

**CORPORATE PARENTING PANEL
5 September 2016**

MEMBERS PRESENT: Councillor Nicola Greene - Chair; Councillor Bobbie Dove - Vice-Chair; Councillors Blair Crawford, Rae Stollard and Michael Weinhonig.

NON-ELECTED MEMBERS PRESENT:

Lisa Male Participation Worker, Children's Social Care
CLICK Members

ALSO PRESENT:

Jane Portman Executive Director, Adults and Children
Mike Felstead Service Manager, Quality Assurance and Safeguarding
Rubina Payne Fostering Team Manager

FROM THE DORSET CLINICAL COMMISSIONING GROUP:

Penny Earney Designated Nurse, Looked After Children

The meeting started at 4:39pm and finished at 6:40pm.

Note: To see a copy of the public reports that were considered by the Panel at this meeting please visit:

<http://www.bournemouth.gov.uk/CouncilDemocratic/CouncilMeetings/CommitteesPanels/CorporateParentingPanel.aspx>

Please note that the next meeting of the Corporate Parenting Panel is scheduled to take place on the 28 November 2016.

It is recommended that you check this information with Democratic Services closer to the scheduled date of the next meeting in case the arrangements have been changed.

Contact: Alex Vine, Democratic and Overview and Scrutiny Officer
☎ 01202 454713 ✉ alex.vine@bournemouth.gov.uk

Corporate Parenting Panel, 5 September 2016

Agenda Item / Report No.	Minute No.	Matter Considered	Decisions Made
Item 1.	10	<p>Membership of Panel</p> <p>The Panel were informed that, in the absence of the Service Director, Children's Social Care; the Executive Director, Adults and Children and the Service Manager, Quality Assurance and Safeguarding, were in attendance.</p>	
Item 2.	11	<p>Declarations of Interest</p> <p>There were none.</p>	
Item 3.	12	<p>Minutes of the last meeting held on 6 June 2016</p>	The minutes were agreed as a true and accurate record.
	13	<p>Exclusion of the press and public</p> <p>That the press and public be excluded for the following items of business under Section 100(A)(4) of the Local Government Act 1972 as they involve the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in paragraphs 1 and 2 in Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Act, and the public interest in withholding the information outweighs the public interest in disclosing the information.</p>	To exclude the press and public.
Item 5.	14	<p>Fostering</p> <p>The Panel received a presentation by the Fostering Team Manager, followed by presentations from 3 foster families.</p>	That the comments made by the presenters be considered by the Chair and Vice-Chair for future agenda planning.

Corporate Parenting Panel, 5 September 2016

Agenda Item / Report No.	Minute No.	Matter Considered	Decisions Made
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 35 new foster carers had been recruited in the last 12 months. • 65% of the in-house cohort of children in care were of school age and above. • 80% of foster children did not return to their birth parent(s). • More foster children were being placed within the area. • There was a 35% vacancy rate for social workers at the time of the last Ofsted inspection. <p>Training and employment</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Training for foster carers and foster families was invaluable and more should be available to improve the experiences of both the foster families and the foster children in order to deal with emotionally complex issues. • Day long courses were not ideal for working foster families and it would be beneficial to consider some evening courses, as time off work was required. • Foster families found it difficult to balance foster caring with full time employment. <p>Parent and child placements</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Some foster care placements included both the child and the birth parent(s) - in some instances the birth parent may have been unable to care for their child without this support owing to disability or other circumstances. 	

Corporate Parenting Panel, 5 September 2016

Agenda Item / Report No.	Minute No.	Matter Considered	Decisions Made
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Parent and child placements often required a 12-week assessment which could be intrusive and difficult. • Foster families which accepted both a birth parent and a child also provided support to the parent in the form of a role model for the birth parent. • Housing was a major issue with parent and child placements. <p>Fostering support</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There was a need for businesses and leisure activities which supported foster carers. • There was no formality concerning passports and bank accounts for foster children. Obtaining these for foster children was difficult and could be made easier whilst they were with the foster family as well as for when they left the fostering process. • Having a good relationship with a social worker made a big difference - particularly if there were regular meetings and good communication with them. <p>After fostering</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Children were able to come back to visit their foster carers once they have been adopted. <p>In response to the Panel's questions, the following was noted:</p>	

Corporate Parenting Panel, 5 September 2016

Agenda Item / Report No.	Minute No.	Matter Considered	Decisions Made
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The intense selection process made some think about whether they wanted to commit to being a foster family. • There was a high turnover of social worker staff and the children needed more stability. It was hard for that child to build a relationship with their social worker if they kept changing. It could become exhaustive and demoralising for a child to have to explain their story multiple times. Staffing turnover often resulted from sickness or retention issues. • Contact dates for foster children needed to be scheduled regularly for stability. <p>The Chair indicated that she would like to scrutinise the high turnover of social workers in the Panel's forward plan.</p> <p>The Executive Director for Adults and Children undertook to conduct a broad report about workforce issues relating to high staff turnover for social workers and its impact on foster care. It was noted that a review of social care teams was currently being considered by Corporate Management Team and that this could contribute to a workforce paper.</p> <p>CLICK members asked for clarification on the current workforce, to which the Executive Director explained that Bournemouth Borough Council was reviewing its team structure in light of these issues. Furthermore, the Service Manager for Quality Assurance and Safeguarding informed that Panel that a November consultation with staff was planned to address these issues.</p>	

Corporate Parenting Panel, 5 September 2016

Agenda Item / Report No.	Minute No.	Matter Considered	Decisions Made
		<p>The Chair thanked the foster families for their presentations and wished them well in the future.</p>	
Item 6.	15	<p>CLICK Presentation</p> <p>The Panel received a presentation from CLICK members of various ages and circumstances, including children in care and care leavers.</p> <p>CLICK JUNIOR PRESENTATION</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A survey of looked after children found that their priorities were food, clothing, being loved and cared for, and having opportunities to participate in leisure activities or new experiences. • There was a need for someone to talk to. • There was little or no choice for the child in the placement and it did not feel like they were being listened to. • It would be beneficial to have support groups with other looked after children. • There was a lot of red tape associated with looked after children if they wanted to 'sleep over' at a friend's house. The friend's parents were often required to undergo background checks which could alienate the child. This was dependent on local policy as there were different regulations between local authority areas. 	<p>That the comments made by CLICK Members be considered by the Chair and Vice-Chair for future agenda planning.</p>

Corporate Parenting Panel, 5 September 2016

Agenda Item / Report No.	Minute No.	Matter Considered	Decisions Made
		<p>CLICK SENIOR PRESENTATION</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There was not enough support or personal advice for care leavers as not all social workers were trained in mental health and therefore could not provide that support when it was needed. • There was no support for the psychological impact of living alone after leaving care. More support was required to prepare care leavers for living on their own. • It was particularly difficult to find housing as a care leaver. • In the past 6 months, 3 CLICK members had not been able to attend CLICK due to mental health issues. • The training flat was an excellent resource. • There was a lack of financial support and many former looked after children ended up in debt. <p>The Panel considered the importance of the issues raised by CLICK Members and were particularly interested in exploring further improvement opportunities in the area of housing.</p> <p>The Panel thanked the CLICK members for their presentations.</p>	
Item 4.	16	<p>CLICK</p> <p>The Panel received questions from CLICK members in relation to issues raised by the CLICK presentation. The following was noted:</p>	That the Panel's Link Member for Housing works with CLICK Members to improve access to housing for care leavers.

Corporate Parenting Panel, 5 September 2016

Agenda Item / Report No.	Minute No.	Matter Considered	Decisions Made
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It would be beneficial for care leavers to have access to very small emergency loans to prevent dependency on pay day loans. • There was a need for more engagement with foster carers and social workers. • A LAC support group should be led by LAC and should be held outside of schools. <p>The Designated Nurse, Looked After Children, informed the Panel and CLICK Members that there was currently 1 mental health nurse in the Bournemouth service but the Dorset service was increasing the number of nurses overall from 5 to 16 from December.</p> <p>It was noted that the term “mental health nurse” was stigmatic and that it may be better to refer to them as “emotional health nurses” to increase engagement with young people.</p>	