

**CORPORATE PARENTING ADVISORY
PANEL
19 MAY 2010
6.00 - 7.55 PM**



Present:

Councillors Mrs Ryder (Chairman), Mrs McCracken (Vice Chairman), Mrs Angell, Mrs Birch, and Mrs Shillcock

Also Present:

Councillor Beadsley

Apologies for absence received from Councillor Barnard

1. Election of Chairman

RESOLVED that Councillor Mrs Ryder be elected Chairman of the Panel for the ensuing municipal year.

2. Appointment of Vice Chairman

RESOLVED that Councillor Mrs McCracken be appointed Vice Chairman of the Panel for the ensuing municipal year.

3. Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest.

4. Minutes and Matters Arising

RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting of the Panel held on 17 March 2010 be agreed as a correct record.

Matters arising –

- (i) Visit to Rainforest Walk – the visit to Rainforest Walk would take place on Tuesday 15 June. Members were asked to meet outside Rainforest Walk at 11.00am. Councillor Beadsley gave his apologies as he was now unable to attend.
- (ii) Terms of Reference - revised terms of reference, incorporating amendments discussed at the last meeting were tabled. Members were asked to email any comments to sarah.roberts@bracknell-forest.gov.uk by Wednesday 2 June, after which they would be submitted to the Executive Member for Children & Young People for approval.

5. Presentation from Head of Youth Offending Service

The Chairman welcomed Karen Roberts, Head of the Youth Offending Service (YOS), who attended to give a presentation of the service in relation to looked after children and young people.

Karen gave a brief summary of the work of the YOS to put the presentation into context. The YOS team comprised workers from many fields – including police, drugs work, social work, health, parenting. The service provided supervision, comprising a mixture of support and enforcement, for young offenders, aged 10 to 17, sentenced by the courts. There was also an early intervention service for 8 to 13 year olds identified as being at risk of becoming offenders: this began four years ago and had been successful in addressing the needs of those young people.

Karen tabled a paper entitled Offending Behaviour and Looked After Children. Looked after children were significantly over represented in the overall population of children 10 to 17 identified as having committed offences and then dealt with through the criminal justice system. Some factors known to contribute to the offending of looked after children were –

- Trauma and difficulties experienced
- Family problems and conflicts
- Violence and abuse in the family
- Abuse, neglect, bereavement and disadvantaged backgrounds
- Major upheaval in becoming looked after
- Changes and a lack of permanence
- Stigma of being looked after
- Difficulty in finding appropriate placements and separation from families and communities
- Mental health problems

Offending was one of a range of negative outcomes and often began before the young person became looked after.

Karen tabled a paper which set out local statistics. Figures had significantly reduced from 19% in September 2008 to 7.5% in March 2010 with the YOS and Children's Social Care working jointly to the policy and protocol for the prevention of offending of looked after children. Karen confirmed that YOS retained an interest in young people placed out of area.

Karen tabled a case study of a 17 year old which illustrated the never give up approach. The young person had a poor early start and lots of factors contributed to the escalation of his offending. Social workers had little opportunity to build a relationship with him until he received a custodial sentence.

On release he was found a placement in an individual supported flat with an organisation called Moving On and received an intensive supervision package – for 25 hours a week he was engaged in a programme covering wide issues.

This case showed how things could escalate in negative circumstances but the YOS do not give up. It was a good example of Social Care and the YOS working together, and MAPPA had recently commended the good joint work in this young person's resettlement plan.

The Chairman thanked Karen for a fascinating and interesting presentation.

6. **Commissioning Strategy for Looked After Children**

Sheila McKeand presented the Commissioning Strategy for Looked After Children which was based on –

- (i) an analysis of need
- (ii) identification of gaps in meeting need and development of action plan to address the gaps
- (iii) implementation of the action plan
- (iv) monitoring of progress and re-evaluation of the analysis of need.

The strategy had been based on the work of the Care Matters Steering Group, had been discussed in a number of forums, and would be presented to the Children's Trust on 27 May 2010 for comment and adoption.

Arising in discussion –

- Paragraph 6.3, gaps in service provision, Councillor Mrs Shillcock asked why there was no specific accommodation scheme for care leavers in Bracknell Forest. She referred to the 'MoveOn' scheme in the Supporting People Strategy where there was an agreement with Bracknell Forest Homes for a percentage of accommodation. Sheila McKeand thought that care leavers were addressed in the main housing strategy. She would seek further clarification and report back to the next ordinary meeting under matters arising.
- Paragraph 5.4, ethnicity, and paragraph 6.4, recent changes, the question of placements and funding for unaccompanied asylum seeking children was discussed.

The Panel agreed that the action plan should be brought back to each meeting for monitoring.

7. **Performance Report**

Sarah Roberts presented the short performance report giving an overview of performance of Children's Social Care for looked after children to 31 March 2010. The additional information requested at the last meeting had been included and examination results would be reported to the September meeting.

Arising in discussion –

- Placement stability – 17 out of 88 had moved placement three times or more, quite a high figure. A significant factor was the high number of older young people. The Panel noted that when a young person went missing for more than 24 hours it counted as a placement move and Bracknell Forest was particularly honest about how this was reported. Also Bracknell Forest had such relatively small numbers that small changes made a significant difference.

The officers would try to plot the numbers of out of borough placements onto a map to present to a future meeting.

8. **Employment of Care Leavers**

The Panel received a verbal update on the employment of care leavers, including details of two young people who had commenced work. Other potential employers were being identified and would then need to be matched to young people. The Panel asked for an update at the September meeting.

9. **Fostering Fortnight 17 - 28 May**

The Panel noted the details of Fostering Fortnight, 17 to 28 May. On Monday at the Bandstand seven serious enquiries were received. Other fostering events were to be held at Bracknell Leisure Centre, the Hollywood Bowl, the Coral Reef, and the Look Out Discovery Centre.

The Panel noted that taster sessions for looked after young people were to be held at Bracknell Sports Centre during half term week.

10. **Dates of Future Meetings**

Closed training session – 6 July 2010, from 5.30 to 7.30pm to undertake training on the participation of children and young people in the decision making process.

29 September 2010, 5.00 to 7.00pm.