

Date Published: 09 January 2017



**CHILDREN, YOUNG PEOPLE & LEARNING OVERVIEW &
SCRUTINY PANEL**

11 JANUARY 2017

SUPPLEMENTARY PAPERS

**TO: ALL MEMBERS OF THE CHILDREN, YOUNG PEOPLE & LEARNING OVERVIEW
& SCRUTINY PANEL**

The following papers have been added to the agenda for the above meeting.

These were not available for publication with the rest of the agenda.

Alison Sanders
Director of Corporate Services

	Page No
6. CORPORATE PARENTING ADVISORY PANEL	3 - 10
To receive the minutes of the meetings of the Corporate Parenting Advisory Panel held on 21 September and 7 December, 2016 (To Follow).	

This page is intentionally left blank



**CORPORATE PARENTING ADVISORY
PANEL
7 DECEMBER 2016
5.00 - 7.10 PM**

Present:

Councillors Mrs McCracken (Chairman), Mrs Ingham (Vice-Chairman), Ms Hayes and Peacey (Substitute)

Apologies for absence were received from:

Councillors Heydon, Mrs Birch and Mrs Temperton

Also Present:

Doug Jennings, Co-optee

Councillor Barnard, Executive Member for Children & Young People

89. Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest.

90. Minutes and Matters Arising

The minutes of the meeting on 21 September 2016 were approved as a correct record, subject to an amendment in minute 82 of '*Standards Inspection Framework*' to read '*Single Inspection Framework*'.

Matters Arising

- Larchwood Short Break Unit was due to hold a carol singing evening on Friday 9 December, and some Members had confirmed that they would attend.
- Peter Hodges had arranged a meeting with Slough Children's Trust and Reading Borough Council to further explore the work of the Wellbeing Team for Looked After Children.
- Kashif Nawaz confirmed that there had only been one child who had English as an Additional Language, but that this data would be incorporated into future Educational Achievement reports.

91. Urgent Items of Business

There were no Urgent Items of Business.

92. Panel Announcements

It was agreed that as Link Member reports were not forthcoming, brief updates would be provided by Officers where necessary. Members were invited to raise issues in which they had an interest on an ad hoc basis.

However, the Panel received and noted Councillor Mrs Temperton's report on Unaccompanied Asylum Seekers. The Panel recognised Councillor Mrs Temperton's hard work, and thanked her for her report.

93. **SiLSiP Annual Presentation to CPAP**

CPAP welcomed members of SiLSiP to the meeting who introduced themselves.

Members of SiLSiP reported that they were currently involved in the following areas:

- SiLSiP met regularly with senior Council officers and invited Councillor Mrs McCracken to meet with them as the Chair of CPAP
- SiLSiP were involved in interviews for new Children Social Care staff
- SiLSiP have raised the importance of Life Story work with Senior Managers. Head of Service will update on progress on implementation.
- SiLSiP held regular activities for young people who were looked after, which had included go karting, Ready Steady Cook and a Kooth workshop.

The Do You Know training had been delivered to 124 people since its beginning, and was still open to all who came into contact with Looked After Children. All CPAP members were invited to attend.

Members of SiLSiP had also been involved in the Takeover Day, in which 20 young people had been paired with Executive Members and Senior Managers to shadow their work. The young people commented on going to meetings about libraries, traffic and housing, and noted that the experience had been enjoyed by all.

In April 2016, members of SiLSiP had created an animation about bullying called Just The Same. The animation was played to the panel and Councillors commented that the animation demonstrated exceptional thought and creativity.

Members thanked SiLSiP for their presentation and for attending the meeting.

94. **CAMHS System Without Tiers Update**

Louise Noble, Service Manager for CAMHS presented the CAMHS update report.

The chair commented that it would be more helpful if the report can be provided to members further in advance so there can be more time to consider the information. Louise agreed that in future she will endeavour to do this.

Members were reminded that CAMHS came under Berkshire Health Foundation Trust, and provided specialist care to young people with complex and enduring mental health needs.

Louise commented that CAMHS had seen a significant increase in referrals, with 44% more referrals in 2016 than in 2012. In 2015/16, the CAMHS service had received additional funding to combat the long waiting lists. This extra funding had been used to recruit additional staff and 30 new staff had been recruited to the Berkshire service. Louise commented that the service now had a cohort of consultant psychologists who were proud to associate themselves with the service. The child psychologist consultant specific to Bracknell, Dr Cornelius Ani, was reported to be leaving to join another CCG. A new consultant, Dr Mhedi Mirkhani, had been recruited to work in Bracknell, and it was noted that Dr Mirkhani shared many of the same specialisms that Dr Ani had held.

It was reported that looked after children were incorporated into the CAMHS service. There had been a 6% increase in total referrals in 2015/16 in Bracknell, and 8% increase across Berkshire. Louise explained that all referrals come through the Common Point of Entry, and were triaged and prioritised to be seen within either 24

hours, 10 days or 6 weeks depending on level of need. All Looked After Children would be designated to be seen within 10 days, unless there was a specific urgency.

The average waiting time in Bracknell in October was three weeks. All children and young people who were waiting for more than 6 weeks had been waiting for an ASD diagnosis. Work was ongoing with GPs and schools to promote school referrals for ASD rather than a medical referral.

Louise explained that the number of service users for the specialist community teams who dealt with children and young people experiencing plans and intentions of suicide had decreased from 50 at the end of Quarter 4 2015/16 to 19 at the end of Quarter 2 2016/17. None of these young people had been waiting for more than 12 weeks.

It was reported that the Berkshire Adolescent Unit had been developed to have 24 hour acute mental health care with a nine bed capacity. Louise noted that if a young person required a secure or intensive unit, they could be transferred to a private provider in Maidenhead. The challenge of capacity meant that an additional focus had been placed on preventative solutions.

Arising from discussion, the following points were noted:

- All children who were referred to CAMHs were RAG rated, and Looked After Children were automatically assigned an amber rating.
- The target in Berkshire was to have a first appointment within three weeks of referral, and a second appointment within 12 weeks of referral.
- If a Looked After Child was moved out of Berkshire, the CAMHs service in the host authority would take over their care. However, if the child was moved to be placed in a specialist mental health unit, they would remain the responsibility of Berkshire CAMHs in order to plan for their ongoing care needs and for their return to Berkshire.
- The CAMHs policy had recently changed to give waiting list priority to children from military families, as it was recognised that a military family may not remain in the area long enough to get to the top of a CAMHs waiting list.
- A conversation regarding the criteria for CAMHs funding for Looked After Children took place, and it was agreed that the Head of Service for Looked After Children will have a discussion with the CCG regarding this to ensure that a system is in place.

The Panel thanked Louise for her report and update.

95. **Virtual School Annual Report**

Kashif Nawaz, Head of the Virtual School, presented the Annual Report on the Work of the Virtual School 2015 – 16.

The Virtual School focussed on the attendance, progress and achievement of Looked After Children. Attendance was monitored by contacting the schools to ensure attendance. If any issues were identified, social workers would discuss this with the child. Bracknell Forest was above average in achievement across the key stages, however it was recognised that achievement was broader than academic alone, and activities such as work experience were included in the achievement reports of Looked After Children.

The Virtual School also monitored the appropriate use of the Pupil Premium Grant in schools.

The Virtual School also offered appropriate and timely advice in Year 8 and Year 9 to advise on post-16 options. It was noted that the Virtual School staff offered their breadth of experience to these discussions to give the best advice possible to Looked After Children.

Professional development practices included designated teachers and governors for Looked After Children, who challenged practices in their schools.

In response to discussion, the following points were noted:

- Each school was required to submit a spending plan for the Pupil Premium Grant by October half term of each academic year in order to be eligible. If the Virtual School was unsatisfied with the quality of the spending plan submitted, the plan would be challenged. Detail of past spending was available for the past three years.
- The Pupil Premium Grant secured an average of £1900 in funding per child, and it was anticipated that this would increase.
- All Looked After Children needed a PEP in order to qualify for the Pupil Premium Grant.
- The Virtual School was present in academy schools where necessary, and would ensure that the educational journey for the Looked After Child was uninterrupted.
- With reference to paragraph 6.16.2 of the report, it was noted that a good relationship was maintained between teachers and the educational psychologists. There was a training event at least once per year to cover a mental health related topic arising from teachers' experiences.

96. Independent Reviewing Officer (IRO) Annual Report

Frederika van Rooyen, Conference and Review Team Manager presented the Independent Reviewing Officer Service Annual Report for the period April 2015 to March 2016.

Frederika informed the Panel that on 31 March 2016, there had been 98 Looked After Children but that this number varied significantly and had increased recently. It was anticipated that the number of Looked After Children would increase due to the unaccompanied asylum seekers coming to Bracknell Forest.

293 Looked After Children reviews had been completed during 2015 – 16, and 98% of these had been within the statutory timescales. The 'voice of the child' had been integral in the review process, and the IROs had ensured that the voice of the child was still captured if the child was unable to attend the review. Between April and March 2016, 129 parents had attended review meetings.

With regard to performance monitoring, it was noted that the IRO was considered the 'critical friend' to Children's Social Care, issuing challenges to social workers where appropriate. The IRO service welcomed the increased stability and retention of staff in Children Social Care.

The Panel recognised a successful year in the IRO service, and thanked Frederika for her report.

97. Chief Officer's Response to IRO Annual Report

Lorna Hunt, Chief Officer: Children's Social Care presented the Response from the Council to the IRO Annual Report.

Amongst the aspects highlighted, it was reported that there had been an increased focus on permanency for looked after children, with an increase in Special Guardianship Orders.

There had been several successful placements of older children for adoption in the reporting period, and the Staying Put policy for post-18 was positive with a number of children remaining in foster care and all being considered where needed.

Lorna noted that there had been 13 informal and one formal dispute raised by the IRO service during the reporting period, and that the IRO function was recognised as a constructive challenge to the service to ensure that care planning for children was timely and made an impact.

Lorna agreed that an increase in staffing stability had been key for the service and the children in care. This was also noted by Silsip as being positive.

Lorna stated that a key priority for the service was the need to recruit more local foster carers in order to offer children a choice of placement whilst keeping them in borough.

The panel thanked Lorna and Frederika for their reports and contributions.

98. Report on Residential Homes Currently Used by Bracknell Forest

Peter Hodges, Head of Service: Looked After Children presented the Looked After Children Residential Placements report which detailed the commissioning arrangements for looked after children who live in residential homes as requested by Members at a previous Panel meeting.

At 31 October 2016, there were 110 Looked After Children under the care of Bracknell Forest, of whom 11 were placed in residential homes. 23 children were receiving a service from Larchwood Children's Homes. Peter commented that residential home placements were rarely seen as a permanent solution but rather an opportunity for children to have stability while ongoing permanency was considered

It was explained that the decision to place any child more than 20 miles from Bracknell Forest Council was to be authorised by the Chief Officer and Director of Children, Young People and Learning, due to the increased costs associated with this and to ensure that it met their needs..

Peter commented that the child who had been in a residential home in Scotland had been moved back to Bracknell Forest, following successful work to identify the needs of the child. It was noted that the majority of Looked After Children in residential placements had been placed in with a Ofsted rated 'Good' provider.

Members were informed that Bracknell Forest Council had joined with five other Local Authorities to commission a school and satellite homes for Looked After young people within a suitable distance of their home authority.

Members thanked Peter for his report.

99. Six Monthly Adoption Report

Hilary Loades, Adopt Berkshire attended the meeting to present the Bracknell Forest Adoption Services Half Year Report from 1 April 2016 to 30 September 2016.

Adopt Berkshire had recently received a 'Good' rating by Ofsted in Wokingham, and awaited the impending inspection in Bracknell Forest.

At the time of the meeting, there were 7 children currently in adoption proceedings in Bracknell Forest. Hilary commented that Bracknell Forest was particularly good at permanency planning, and that communication between the Local Authority and Adopt Berkshire had been good. Hilary also noted that Bracknell Forest's fostering for adoption aim was good.

Hilary identified some of the risks to adoption, primarily the national lack of adopters with only three adopters per Looked After Child in the UK. It was recognised that Adopt Berkshire were proactive in their recruitment. Hilary advised the Panel of plans to join together Adopt Berkshire and Reading, Swindon and Oxfordshire Local Authorities into a Regional Adoption Agency, with Oxfordshire to be the host authority. It was anticipated that this would only add to the good delivery of adoption services already carried out for Bracknell Forest, as the existing Berkshire office would remain in place. Hilary noted that Bracknell Forest may benefit from the larger pool of adopters. The post-adoption process would remain the responsibility of the Local Authority.

In response to discussion, the following points were noted:

- It was suggested that the media's representation of adoption may dissuaded some potential adopters from enquiring. There may be a lack of adopters for under 2's who had been historically easier to match than older children.
- Hilary commented that she had noticed an increase in families scrutinizing child profiles and being more discerning as to who they would consider. This reflected a national increase in service user choice in adoption.

Members thanked Hilary for her report and for her work with Adopt Berkshire.

100. **Six Monthly Regulation 44 Visits**

Sarah Roberts, Policy and Research Officer, presented the Report on Regulation 44 Visits to Larchwood Short Break Unit during the period April to September 2016.

It was reported that the visits had been positive. The reporting template had been updated following an Ofsted inspection, and the Unit had experienced a higher consistency of visitors attending.

Sarah commented that the facility and staff were both good, and their good relationship with core relief staff was beneficial to consistency of care for young people.

An interim inspection of the Unit had been conducted the week before the meeting, and the outcome was awaited.

Members thanked Sarah for her report.

101. **Performance Management Information**

Lorna Hunt, Chief Officer: Children's Social Care presented the Performance Management Information.

An update report was requested on the stability of placements of Looked After Children. **Action: Peter Hodges**

It was noted that the number of placements was similar to the national average with adoptions in Bracknell Forest increasing. Lorna commented that recruitment had helped stability of placements.

The distance of children newly looked after placed from home was reporting to be decreasing.

The percentage of Health Assessments completed on time was at 90.2% in September 2016. The percentage of dental checks completed on time was at 93.3% in September 2016. These continued to be monitored.

102. Dates of Next Meetings and Forward Plan

The next meeting was scheduled for 8 March 2017 at 5pm. The following items were included on the Forward Plan:

- Participation Strategy Annual Report
- Advocacy and Independent Visitors Briefing
- Leaving Care Service
- Foster Carer Association
- Staying Put
- Placement Stability

CHAIRMAN

This page is intentionally left blank