

AT A MEETING of the Corporate Parenting Board of HAMPSHIRE COUNTY
COUNCIL held at the Castle, Winchester on Monday 25th March 2019

Chairman:
Councillor Roz Chadd

p Councillor Ann Briggs

p Councillor Malcolm Wade

Co-opted members

Dan Busby, Care Ambassador
Shannon Nichols, Care Ambassador
a Carla Wright, Care Ambassador

49. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies were received from Cllr Chadd, therefore Cllr Briggs chaired the Board. Cllr Carpenter was in attendance as the Conservative Deputy.

Apologies were also received from Carla Wright.

50. 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 the circumstances described in 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 Non-Pecuniary interest in a matter being considered at the meeting should consider whether such interest should be declared, and having regard to Part 5, Paragraph 2 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.

There were no declarations of interest.

51. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

The minutes of the previous meeting were agreed and signed.

52. DEPUTATIONS

None received.

53. CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

In light of the Agenda item providing an update on the Corporate Parenting Board's engagement with Young People, the Chairman had no further announcements to make.

54. **UPDATE ON THE CORPORATE PARENTING BOARD'S ENGAGEMENT WITH YOUNG PEOPLE**

The Panel provided a verbal update on the Corporate Parenting Board's engagement with Young People. Since the last Panel meeting members had visited Croft House, which was described as a positive and educational experience.

Members expressed satisfaction in how warm the environment was and how much it felt like a home, while noting the fantastic work of the employees there. The Panel discussed the 'Staying Close' policy which keeps contact between care settings and care leavers and allows for return visits to emulate the family environment. This was noted as a possible area for improvement and for a future agenda.

Resolved: That the Corporate Parenting Board note the update on their engagement with Young People.

55. **PARTICIPATION UPDATE - PROGRESS ON RELAUNCH OF CARE AMBASSADORS**

The Panel received a verbal update from the Director of Children's Services on the participation and the progress on the relaunch of Care Ambassadors.

The first part of the update concerned reunification, and the Panel heard that of 67 young people who left care in January 34.3% returned home and of 45 in February, 40% returned home. Other outcomes for leaving care included; adoption, living independently, Special Guardianship Orders or being re-assessed to be over 18 (in the case of Unaccompanied Asylum Seekers).

In relation to the Care Ambassador role, Members heard that the role profile has been revised and updated and recruitment is taking place between April & May.

In response to questions members heard that;

- The majority of reunifications were successful but there are some which are not. The focus on the return home is embedded within the service but this is assessed carefully.
- Visits continue when a child returns home, although these decrease in frequency over time while their situation settles.
- Participation is being looked at in both a 'top-down' and 'bottom up' approach in an attempt to ensure success.

Resolved: That the Corporate Parenting Board note the update on participation and the progress of the relaunch of Care Ambassadors.

56. **THE BIG ACTIVITY WEEK**

The Panel received a presentation from the Director of Children's Services on The Big Activity Week.

The Panel heard how four activity centres around Hampshire were offering an activity week for children in care in years 5-8. These spaces were allocated

following referrals from social workers and a management committee considers child combinations etc. The purpose of this week was to provide children in care with an opportunity to develop self belief, resilience, team work etc.

Resolved: That the Corporate Parenting Board note the overview of the Big Activity Week.

57. UPDATE ON FOSTERING

The Panel received a presentation from the Director of Children's Services providing an update on Fostering.

The Panel heard that Hampshire County Council's fostering households have declined from 372 in March 2016 to 364 households in March 2019 (2% decline) which mirrors the position nationally.

The Panel found that whilst Hampshire has historically been a strong competitor in the market for support and finances, this is no longer the position. This, alongside a national decline in fostering households, has led to a review of the current recruitment and retention strategies.

The panel also received an overview of recruitment events that had taken place and details of actions that had been taken by the service in response to feedback received.

Resolved: That the Corporate Parenting Board note the update on Fostering.

58. UPDATE ON THE IMPLEMENTATION OF LGBT+ POLICY

The Panel received a presentation from the Director of Children's Services providing an update on the implementation of LGBT+ Policy. The panel heard how this policy ties into 'Every Child Matters' and is about identity rather than sexual relationships which can be the assumption. Members were told how guidance had recently been published and it is hoped that all young people will have a safe place to learn and grow.

The Panel heard how Hampshire's Children's Services is leading in this area and trying to remove professional's nervousness about getting it wrong.

Resolved: That the Corporate Parenting Board note the update in relation to the implementation of LGBT+ Policy.

Chairman, Corporate Parenting Board