

Lancashire County Council

Corporate Parenting Board

Minutes of the Meeting held on Thursday, 21st January, 2021 at 6.00 pm in
Zoom Virtual Meeting - Zoom

Present: Members

County Councillor Ian Brown	- Lancashire County Council
County Councillor Stephen Clarke	- Lancashire County Council
County Councillor David Foxcroft	- Lancashire County Council
County Councillor Jayne Rear	- Lancashire County Council
County Councillor Julie Gibson	- Lancashire County Council
Marieta Birt	- Fostering Forum
Liz Donnelly Nelson	- Adoption
Brendan Lee	- Children's Social Care, LCC
Jake	- LINX Representative
Callum	- LINX Representative
Georgia	- LINX Representative

Co-opted members

Barbara Bath	- Fostering, Adoption, Residential and YOT Team, LCC
Jane Hylton	- Children in Care and Care Leavers Service, LCC
Caroline Waldron	- Clinical Commissioning Groups
Amanda Mansfield	- Independent Reviewing Officers
Roxanne McAllister	- Leaving Care, LCC
Stephen Young	- Corporate Management Team, Lancashire County Council
Mia Leyland	- Barnardo's
Umer Khonat	- Business Intelligence Team
Nighat Parveen	- Child and Family Wellbeing Service

Other Attendees

Cathy Trengove	- Barnardo's
Sam Gorton	- Democratic Services, LCC
Ralph Rushworth	- Children in Care and Care Leavers Service, LCC
Maureen Huddleston	- Clinical Commissioning Groups
Shell Arliss	- NYAS

1. Introductions and Apologies

All were welcomed to the meeting and apologies were received from Dr Nicola Bamford, Stephen Young, Sharon Hubber, Tracy Smith, Kirsty Clarke and Audrey Swann.

Nighat Parveen, Senior Manager Central, South and North, Children, Family and Wellbeing Service, Lancashire County Council had replaced Judith Gault on the Board and was welcomed to her first meeting.

2. Notes of the Meeting and Matters Arising from 24 November 2020

Resolved: That the minutes were agreed as an accurate record.

Item 3 – Care Leavers Housing Report

The Chair reported that a meeting to be held with District Housing representatives in the New Year was ongoing. The Board also noted that the Chair, Sharon Hubber, Brendan Lee and Sam Gorton had all met to discuss the future of the Corporate Parenting Board and will be discussed later in this meeting.

Item 4 – LINX

Nighat Parveen reported back following the action from the meeting held on 24 November 2020 where Judith Gault was going to feedback to Kathy Ashworth, Project Lead Manager, Child and Family Wellbeing Service on the suggestion of delivering life skills courses in Youth Zones following a request from the young people. The Board were informed that this had been reported back to the Senior Management Team and following discussions, Nighat informed the Board that this was difficult at this moment in time, especially during the pandemic, however there are some programmes available virtually to all children, young people and their families. The Service's suggestion back to the Board, is that if anybody would like to lead on life skills courses from the Board, the buildings are available through Facilities Management to book and deliver the courses. The Child and Family Wellbeing Service however does offer a good range of programmes that young people can take part in, and, be referred to if further support is required, through a Request for Support pathway from the Child and Family Wellbeing Service, via the following link: <https://www.lancashire.gov.uk/practitioners/supporting-children-and-families/children-and-family-wellbeing-service/>

A link to the What's On guide was provided and circulated to the Board: <https://fisonline.lancashire.gov.uk/SynergyWeb/Enquiries/Search.aspx?searchID=231> and further information can be found by searching on the relevant district.

Jane Hylton, Development Team Manager, Looked After Children and Leaving Care, Lancashire County Council agreed to speak with Nighat outside of this

meeting with regards to buildings that have access to kitchens, which may be useful in delivering some specific care leaver life skills courses in the future.

3. Monthly Performance Report

Umer Khonat, Business Intelligence Analyst, Business Intelligence Team, Lancashire County Council provided an overview of performance information for December 2020 that is produced in relation to Children's Social Care and more specifically Children in Care and Care Leavers that the Board received with the agenda papers.

The Board received the headline indicators which are a subset of the main indicator set, which gives further breakdown data.

A few highlights from the data was:

- In October the number of Children Looked After was 2130 (84.8%) and in December 2020 there had been a decrease to 2106 (83.9%) a reduction of 10 in Lancaster and 26 in Burnley. There have been some increases in other districts, however they were offset by the decreases. Rates did peak in July 2020 during the pandemic and the trajectory is now showing signs of decline.
- There has been a reduction from 94% (October) to 91% (December) in the percentage of children looked after with an up to date statutory visit and it is expected that this will increase again in the new year.
- 99.5% of reviews were carried out during the previous 12 months in time and this figure had been seen since April 2020.
- The percentage of children looked after registered during the previous 12 months, who also had a previous period in care had increased from 8.6% (October) to 9.8% in December.
- In terms of placement stability, there has been a small improvement in children looked after during the previous 12 months who had three or more placements.
- Children looked after who have had the same placement for at least two years had fallen slightly from October (70.8%) to 70.0% in December and there is scope for improvement on this.
- Up to date health assessments was the highest in December for over two years and a lot of work has been undertaken with Health partners to improve the outcomes for children looked after in Lancashire, with 78.3% in December 2019 to 91.9% in December 2020.
- With regards to up to date dental assessments, this has shown a decrease from December 2019 at 69.5% to December 2020 at 51.0%, however, this is mainly due to the lockdowns experienced during the pandemic with access to dentists being limited, however 51% is not an acceptable level and further work is required to improve this rate.
- In terms of the three care leaver indicators, they are as follows:

- Percentage of care leavers in suitable accommodation had seen a reduction of 9 care leavers in suitable accommodation since October 2020 (93.0% to 92% in December 2020) and this is not acceptable and further work will be carried out in terms of improving this figure.
- Care Leavers in Education, Employment and Training (18-20 years) has increased by 6% since April (48.0% in December 2020, an increase of 137 care leavers) and is the highest it has been for around 18 months. There is a lot of work being done in this area.
- With regards to care leavers with whom the Local Authority has been in contact with in the last two months (18-20 years), performance is at 88% (December 2020) which is a 13% increase from December 2019. There is still scope for improvement here.

Caroline Waldron, Designated Safeguarding Representative, Clinical Commissioning Groups, provided some context in terms of the performance data on dental assessments. Caroline is also the Lancashire and South Cumbria representative on the NHS England Looked After Children North Regional meeting, and every designated nurse that attends the meetings are reporting the same challenges in relation to routine dental checks, in that they can access emergency treatments, however routine assessments at this time are not being currently being provided due to the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic. Providers are continuing to give good oral health advice to young people as part of the annual health assessments and also to foster carers. Caroline has also approached the Dental Lead in the Integrated Care System as to whether there is any bespoke provision that can be provided for looked after children across the footprint. However, the performance in the data is reflective of the current pandemic across the UK.

Roxanne McAllister, Senior Manager, Looked After Children and Care Leavers, Lancashire County Council provided the Board with some context in terms of the leaving care data received, in particular with regards to the unsuitable accommodation data. It was reported that the vast majority of young people who are classed as in unsuitable accommodation are in the criminal justice system. The decrease in the in-touch and contact data is about capacity in the service which has been addressed, so targets will start to improve.

Following on from Roxanne's comments, Barbara Bath, Head of Fostering, Adoption, Residential and Youth Offending, Lancashire Council reported that the work that the In Care out of Trouble agenda is providing is working with all agencies (Courts, Police) in trying to include care leavers in that group of young people that need to be prioritised in terms of diverting them from custody and the criminal justice system. Work is in-hand, in the early stages and the full agreement has yet to be signed off to include care leavers as part of that piece of work, however, it is ongoing and hopefully in a few months' time, the data will have seen an improvement from the multi-agency effort as it is not a single agency issue.

A request was made with regards to how many of our children in care/care leavers, have been affected by COVID-19. The Board noted that in response to the pandemic data wise, currently there were 25 children who have a COVID-19 condition on their record which is a decline from the peak in September 2020.

A discussion on health at the recent Care Leavers Forum had noted that when young people leave care and have to book appointments for themselves, sometime anxiety prevents them from doing this and also the fee for example of prescriptions, dental treatment that they would have to pay if they were working, or what happens if they are not working. It was suggested that there needs to be Health support included in the Local Offer and would be a good piece of work to take forward. Caroline Waldron, had been in attendance at the Care Leaver Forum and following the discussions and as part of her wider discussions with the Dental Lead, feedback will be included from the young people at the meeting and also took the opportunity to look at the Local Offer and strengthen this support and ensure guidance is easily accessible. The Board were also informed that Health were reviewing the Care Leaver Summary Passport, where a lot of the information needed to support Care Leavers can be shared at the last Health assessment prior to leaving care. It was noted that a wider piece of work would be carried out between the Children in Care and Care Leavers Service and Health to ensure that support is given to the young people and that this is something that the Personal Advisors (PAs), should be carrying out in their role.

The Board felt that receiving the data at the start of the meeting and the feedback provided on data from the Services was a much better way of conducting this meeting, and it was reassuring that Services could update the Board on work that was ongoing to improve/maintain targets and gave the Board an opportunity for scrutiny.

- Resolved:**
- i) That the Corporate Parenting Board discussed and commented on the information presented and agreed the content of future performance information provided to subsequent meetings.
 - ii) That Jane Hylton, Ralph Rushworth and Caroline Waldron would discuss the Health Local Offer and use the benchmarking tool provided by the Catch 22 summary report.
 - iii) Marieta Birt, fostering representative agreed to report back at the Fostering Forum to ensure that all foster carers were made aware of appointment bookings when preparing their young people for leaving care.

4. Education, Employment and Training Strategy Action Plan

Roxanne McAllister, Senior Manager, Children in Care and Care Leavers Services, Lancashire County Council provided the Board with an update on the Education, Employment and Training Strategy Action Plan since it was last presented to the Board at its' meeting in November 2020. The data has gone from 53.6% of young people Not in Employment, Education or Training to 51%,

and given the current situation, the 2% decrease is quite significant, and work is ongoing to keep those young people engaged.

The Virtual School have a big focus on children look after ensuring that those who are in care are accessing their education place, and if they cannot go into school, ensure they have the correct equipment to enable them to do online learning. Information is being tracked as to who is accessing education during the current climate and any discrepancies are being followed up.

The restructure of the Children Looked After and Care Leavers Service has also progressed with a recruitment process in place as well and ensuring staff are in the right areas and this has delayed the roll out of action plan. There will be a lot of development work being undertaken with the new workers on strategic pieces of work which will include the action plan and how it is moved forward and progressed.

It was agreed that going forward the data reported (Item 3) would reflect the work that is being undertaken in the action plan.

- Resolved:**
- i) That the Board noted the update on the Education, Employment and Training Strategy Action Plan.
 - ii) That the data received at Item 3 is aligned to the priorities in the Action Plan and shared with the Board at subsequent meetings.

5. Future of Corporate Parenting Board

Brendan Lee, Head of Children in Care and Care Leavers Service, Lancashire County Council informed the Board that the Chair, Sharon Hubber, Director of Children's Services and Sam Gorton, Clerk to the Corporate Parenting Board had met recently to discuss the future of the Board and how to take this forward.

Following discussion, the Board agreed that there would be two/three development sessions to discuss:

- Priorities
- Membership of the Board
- Terms of Reference
- Cycle of meetings
- How other Corporate Parenting Boards work across the Country
- Alternative approaches to meetings
- Develop a forward plan for two/three years to ensure that a significant difference is being made to the children and young people of Lancashire
- Link-in with other wider strategic partnerships across the Council and other Stakeholders
- Involve other County Councillors not on the Board and ensure they know about the work and what corporate parenting is all about

- Look at having a budget for the Board
- Reports presented in a young person friendly way

Young people shared their thoughts about the future of the Corporate Parenting Board as follows:

- How will they be involved in the Board going forward with participation back in-house from 1 April 2021?
- How will their voice be heard?
- Who will invite them to the Board?
- How can they be independent if in-house?
- Use the What's Change poster so they can see at a glance what has changed since the last meeting
- More activities from the young people, especially younger members
- Have the option at future meetings of some people on Zoom as well as some around the table
- Future agenda item of What does support look and feel like for younger people?

Resolved: That Development Sessions be arranged, and details be circulated to the Board.

6. Any Other Business

There was no other business received.

7. Date and Time of Next Meeting

Tuesday, 16 March 2021 at 6pm, via Zoom.