send messages.

**Action:** LINX to write a letter and collect messages to send to Amanda and forward this to Sam Gorton who will ensure she receives it.

### **Local Offer**

Consultation with around 800 care leavers had taken place on the Local Offer, on what they would like to see included in it. The deadline for the questionnaire is 7 April 2018 and then the results will be analysed and presented back to the CPB. A workshop will be held in April for Elected Members, CPB members, Chief Executive, LCC and John Readman and this will then form part of the Care Leavers Strategy. The Local Offer will be made by the end of 2018. A regular update will come to the Board.

### **Corporate Parenting Strategy**

John Readman asked if LINX were involved with the strategy and if not, then links needed to be made as some work had been started to look at having one document and the young people's views were crucial.

## **Pledge**

It was agreed that a new pledge was needed about what our young people were saying and what we as a Board were doing about it.

**Action:** The Board to look at designing a new pledge at a future meeting.

## **CPB Website**

This is outdated and needs revising. John requested volunteers to look at the website and agree content and ensure all documents are up to date. LINX are asked to be involved also. It was agreed that some of the five new Care Leaver apprentices could be the link between LCC and LINX on the project.

**Action:** Barbara Bath will seek to find a lead from Children's Services to create a Task and Finish Group to look specifically at bringing the website up-to-date as soon as possible.

## **Ofsted**

Barbara Bath talked about how LINX had been really influential during inspections and also supported all Social Workers, not just the newly qualified ones, those who have been doing it for years, and have made them look at their actions by young people sharing their experiences directly with them. CPB and young people had been really powerful and this had been recognised and praised by Ofsted. Colleagues in Children's Services were now beginning to change their thought processes and this needed to continue and shape and influence the Service going forward.

John Readman informed the Board that it was envisaged that Ofsted will carry out a full inspection possibly May/June 2018 where they would inspect for four weeks. They would possibly want to attend a CPB meeting, definitely meet with the Chair, CC Brown and maybe other members, and also meet with LINX. Preparation for their next visit needs to start now. When further information was available, John would ensure that this was circulated and there is an expectation for all to be involved.

Barbara Bath informed the Board that a recent Ofsted visit to one of the Residential homes in Lancashire now had all Units at Good/Outstanding except one whom they visited last week and said this is now improving. This is a real celebration for the Residential Service.

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

Sam R, young person, shared with the Board the attached information from the Become Board that he was a member of. He had also recently been accepted as a Board member on the Young Editors group which produces a magazine quarterly. The Board felt that this magazine would be useful for Foster Carers

and requested that Sam source more magazines to be shared with carers through the Fostering Forum.

**Action:** Sam R to source more Become magazines and distribute (with the help from Barnardo's/Barbara Bath), to the Fostering Forum.

### **What Would You Do Different If You Were In Charge of Children's Services?**

Mark Ormerod presented the attached PowerPoint to the Board on what he would do differently.

The Board received the presentation and discussion ensued. Mark felt there was a need for young people to be Care Mentors for those younger children coming into care, so they can help and guide them from experience. This could be a paid role or look at having it accredited, so the Care Mentors would have something to be recognised by.

Karen Buckley shared that she was happy for Young Inspectors to inspect her Agency and could also offer a Care Leaver Apprenticeship and is certain that other Agency Providers would be willing to offer an apprenticeship also.

Training in schools for specialised teachers could be an opportunity for the young people to speak to them, like they do in the Social Work Academy in a formal setting. This would give them more of an understanding of Children in Care.

Mark felt that one thing that needed changing for the better is Staying Put. He felt that a campaign on this was needed and that there was a distinct lack of knowledge on this. Foster carers are confused by it and more needs to be done about helping them to understand more and also allaying fears that if they offered a Staying Put policy they do not lose their foster carer status. Barbara Bath thanked Mark for highlighting this and that this was a quick fix solution. Barbara agreed to take this forward. Communications around Staying Put needed to be stronger – advertise it as well as advertising for foster carers.

Mark requested that a Focus Group be set up on Staying Put so young people were also aware of it and how it works. John Readman agreed to look at this.

- Action:**
- i) Barbara Bath to ensure the correct information is shared on the Staying Put policy and that foster carers understand it fully.
  - ii) John Readman agreed to look at setting up a Focus Group on Staying Put and will discuss with young people outside the meeting.

Mark felt that After Hours Support was crucial for care leavers. Look at changing contracted hours so staff can support young people after 5pm and before 9am if needed. If young people are working, they cannot always make contact 9am-5pm and then the office closes and there is nobody to contact, ie if a key is lost.

Mark was thanked for his very informative presentation and CC Brown and John Readman will scrutinise this and follow it through and report back at a future meeting.

**Action:** John Readman and CC Brown to follow up points within the presentation and share findings/solutions at a future meeting.

LINX had also been asked the same question about what they would change if they were in charge of Children's Services. Attached are their suggestions/comments.

### **Feedback on the CPB Performance Report March 2018**

Young people gave feedback on their findings from the Performance Report. Attached are the comments from young people they want answering. Concern was raised around Health Assessments and support that the young people felt was not given by Social Workers when accompanying them to appointments. This needs raising with Social Workers.

Numbers of Care Leavers attending University has increased. Barbara Bath agreed to look at why they are increasing and continue with the good work that is encouraging Care Leavers to attend University.

**Action:** Barbara Bath agreed to look at why University figures for Care Leavers were increasing, which is good news and to ensure this continues to rise.

### **Young Inspectors**

LINX presented the attached PowerPoint to the Board. They were asked which five Agency providers had been inspected. Lorraine Moody agreed to ask Dylan Williams who has been involved with this and will report back at the next meeting.

**Action:** Dylan Williams to report back at the next meeting which five Agency providers have been inspected by the Young Inspectors.

## **8. National Care Leavers Benchmarking Forum**

Due to the recent adverse weather conditions, Natasha Wright and Jane Hylton could not attend the last National Care Leavers Benchmarking Forum (NCLBF) meeting. The Board had been presented with different logos for the NCLBF and LINX were asked to choose from five. Option two was voted the best logo and Natasha and Jane would report back to the NCLBF on this.

## **9. Title for Corporate Parenting Board**

There had been no suggestions received as discussed at the meeting on 23 January 2018. LINX were once again asked to think of an alternative name for the Board and also look at a logo which could be used in the Mission Statement.

**Action:** LINX to report back to the Board at the next meeting suggestions for an alternative name and a logo for the Board.

## **10. Care Leavers Policy**

As previously discussed at Item 3, this item will be deferred to the next meeting. In the meantime John Readman will follow this up and discuss with Jane Hylton outside of this meeting.

**Action:**

- i) John Readman to follow this up prior to the next meeting and speak with Jane Hylton.
- ii) Sam Gorton to ensure this item is on the next agenda for May.

## **11. Any Other Business**

### **PROUD**

Michelle Dawson, Barnardo's was presented with her Winners certificate from the PROUD event in the Workers Category, who was nominated by the young people and won. Michelle expressed how fantastic it was to work with such inspiring young people every day. The Board congratulated Michelle on this achievement.

### **Invite for Chief Executive, Lancashire County Council**

Mark Ormerod requested that John Readman invite Angie Ridgwell, Chief Executive of Lancashire County Council (LCC) to attend a future Board meeting. John agreed to invite Angie.

**Action:** John Readman to extend an invitation to Angie Ridgwell, Chief Executive of LCC to a future meeting of the Board.

CC Brown thanked the Board members for their contributions and especially to Mark Ormerod for his presentation.

## **12. Date and Time of Next Meeting**

The next scheduled meeting will take place on Tuesday, 22 May 2018 at 6.00pm in Committee Room 'D' – Henry Bolingbroke Room, County Hall, Preston, PR1 8RJ.



### **13. Performance Report**

This item was for information.