

# CORPORATE PARENTING SPECIALIST ADVISORY GROUP

## Monday, 2 March 2020

**PRESENT** – Councillors: Gunn (In the Chair), Bateson, Davies, Liddle, Taylor and Whittle.

### **OFFICERS –**

Alyson Hanson – Head of Permanence

Joanne Siddle – Head of Education

Pamela Price – Service Lead Placements

Paula Quinn – FCA Committee

Sam Briggs – FCA Secretary

Sarah Bateman – Service Lead Review and Quality

## RESOLUTIONS

### 1 **Welcome and Apologies**

The Chair welcomed all present to the meeting. Apologies were received from Councillors; Batan, Brookfield, Kay, McFall and Smith (D). Apologies were also noted from Jayne Ivory, Charlotte Hesketh, Jaffer Hussain and Caroline Waldron.

### 2 **Declaration of Interest in item on this Agenda**

There were no Declarations of Interest received.

### 3 **Minutes of the Previous Meeting**

#### **Matters Arising**

#### **Beez Card Update**

At the last meeting concerns were raised about the process of obtaining a Beez Card for Children in Care. Pamela Price, Service Lead Placements, attended the meeting and informed the Committee that the process had since been looked at and improvements had been made. A single point of contact with a specific email address had been identified and had been trialled twice. It was noted that assurances had been given that the email inbox was safe and secure. On both trialled occasions the Beez Card was ready within two days and was available for collection at any leisure centre. Pamela asked that any further issues should be reported back to her. It was also noted that the telephone number on the website was still incorrect. Pamela confirmed that this would be amended.

**RESOLVED** – The Minutes of the previous meeting held on Monday 27<sup>th</sup> January 2020 were approved as a correct record and were duly signed by the Chair.

### 4 **Vice Chair Update**

The Chair informed the Group that there was nothing new to be updated on. It was noted that regular updates were also provided to the Executive Board.

## 5 Out of Borough Placements

Alyson Hanson attended the meeting to give the Group a presentation on Out of Borough Placements. Alyson introduced her colleagues, Pamela Price (Service Lead Placements) and Sarah Bateman (Service Lead Review and Quality).

The Group heard that as of November 2019, there were 402 children in care in Blackburn with Darwen. Of those, 166 children in placements were recorded as being outside the local authority boundary. The placements types were highlighted as follows:

In house foster care	29
Independent Fostering Agencies	44
Family and Friends	14
Residential	35
Placed with parents	10
Adoptive placements	18
Regulation 24 placements	6
Other LA placements	2
Supported accommodation	4
Young Offender Institutions	3
Hospital	1
<b>Total</b>	<b>166</b>

The Group heard that the majority of children in foster care living outside of the local authority boundary were still in the North West, with 28 children in IFA (Independent Fostering Agencies) placements being placed in the Lancashire County Council boundary. 95 children were living more than 20 miles away and 20 children were living more than 50 miles away. Those living at the greatest distance were in adoptive or connected persons placements.

The Group was informed of the significant challenges in finding placements and heard that children were being placed out of area due to a lack of suitable provision closer to home. Teenagers and sibling groups were especially more challenging to place and often there was a lack of choice locally, regionally and nationally. Expertise of foster carers for children with complex needs was also a factor.

The Group then looked at 4 case studies and undertook an exercise to determine how each child in each of the scenarios presented would be supported by the Local Authority.

Discussions took place around children in care transitioning into adulthood and how they were supported once leaving care. Concerns were raised and the Group agreed to examine this at a future meeting.

### **RESOLVED –**

- 1) That the Group note the information contained within the presentation and that the presentation be circulated to all Members of the Council for information; and

- 2) That the Group examine the role of the Leaving Care service at a future meeting.

## **6 Participation Update**

A written update on Participation was tabled at the meeting.

Paula Quinn informed the Group that the FCA in conjunction with Performers Without Borders had been successful in securing an Awards For All grant for Circus Skills, which was extremely good news and almost 12 months in the planning. This now meant that a 2 day workshop would be running at Easter and furthermore 2 hour sessions on a Monday evening up until Summer, with a further block running throughout the Autumn term. It was noted that it wasn't just for Looked After Children, however they would get priority.

Discussions took place around attendance levels at VOICE and the possibility of reviewing the venue to encourage more attendance. The Group also discussed the possibility of involving the virtual school to generate wider interest and involvement.

**RESOLVED** – That the written update be noted and that Jo Siddle arrange a meeting with Jaffer Hussain to discuss a review of the venue for VOICE and the involvement of the virtual school to generate more involvement.

## **7 Corporate Parenting Dashboard**

As the Corporate Parenting Dashboard report was presented to the Group at the previous meeting held on 27<sup>th</sup> January 2020, there were no latest monitoring reports for the Group to review and consider at this time. Therefore, it was agreed that the item be brought back to the next meeting taking place on 8<sup>th</sup> July 2020.

**RESOLVED** – That the item be brought back to next meeting on 8<sup>th</sup> July 2020.

## **8 Any Other Business**

### **Dates of future meetings**

The Chair informed the Group of the new dates that had been set for the Municipal Year for 2020/21. These were as follows;

8<sup>th</sup> July 2020  
7<sup>th</sup> October 2020  
11<sup>th</sup> January 2021  
16<sup>th</sup> March 2021

**RESOLVED** – That the Group note the dates of the future meetings.

### **Children in Our Care Ofsted Inspection**

Councillor Bateson informed the group of a recent 2 day Ofsted inspection to Children in Our Care. The results of which were not available to share to the Group as of yet, but it was agreed that this item be brought back to the July meeting, when the outcome of the inspection would be available.

**RESOLVED** – That the Group note the update and that the item come back to the next meeting.

Signed: .....

Date: .....

Chair of the meeting  
at which the minutes were confirmed