

REGULATORY COMMITTEE

CORPORATE PARENTING PANEL

MINUTES of a meeting of the Corporate Parenting Panel held on 23 January 2007 at 2:00 pm at County Hall, Lewes.

PRESENT - Councillors Elkin, Skilton, Waite (Chairman) and Whetstone

ALSO PRESENT - Councillor Stroude, Lead Member for Children and Families
Helen Davies, Deputy Director, Children and Families
Sally Carnie, Head of Looked After Children Services
Wendy Peters, Looked After Children Education Welfare Officer
Chris Makin, Unit Manager, Old Roar House
Graham Beale, Unit Manager, Rose Cottage and Homefield Cottages
Martin Sutcliffe, Unit Manager, Landsdowne Secure Unit
Helen Simmons, Unit Manager, Sorrell Drive
Anthony Julyan, Operations Manager, Sorrel Drive
Annie Petch, Democratic Services Officer

29. MINUTES

29.1 RESOLVED – to approve the minutes of the meeting held on 20 October 2006 as a correct record.

30. REPORTS

30.1 Copies of the reports referred to below are included in the minute book.

31. APOLOGIES

31.1 Apologies for absence were received from Councillors O’Keeffe, St Pierre and Taylor.

32. VIEWING OF DVD: ‘SUPPORTING LITERACY IN THE HOME’

32.1 The Panel viewed a DVD called ‘Supporting literacy in the home’. The DVD explained the stages of reading for children and how carers can take the necessary steps to help children become better readers.

32.2 RESOLVED to (1) request an update at a future Panel meeting on the impact and success following the launch of the DVD; and

(2) request that copies of the DVD be distributed to members of the Corporate Parenting Panel when they become available.

33. LOOKED AFTER CHILDREN STATISTICS

33.1 The Panel noted that the statistics on children placed for adoption had increased in October and November and agreed the drop in figures earlier in the year probably resulted from the implementation of the new Adoption and Children Act in December 2005. The trend on placements with agency foster-carers had gone slightly downwards and this exemplifies the progress made in developing the in house service.

33.2 The Panel also noted that the number of looked after children had gone up by 19 in the past year. This increase had been absorbed by the increase in the number of in-house foster carers. The Deputy Director for Children and Families advised the Panel that these increases had put a pressure on the fostering budget and an additional £600,000 has been allocated in 2007/8 to deal with this.

33.2 RESOLVED – to note the statistics

34. YOUNG PEOPLE AND CORPORATE PARENTS: WORKING TOGETHER

34.1 The Panel considered a report by the Director of Children's Services. The report informed the Panel of progress in relation to the presentation by young people in care supported by Xpress Advocacy Service to the Corporate Parenting Panel.

34.2 RESOLVED - to agree the proposals in the report and request all arrangements be made via the Chairman if prior to the next Corporate Parenting Panel meeting.

35. CONSULTATION ON THE GREEN PAPER, 'CARE MATTERS': TRANSFORMING THE LIVES OF CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE

35.1 The Panel considered a report by the Director of Children's Services informing the Panel of the East Sussex response to the Green Paper, "Care Matters".

35.2 RESOLVED – to note the contents of the report.

36. EXCLUSION OF PUBLIC AND PRESS

36.1 RESOLVED - to exclude the public and press from the meeting for the remaining items on the grounds that if the public and press were present there would be disclosure to them of exempt information as specified in paragraph 6 of Part 1 of Schedule 12(A) of the Local Government Act 1972 (as amended), namely information relating to any individual.

37. AUDIT OF NEED IN RELATION TO BLACK AND MINORITY ETHNIC CHILDREN IN EAST SUSSEX

37.1 The Panel considered a report by the Director of Children's Services which provided the findings of an audit undertaken in May 2006 regarding black and minority ethnic children within East Sussex and the action plan developed in response to those findings.

37.2 RESOLVED – to (1) note the findings of the audit; and

(2) endorse the action plan and programme of work in response to the audit

(3) request an update at a future meeting following the results of the Joint Area Review of Children's Services

38. CSCI REPORTS

38.1 The Panel considered CSCI reports for the following children's homes:

- (i) Old Roar House (27 September 2006)
- (ii) Rose Cottage (24 October 2006)
- (iii) Homefield Cottages (26 October 2006)
- (iv) Lansdowne Secure Unit (3-5 October 2006)
- (v) Lansdowne Secure Unit (27 December 2006)

(vi) The Bungalow, Sorrell Drive (18 December 2006)

38.2 Two action plans were tabled relating to Lansdowne Secure Unit following their recent inspection. The action plans were considered with the inspection reports.

38.3 RESOLVED – to note the reports

39. CHILDREN'S HOME REGULATIONS 1991, REGULATION 33: INSPECTION REPORTS

39.1 The Panel considered inspection reports for September, October and November 2006 for the following children's homes:

- (i) Acorns and Lansdowne (Dorset Road)
- (ii) The Bungalow, Sorrel Drive
- (iii) Lansdowne Secure Unit
- (iv) Old Roar Children's Home
- (v) Homefield Cottages
- (vi) Rose Cottage

38.2 RESOLVED – to note the reports