

## REGULATORY COMMITTEE

### CORPORATE PARENTING PANEL

MINUTES of a meeting of the Corporate Parenting Panel held on 19 October 2007 at 10:00am at County Hall, Lewes.

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PRESENT Councillor Waite (Chairman)  
Councillors Dowling, Elkin, O'Keeffe, Skilton, and Taylor

ALSO PRESENT Helen Davies, Deputy Director Children and Families  
Ruth Henson, Looked After Children Education adviser  
Teresa Lavelle-Hill, Head of Looked After Children services  
Lyn Fletcher, Practice Manager, Adoption and Permanence  
Annie Petch, Democratic Services Officer

Chris Makin, Unit Manager, Old Roar House  
Graham Beale, Unit Manager, Rose Cottage and Homefield Cottages  
Helen Simmons, Unit Manager, Sorrell Drive  
Anthony Julyan, Operations Manager, Sorrel Drive

Ben Vince, East Sussex Foster Care Association.  
Tina Henderson, East Sussex Foster Care Association  
Marnie Clarke, East Sussex Foster Care Association

#### 11. MINUTES

11.1 RESOLVED – to approve the minutes of the meeting held on 20 July 2007 as a correct record.

#### 12. REPORTS

12.1 Copies of the reports and tabled papers referred to below are included in the minute book.

#### 13. APOLOGIES

13.1 Apologies for absence were received from Councillor St Pierre.

#### 14. EAST SUSSEX FOSTER CARERS' ASSOCIATION

14.1 The Panel received a presentation on the work of the East Sussex Foster Carers' Association (ESFCA) by Ben Vince, Tina Henderson and Marnie Clarke.

14.2 The presentation focussed on the work and achievements of the East Sussex Foster Carers' Association over the past year and these included:

- Receiving lottery funding which has allowed them to employ 2 part time workers. ESFCA raised in excess of £100,000 (£48,000 for lottery and £52,000 from other funders) last year that went directly into services for looked after children, children who care, and foster carers.
- Core work which included a very successful annual conference; Christmas parties; computers for children in care; newsletters; quiz nights; 2-day residential trip to Little Canada for children who foster; luggage for looked after children; and social days out.

- Survey was undertaken about the effect that the new integrated service had impacted on looked after children (results attached).
- User groups for children and young people who foster
- Inspiration Project
- 2-day 'Healing Parents Conference'
- Monthly surgeries for foster carers, to give them access to Senior Managers from Children's Services
- Embarking on a new 'CV and Suits' project to support care leavers gain further education or employment
- Keynote speakers at the Fostering Network annual conference
- Congratulations to Ann and Denis Holder who received an MBE

14.3 The Panel were asked to consider a tabled paper requesting the provision of a centre from which to run their services for children in care, children who care and foster parent.

14.4 RESOLVED to receive the presentation.

15. REPORT ON THE EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENT OF LOOKED AFTER CHILDREN IN THE SCHOOL YEAR 2006-07

15.1 The Panel considered a report by the Director of Children's Services informing them of the educational outcomes of looked after children in 2007 and the strategies used in order to continue to raise attainment in East Sussex.

15.2 RESOLVED to note the contents of the report and the progress of the service.

16. PROGRESS REPORT OF EAST SUSSEX FOSTERING SERVICE, 1 APRIL – 30 SEPTEMBER 2007

16.1 The Panel considered a report by the Director of Children's Services outlining the performance of the Fostering Service between 1 April and 30 September 2007.

- 16.3 RESOLVED – to
- (1) note the contents of the report and the progress of the service; and
  - (2) request that invitations be extended to Panel members to attend the Fostering Service Annual Picnic.
  - (3) thank everyone involved in the foster care awards ceremony in July 2007, and the Big Breakfast event at the Eastbourne Airbourne week.

17. PROGRESS REPORT OF EAST SUSSEX ADOPTION AND PERMANENCE SERVICE, APRIL-SEPTEMBER 2007

17.1 The Panel considered a report outlining the performance of the Adoption and Permanence Service between April and September 2007.

17.2 RESOLVED – to note the contents of the report and the progress of the service.

18. LOOKED AFTER CHILDREN STATISTICS

18.1 The Panel noted:

- The number of placements with in-house foster carers had gone up whilst the number placed with agency foster carers was on a downward trend.

- The number of children placed for adoption was also on a downward trend and the Deputy Director Children and Families explained more research was needed to fully understand the reason why.
- A reduction in the number of children placed in 'other residential' accommodation whilst the number of children placed in 'ESCC residential' homes had increased.
- A reduction in the number of children placed with a parent.

18.2 RESOLVED – to note the statistics.

## 19. DRAFT ANNUAL REPORT ON CORPORATE PARENTING

19.1 The Panel considered the draft annual report prepared by the Director of Children's Services.

19.2 The Panel received a tabled paper of an extract from the Joint Area Review report detailing the results of the inspection of the Looked After Children service.

19.3 The Panel discussed possible future topics to be brought to the Panel; these included mental health issues; housing for care leavers; and public health issues.

19.4 RESOLVED to (1) request that an explanation of inspection grades be included in the Inspection section of the Corporate Parenting Panel annual report;

(2) amend the move-in date to Old Roar house date to January 2008; and

(3) expand the conclusion to include the areas of improvement and recommendations detailed in the Joint Area Review inspection report.

## 20. EXCLUSION OF PUBLIC AND PRESS

20.1 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 category 1 of Part 1 of Schedule 12(A) of the Local Government Act 1972 (as amended), namely information relating to any individual. It is considered that the public interest in maintaining the exemption outweighs the public interest in disclosing the information.

## 21. OFSTED INSPECTION REPORTS

21.1 The Panel considered the following Ofsted Inspection Reports

- (i) Acorns, Dorset Road
- (ii) Homefield Cottages
- (iii) Lansdowne Secure Unit
- (iv) Old Roar Children's Home

21.2 RESOLVED – to note the inspection reports

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

22.1 The Panel considered inspection reports for June, July and August 2007 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

22.2 RESOLVED – to note the reports.