

**CORPORATE PARENTING ADVISORY
PANEL
28 SEPTEMBER 2011
5.00 - 7.10 PM**



Present:

Councillors Mrs McCracken (Chairman), Mrs Barnard (Vice-Chairman), Mrs Birch and Ms Brown

Also Present:

Councillor Barnard (Executive Member for Children and Young People)

Apologies for absence were received from:

Councillor Ms Hayes

18. Minutes and Matters Arising

RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting held on 6 July 2011 be agreed as a correct record.

19. Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest.

20. Education of Looked After Children and Exam Results

Tony Mansfield presented the summary report in relation to Examination Results for Bracknell Forest Council Looked After Children for the Academic Year 2010-11.

There were 11 students in the cohort:

- 5 students had full statements of special educational needs (SEN).
- 1 was an unaccompanied asylum seeker with very limited English.
- 4 attended Bracknell Forest comprehensive schools.
- 1 attended an independent school.
- 9 students already had a sixth form or college place. One had deferred further education due to personal reasons; the other student was actively seeking work but was also being encouraged to consider a college placement.

The reports included a comparison with last year's results. Progress is reviewed during Key Stage via schools' tracking systems. It is recognised that looked after children are in need of particular support in order to progress. Additional support needs are identified through Personal Education Planning meetings. Support can range from learning support assistance in the school, extra tuition or opportunities to develop social skills through out of school activities.

The Panel discussed the progress of young people years over the age of 16 who were either still looked after or care leavers.

21. **Performance Monitoring Report**

Sheila McKeand presented the Performance Monitoring Report in relation to Looked After Children which included data up to 30 June 2011.

The Panel discussed data on looked after children and children subject to child protection plans. The trends show an increase in the number of looked after children over the past four years, this has followed on from a rise in the number of children with child protection plans. Early intervention was identified as a key element to reducing the number of children who become looked after.

The Panel considered data in relation to sibling groups; in Borough and out of Borough placements; placements moves and legal status. There has been a downward trend in the number of placement moves. The importance of supporting foster carers; matching placements to meet the need of the child was noted.

The Family Placement Team recruit and supported foster carers. The proposed 'Life Chances' virtual team would provide further support.

22. **Inspection Report for Fostering Service**

Sheila McKeand presented the Inspection Report on Fostering Services at Bracknell Forest Council. The overall outcome of the inspection was good with some outstanding features. The Panel were slightly disappointed that the outcome was not outstanding overall but commented that it was a very good report and asked for their thanks to be conveyed to staff in Fostering Services.

23. **Hearing the Voice of the Child: CPAP's Engagement with the Children in Care Council**

Sheila McKeand and the Chairman gave the Panel an overview of the SiLSiP meeting which took place on 7 September 2011. Five young people in care attended the meeting along with Louise Hopkinson, Children's Participation Development Officer.

All Bracknell Forest's looked after children are members of SiLSiP but very few attend the formal committee style meetings. The meeting decided that it would be better to have small 'focus' groups to discuss specific issues, the outcome of these could be reported to officers and CPAP. Once a year members of SiLSiP could meet with the Corporate Parenting Panel on a formal basis in order to discuss issues that had arisen during the year. A second meeting would be arranged between SiLSiP and the Executive member, Chair or CPAP, the Director of Children, Young People and Learning and Chief Officer for Children's Social Care.

It was suggested that young people be involved at an early stage in the annual budget discussions in order to have their voice heard when deciding priorities. The Panel were impressed that young people had proposed that if there were not sufficient budget to arrange another residential event, they could raise the money through a cake bake. The proposed changes will enable activities involving small groups of young people to be involved in developing services for all looked after children and young people.

The suggested changes to SiLSiP were approved by the Panel.

24. **The Life Chances Team**

Sheila McKeand gave a presentation on the Life Chances Team, which had been running successfully in West Berkshire for 3-4 years and is now being developed in Bracknell Forest also. The Life Chances Team is a virtual team where professionals come together once a month to discuss the needs of Bracknell's looked after children and agree who in the team would be best placed to address any issues arising. The team consists of a range of professionals and services who may be involved in a child's life such as the designated nurse, youth worker, Educational Psychologist, Mental Health Worker, and representatives from Early Years, Youth Offending Service and CAMHS.

The Life Chances Team meet once a month to think creatively about how services could help young people and to identify issues. The team have access to a shared database and any member of the team could put forward an idea for dealing with an issue. Every month progress would be reported back at the meetings. The team monitor cases, provide intensive targeted support and work together to offer training, for example, in schools. The Team would co-ordinate next year's awards and achievement ceremony. Foster carers can have direct access to all the members of the team, thus cutting out potential delay by going through the social worker to arrange a meeting or relay information.

A dedicated co-ordinator administers the data base, organises meetings and keeps the process running. The Head of Service and Deputy Virtual School Head share the chairing of the meetings.

It is anticipated that by working better together, there will be a more effective and timely use of worker's skills, this will improve the education and health outcomes for looked after children and reduce the need to use more expensive external placements.

25. Dates of Next Meetings and Forward Plan

14 December 2011

Members of SiLSiP will join the Panel at the next meeting in December. Consideration was given to starting the meetings at 5.30pm but the Panel decided to keep to a 5pm start.

The Panel decided that they would like to hold future Panel meetings in the Function Room rather than the Council Chamber, except for the December meetings which would need to be held in the Council Chamber due to the number of visitors.

CHAIRMAN

This page is intentionally left blank