

CORPORATE PARENTING PANEL

MINUTES of a meeting of the Corporate Parenting Panel held at Committee Room, County Hall, Lewes on 8 July 2016.

PRESENT Councillors Charles Clark, Roy Galley, Ruth O’Keeffe, Mike Pursglove, Jim Sheppard, and Sylvia Tidy

ALSO PRESENT Liz Rugg, Assistant Director Early Help and Social Care
Teresa Lavelle-Hill, Joint Head of Looked After Children Services
Carole Sykes, Operations Manager – Adoption Team
Adrian Sewell, Operations Manager – Fostering Team
Alex Sutton, Operations Manager – Safeguarding Unit
Roy Noble, Deputy Homes Manager
Janet Fairless, RHM Brodrick House and Homefield Cottage
Helen Simmons, RHM Acorns and The Bungalow
Ian Williams, RHM Hazel Lodge

1 ELECTION OF CHAIR

1.1 Councillor Roy Galley was appointed as Chair of the Corporate Parenting Panel.

2 MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 22 APRIL 2016

2.1 RESOLVED to agree as a correct record the minutes of the meeting held on 22 April 2016.

3 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

3.1 Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Jim Sheppard and Peter Charlton. It was noted that Councillor Mike Pursglove was substituting for Councillor Charlton.

3.2 Apologies were also received from Nicky Scott, Operations Manager Residential LAC Services, and Nigel Hewitt RHM Lansdowne Secure Unit.

4 EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC

4.1 The Panel agreed to exclude the press and public for the next two agenda items on the basis that if they were present there would be disclosure to them of information considered to be exempt by virtue of Category 1 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A to the Local Government Act 1972 (as amended), namely information relating to any individual.

5 OFSTED INSPECTION REPORTS FOR THE BUNGALOW - MARCH 2016

5.1 The Panel considered a report received from Ofsted on the service at The Bungalow, Sorrell Drive.

5.2 The Panel discussed the positive outcome of the Ofsted report.

5.3 RESOLVED to note the report.

6 CHILDREN'S HOME REGULATIONS 1991, REGULATION 44: INSPECTION REPORTS FOR FEBRUARY TO MAY 2016

6.1 The Panel considered Regulation 44 Reports for February to May 2016 for the following Children's Homes:

- (a) Acorns at Dorset Road
- (b) Brodrick House
- (c) Hazel Lodge
- (d) Homefield Cottage
- (e) Lansdowne Secure Unit
- (f) The Bungalow, Sorrel Drive

6.2 Each Registered Home Manager gave a brief oral update on activity at the home covering the period since the last Panel meeting.

6.3 The Panel RESOLVED to note the reports.

7 INDEPENDENT REVIEWING OFFICER (IRO) ANNUAL REPORT 2015/16

7.1 The Panel considered a report by the Director of Children's Services which presented a Report of the Independent Reviewing Service. Alex Sutton, Operations Manager Safeguarding Unit, highlighted the role of the Independent Reviewing Officer (IRO); the new integrated care planning approach designed to be responsive and dynamic to the child's needs; and problem resolution and escalation.

7.2 The Panel were further informed about the greater flexibility of the service whereby children do not have to have twice yearly reviews once they are settled and stable in a placement; and the positive feedback received from the children using the service who feel that their views are listened to and taken forward where possible.

7.3 The Panel discussed the contact cards for children coming into care; the mixture of views and responses from Young People using the IRO service; and the case load of the IRO's.

7.4 RESOLVED to note the report.

8 ANNUAL PROGRESS REPORT OF THE EAST SUSSEX FOSTERING SERVICE

8.1 The Panel considered a report by the Director of Children's Services which outlined the performance and progress of the East Sussex Fostering Service for the period 1 April 2015 to 31 March 2016. Adrian Sewell, Operations Manager highlighted aspects of the Service's work such as recruitment and retention; savings made from the transfer of carers from other agencies; and the marketing techniques used to promote the Service.

8.2 The Panel were further informed of the training provided to foster carers and the new courses which have been introduced, as well as those which will be developed in 2016/17. The Panel were updated on the partnership work taking place between the East Sussex Fostering Service and East Sussex Foster Care Association (ESFCA), Looked After Children's Mental Health Service (LACAMHS), the Supported Lodgings Team and the Virtual School.

8.3 The Panel discussed: the continuing recruitment strategy and target figures; the supported lodgings service; the support provided to foster families; and the work being done to support Care Leavers.

8.4 The Panel congratulated the East Sussex Fostering Service on their hard work.

8.5 RESOLVED to note the contents of the report.

9 ANNUAL PROGRESS REPORT OF THE EAST SUSSEX ADOPTION AND PERMANENCE SERVICE

9.1 The Panel considered a report by the Director of Children's Services which outlined the performance and progress of the East Sussex Adoption and Permanence Service for the period 1 April 2015 to 31 March 2016. Carole Sykes, Operations Manager highlighted aspects of the Service's work such as the continued success in recruitment activity; the Adoption Support Service; and the partnership work which has taken place with the AdCAMHS.

9.2 The Panel discussed: the Service's decision to pause on accepting applications from potential adopters to adopt babies because of the need to concentrate on recruitment of carers for older children and sibling groups; the placement of sibling groups; and the difficulties faced in managing contact with siblings and birth families.

9.3 RESOLVED to note the report.

10 LOOKED AFTER CHILDREN (LAC) STATISTICS

10.1 The Panel considered a report by the Director of Children's Services which provided an update on Looked After Children (LAC) statistics.

10.2 The Panel were informed by Liz Rugg, Assistant Director, Early Help and Social Care on the slight rise in the number of East Sussex LAC since the last quarter; and were provided with an update on the number of Unaccompanied Asylum Seeking Children (UASC) within East Sussex. The Panel were further informed on the national dispersal system which came into effect on the 1st July, and the impact this will have on the service.

10.3 RESOLVED to note the report.