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AT A MEETING of the Children and Families Advisory Panel of HAMPSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL held at the Castle, Winchester on Monday, 25th June, 2018

Chairman:

* Councillor David Keast

Vice Chairman:

* Councillor Roz Chadd

* Councillor Martin Boiles
* Councillor Ann Briggs
* Councillor Fran Carpenter
* Councillor Pal Hayre

* Councillor Jackie Porter
Councillor Robert Taylor
* Councillor Malcolm Wade

*Present

29. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Taylor.

30. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

All Members who believe they have a Disclosable Pecuniary Interest in any matter to be considered at the meeting must declare that interest and, having regard to Part 3 Paragraph 1.5 of the County Council's Members' Code of Conduct, leave the meeting while the matter is discussed, save for exercising any right to speak in accordance with Paragraph 1.6 of the Code. Furthermore all Members with a Personal Interest in a matter being considered at the meeting should consider, having regard to Part 5, Paragraph 4 of the Code, whether such interest should be declared, and having regard to Part 5, Paragraph 5 of the Code, consider whether it is appropriate to leave the meeting while the matter is discussed, save for exercising any right to speak in accordance with the Code.

Councillor Porter declared an interest in Item 8 on the agenda as she is Chairman of a Pre-School within Hampshire.

31. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

The minutes of the last meeting were reviewed and agreed.

32. **DEPUTATIONS**

There were no deputations on this occasion.

33. **CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS**

The Chairman had no announcements to make.

34. **WORK OF THE YOUTH OFFENDING TEAM**

With the Chairman's agreement, Item 6 on the agenda was deferred to a future meeting as an Inspection was taking place of the Youth Offending Service. Feedback on the Inspection would be provided at the next meeting of the Panel.

35. **OVERVIEW OF PLACEMENTS IN CHILDREN'S HOMES 2017-2018**

The Panel received a report from the Director of Children's Services providing an overview of placements in Children's Homes in 2017-2018 (Item 7 in the Minute Book).

The Panel were provided with an update on progress made since the Residential Strategy was implemented which was seen as a flagship strategy, based on the provision of an emotional and warmth-based parenting approach in Children's Homes. The Panel noted that five purpose built new homes had recently been completed, and Ofsted had rated all of the eight operating Children's Homes in Hampshire as 'Good' or 'Outstanding'. Members attention was drawn to Section 4 of the report which highlighted moves for children and staff as the build programme progressed.

Officers informed Members that a total of 50 children had been looked after in children's homes in the period 2017/18 and Section 6 of the report gave greater detail of the admission figures. Details of the number of children discharged during this period were also highlighted and it was heard that of the 24 children discharged, 5 children under the age of 16 were returned to their family or foster carer which demonstrated positive progress in areas such as helping parents with parenting skills.

The Panel noted the increase in the number of children in placement as of 31 March 2018 compared to the previous year and this was due to the opening of the new homes. Officers drew Members attention to the support for young people and the close working with Adult Services to ensure that young people moved forward with support, and within their own timescales.

Members were informed of the strategies put in place to address issues such as recruiting staff to the new build homes and it was heard that children and young people in the homes were actively involved in the recruitment process.

It was noted that overall, the Residential Strategy was progressing well and there had been positive feedback for homes, with exceptional praise from an Ofsted Inspector for Crofton House in Havant.

In response to questions, Members heard that:

- Partners in Practice would be on-line in September which would involve work by multi-disciplinary teams.
- Ofsted ratings for Children's Homes could be downgraded for reasons such as having to place a child in emergency care, and Ofsted had been questioned regarding reasons for giving specific ratings to Children's Homes.
- That regulations were in place to ensure that children were placed in homes which were age appropriate, and with other age appropriate children. The department would continue to work closely with Adult Services to ensure the transition of young people to the right care resources once they reached the age of 17.
- That whilst no new homes were currently being planned, demand for places would be closely monitored.
- It was noted that the number of children placed in children's homes more than 20 miles from Hampshire was currently 14%, and this could be explained for a variety of reasons such as children seeking asylum and finding the right home for children displaying certain behaviour. Members heard that this was also an area which was constantly monitored and held to account.

RESOLVED:

That the Children and Families Advisory Panel note the progress of the Residential Strategy.

36. **FAMILY SUPPORT SERVICE PROGRESS REPORT**

The Panel received a report from the Director of Children's Services which provided the Panel with information about the progress of the Family Support Service over the last twelve months (Item 8 in the Minute Book).

The Panel heard that the Service had brought together a wide range of skilled practitioners, offering effective interventions and the number of families engaged with the Service was higher than previously reached before the Service commenced. The role of the Early Help Hub was explained to Members, who noted its targeted service and how it identified appropriate agencies to support children and families at Level 3. It was highlighted that the number of cases open at Level 3 Early Help Hub at the end of February 2018 was 3288 children, with 45 per cent held by the Family Support Service in the Early Help Co-ordinator role, with the other 55 per cent co-ordinated by another agency acting as the lead Early Help Co-ordinator.

The role of Evidenced Based Parenting Groups was explained to the Panel and it was noted that a termly timetable of groups and courses were published and these had been identified to meet the needs of its local community. Attention was drawn to the importance of continuing supported engagement with families stepping down from Level 4.

The Outcomes Star assessment tool had been implemented in April 2017 to track progress and outcomes for all Level 3 cases, and Members heard how this supported families and methods of measuring engagement and progress were explained.

Members noted the support available to families assessed as Level 2 and it was heard that group work and surgery sessions aimed to prevent families needs escalating to Level 3 or Level 4. It was heard that the new Level 2 service had been well received by partner agencies, and officers also explained the range of innovative interventions being driven by Hampshire's Family Support Service for children and families.

In conclusion, Members noted the effectiveness of the Family Support Service in playing a key role in promoting the educational attendance and attainment of Hampshire's children.

In response to questions, Members heard:

- That the Family Support Service was an evolving service which would work closely with families where there was need identified.
- That there was a significant amount of support available to ensure children were kept safe on-line.
- That data was in the process of being collected in relation to the Outcomes Star assessment tool, and that the Service as a whole was continuing to evolve.
- That discussions with the police about implementing a pilot of the Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACE) programme were underway, and it was heard that this had proved successful in other parts of the country, with the aim to keep children out of care.
- That the right structure was in place for schools and other professionals to raise concerns relating to children and families needs.
- That money was allocated for activities depending on local needs, and demand for activities was responded to.
- That in terms of home schooling, parents would need to give a reason as to why they had chosen to home school their child. There would not be a duty for the Local Authority to then visit home schooled children from an education perspective.

Members requested that an update report be brought back to a future meeting.

RESOLVED:

That the Children and Families Advisory Panel note the continued progress of the Family Support Service.

37. **EXCLUSION OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC**

That the press and public be excluded from the meeting as it is likely, in view of the nature of the business to be transacted or the nature of the proceedings, that if members of the public were present during this item there would be disclosure to them of exempt information within Paragraph 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A to the Local Government Act 1972, and further that in all the circumstances of the case, the public interest in maintaining the exemption outweighs the public interest in disclosing the information, for the reasons set out in the report.

38. **KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS**

The Panel received an exempt presentation from the Director of Children's Services on key performance indicators (Item 10 in the Minute Book).

[See Exempt Minute]

Chairman,

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By virtue of paragraph(s) 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972.

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