

Lancashire County Council

Corporate Parenting Board

**Minutes of the Meeting held on Tuesday, 26th November, 2019 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 Stephen Clarke	- Lancashire County Council
County Councillor Joan Burrows	- Lancashire County Council
Liz Donnelly Nelson	- Adoption
Barbara Bath	- Fostering, Adoption, Residential and YOT Team, LCC
Jake	- LINX Representative
Kris	- LINX Representative
Emily	- LINX Representative
Saarah	- LINX Representative

Co-opted members

Jeanette Woods	- Residential Providers
Audrey Swann	- Vulnerable and Looked After Children, LCC
Amanda Mansfield	- Independent Reviewing Officers, LCC
Mia Leyland	- Barnardo's
Judith Gault	- Children and Family Wellbeing Service, LCC
Andy Smith	- Safeguarding, Inspection and Audit Team, LCC
Natasha Wright	- Barnardo's
Rebecca King	- Barnardo's
Mia Leyland	- Barnardo's
Jenny Donnelly	- Virgin Care 0-19 Service
Jane Jones	- Clinical Commissioning Groups

Other Attendees

Yoni Ejo	- Leaving Care, LCC
Sam Gorton	- Democratic Services, LCC
Umer Khonat	- Business Intelligence, LCC

1. Introductions and Apologies

As this was part of Takeover Month, the meeting would be jointly chaired by County Councillor Ian Brown and Jake, a member of Lancashire's Children in Care Council (LINX).

All were welcomed to the meeting and apologies were received from County Councillor Rear, County Councillor Julie Gibson, Marieta Birt, Angela Epps, Stephen Young, Jane Hylton and Tracey Ellmore.

County Councillor Joan Burrows attended on behalf of County Councillor David Foxcroft.

Jane Jones attended on behalf of the Clinical Commissioning Groups and Jenny Donnelly attended on behalf of Virgin Care 0-19 Service.

2. Notes of the Meeting and Matters Arising from 17 September 2019

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

3. Exploitation and Violence Reduction

Andy Smith, Head of Safeguarding, Inspection and Audit Team updated the Board on the strategic aims and ethos on the Violence Reduction Unit and also the strategic aims of knife crime and the next steps. The PowerPoint attached to the agenda gave further information on this.

Andy informed the Board that this was a new campaign in its' early stages.

Resolved: That the Board welcomed the information received and agreed to receive an update at a future meeting once the campaign was more embedded to see how it was progressing.

4. Children in Care and Care Leavers Performance Information

Umer Khonat, Business Intelligence Analyst, presented the Children's Services Performance Update for October 2019.

The data provided was collated fortnightly and used at every level within the Authority. Care leaver indicators were split into areas – North, East and Central.

The information was used to compare areas, see what works well and share best practice and learn from each service. Information was also shared on figures that were not 100%, ie if an area was 79% good then look at what could be improved for the 21% that was not working. Colours on the information were thresholds that had been set which mirrored the bandings that Ofsted had used.

The analysis information was used at performance meetings in districts and localities where it was scrutinised and performance was reviewed and teams engaged and commissioned research to look at how the data was used, any training issues there might be and the data acts as a mechanism.

As at October 2019 Lancashire was good at the following:

Assessments

Timeliness – 6 month rate 85% (on par with national rate), improvement from 78% in 2017/18. October performance 89%

Children Protection Plans

1194 (48.2 per 10,000), reduced from 1296 since September 2019, this remained below the regional and statistical neighbour averages, however above the national average of 45.7 (per 10,000)

Children Looked After

- Short term placement stability – 8.2%
- Visits in Timescale – 92%
- Placements :
 - increase in Fostering to 61.1%
 - reduction in Supported accommodation to 6.7%

The North West was increasing on a national level, however it was not increasing as much as other areas.

Care Leavers

In Suitable Accommodation (19-21 Years) – 92.4%

Caseloads

Average caseload – 17 for all social workers (October 2019)

As at October 2019, this was what needed to improve and/or challenges for Lancashire.

Re-referrals

Re-referral rate 21.3% - October 2019

Child Protection (CP)

- Visits within timescale – 85%
- Repeat child protection in 12 months (7.1%) and ever (25.5%) off target

Children Looked After (CLA)

- Rate of CLA per 10,000 – 85.0
- Repeat CLA 10.2%
- Dental current performance 70.3%

- Missing episodes interview completed within three days – 44.8%
- Strengths and Difficulty Questionnaire (SDQ)
- No Strengths and Difficulty Questionnaire – 312 (this is currently being worked on to improve this figure and look at themes).

Care Leavers

- Care leavers in Education, Employment or Training – 43.8%
- Care leavers in Contact (Last two Months) – 72.2%

After receiving this information the Board felt that they would like more information on the Strengths and Difficulty Questionnaires and what was being done to support and improve this figure.

A recent follow up visit from Ofsted showed that the Authority was improving and the compliments social workers received was incredible. There was demonstrations of lots of auditing and quality assurance work being undertaken. Partners were complimented along with young people who were spoken too and the work that the social work academy continued to deliver in developing social workers was incredibly good. Also following on from the Staff Survey ran by Lancashire County Council, social workers feedback was really positive and caseloads had also dropped to 17. Independent Reviewing Officers caseloads had also dropped significantly from 130 to around the mid-70s with mid-80s being the highest.

Another issue that came out from the Ofsted report was retention of staff within Children's Services and the Board were informed that turnover of staff has reduced significantly and also that there were now no agency Independent Reviewing Officers in the Authority.

Young people reported that they were involved with the social work academy and enjoyed sharing their experiences with social workers who in turn, felt it extremely beneficial to hear from young people first hand.

Resolved: That the Board discussed and commented on the information presented and agreed the content of future performance information provided to subsequent meetings.

5. Corporate Parenting Strategy Delivery Plan

The Board were asked to look at the Corporate Parenting Strategy Delivery Plan in groups and look at the objectives and list areas that they felt they required more information on in 2020. This would then form the work plan for the Corporate Parenting Board for the year ahead.

Resolved: That Barbara Bath would develop a work plan for the Board and present it at the next meeting in January 2020.

6. Timetable of Meetings 2020/2021

The dates for the 2020/2021 meetings were noted.

7. Any Other Business

Young People's Feedback on the Hertfordshire Model

Young people had looked into Hertfordshire County Council's Social Care system and commented that it sounded positive and that it could benefit a lot of people, however, wondered how it would be embedded in Lancashire. Young people felt that this would be a huge overall of all the different teams within Lancashire County Council's Children's Social Care system and wondered how big in comparison Lancashire was to Hertfordshire. Following research on Children's Social Care statistics between the two Councils young people came to the following conclusions:

- Although the population of the two counties was similar, the size of Lancashire was far bigger.
- Lancashire also had a far greater number of young people accessing support from social care.
- Could this mean a new way of working was more difficult to carry out?
- Young people would like to see any changes be successful and with the right planning, if Hertfordshire could do it, why could Lancashire not?

The Board were informed that the figures the young people had researched were from 2017/18.

Sharon Hubber, Director of Children's Social Care replied to the young people's findings by informing them that Hertfordshire had implemented the family safeguarding model three years ago when their numbers were a lot higher, than those researched in 2017/18. A front door reduction of 40% had now been noted at Hertfordshire since the Family Safeguarding Model was implemented which was a significant reduction and they were, where Lancashire was now. Lancashire would want to see a noticeable difference within three years of implementation also. The route out of care in Hertfordshire was a lot quicker than Lancashire was administering currently.

Some of the key principles of the model was to:

- Support families.
- Multi-agencies working together to support families and keep families together.
- Work in a more supportive way to prevent children coming into care.

Working with families to help strengthen and support them would be carried out differently and social workers would have more time to dedicate to spend with families. Social workers would need the right amount of cases to allow them time to support families and processes would change to help reduce time taken with administrative work ie new electronic notebooks which could be used whilst mobile, which would aide a more efficient way of working.

The Chair queried as to why children in care figures were rising in Lancashire and continued to do so? The Board were informed that this was a national trend and was down to poverty, austerity, organisations that had demised who supported Local Authorities, inadequate Ofsted reports and risk averse Authorities which all added to the trajectory rising across the Country including Lancashire.

Resolved: That an item be placed on the next agenda to give the Board a more informed overview on the Hertfordshire model.

Care Leavers Christmas Gifts

The Chair reminded the Board that the Care Leavers Christmas gifts collection was running until 6 December 2019 with various drop off points across the County.

Young Peoples Involvement in Future Corporate Parenting Boards

It was raised by the young people, that they had recently seen their time allocation on the agenda at Board meetings reduced significantly, after they used to have half of the meeting to discuss their issues.

It was noted that the young people's involvement in the meetings were valued and a vital role of the Board and there were plans in place to look at the Board as a whole and how the meetings could be improved. Further discussions would be taking place at the next agenda setting meeting and there would be further discussion at the next Board meeting in January 2020.

Health

Health colleagues invited young people to challenge them at future Board meetings on issues they wanted to raise.

8. Date and Time of Next Meeting

Thursday, 30 January 2020 at 6pm in the Duke of Lancaster Room – Committee Room 'C', County Hall, Preston, PR1 0LD.