



## CORPORATE PARENTING PANEL

FRIDAY 27 JANUARY 2017

10.00 AM, COMMITTEE ROOM, COUNTY HALL, LEWES

MEMBERSHIP - Councillor Roy Galley (Chair)  
Councillors Charles Clark, Ruth O'Keeffe, Jim Sheppard, Rosalyn St. Pierre,  
Sylvia Tidy and Michael Phillips

### A G E N D A

- 1 Minutes of the meeting held on 14 October 2016 (*Pages 3 - 6*)
- 2 Apologies for absence
- 3 Disclosure of Interests  
Disclosure by all members present of personal interests in matters on the agenda, the nature of any interest and whether the member regards the interest as prejudicial under the terms of the Code of Conduct.
- 4 Urgent items  
Notification of items which the Chair considers to be urgent and proposes to take at the end of the appropriate part of the agenda. Any members who wish to raise urgent items are asked, wherever possible, to notify the Chair before the start of the meeting. In so doing, they must state the special circumstances which they consider justify the matter being considered urgently.
- 5 Children in Care Council  
Presentation
- 6 East Sussex Foster Care Association Annual report (*Pages 7 - 30*)  
Report by the East Sussex Foster Care Association
- 7 Exclusion of Press and Public  
To consider excluding the public and press from the meeting for the next two agenda 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 12A to the Local Government Act 1972 (as amended), namely information relating to any individual.
- 8 Ofsted Inspection reports for the following:
  - 8a Acorns at Dorset Road (*Pages 31 - 44*)
  - 8b Brodrick House (*Pages 45 - 56*)
  - 8c Hazel Lodge (*Pages 57 - 62*)
- 9 Children's Home Regulations 2015, Regulation 44: Inspection reports for August to November 2016
  - 9a Acorns at Dorset Road (*Pages 63 - 128*)

- 9b Brodrick House (*Pages 129 - 200*)
- 9c Hazel Lodge (*Pages 201 - 264*)
- 9d Homefield Cottage (*Pages 265 - 336*)
- 9e Lansdowne Secure Unit (*Pages 337 - 420*)
- 9f The Bungalow, Sorrel Drive (*Pages 421 - 492*)
- 10 Any other exempt items considered urgent by the Chair.
- 11 Looked After Children (LAC) Statistics (*Pages 493 - 496*)  
Report by Director of Children's Services.
- 12 Any other non-exempt items considered urgent by the Chair.

PHILIP BAKER  
Assistant Chief Executive  
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19 January 2017

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## CORPORATE PARENTING PANEL

MINUTES of a meeting of the Corporate Parenting Panel held at Committee Room, County Hall, Lewes on 14 October 2016.

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PRESENT Councillors Roy Galley (Chair), Ruth O'Keeffe, Jim Sheppard, Rosalyn St. Pierre, Sylvia Tidy and Michael Phillips

ALSO PRESENT Liz Rugg, Assistant Director Early Help and Social Care  
Sally Carnie, Joint Head of Looked After Children Services  
Anna Brookes, Head of School and Education, Employment and Training coordinator  
Nicola Scott, Operations Manager – Residential LAC Services  
Janet Fairless, RHM Brodrick House and Homefield Cottage  
Helen Simmons, RHM Acorns and The Bungalow  
Ian Williams, RHM Hazel Lodge  
Nigel Hewitt, RHM Lansdowne Secure Children's Homes  
Scott Lipa, RHM Brodrick House

### 11 MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 8 JULY 2016

11.1 RESOLVED to agree as a correct record the minutes of the meeting held on 8 July 2016.

### 12 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

12.1 Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Charles Clark.

### 13 EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC

13.1 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.

### 14 OFSTED INSPECTION REPORTS FOR HAZEL LODGE, HOMEFIELD COTTAGE, LANSDOWNE SECURE UNIT AND THE BUNGALOW, SORREL DRIVE

14.1 The Panel considered interim reports received from Ofsted on the following services:

- (a) Hazel Lodge
- (b) Homefield Cottage
- (c) Lansdowne Secure Unit
- (d) The Bungalow, Sorrel Drive

14.2 The Panel discussed the positive outcomes of the Ofsted reports.

14.3 RESOLVED to note the report.

## 15 CHILDREN'S HOME REGULATIONS 2015, REGULATION 44: INSPECTION REPORTS FOR MAY - AUGUST 2016

15.1 The Panel considered Regulation 44 Reports for the period May to August 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

15.2 Each Registered Homes Manager gave an oral update on activity at the home covering the period since the last Panel meeting.

15.3 The Panel RESOLVED to note the reports.

## 16 CORPORATE PARENTING PANEL TERMS OF REFERENCE AND WAYS OF WORKING

16.1 The Panel were informed about the proposed changes to the Corporate Parenting Panel's (CPP) Terms of Reference as a result of the Children's Homes (England) Regulations 2015 which amended provisions for the inspection of Children's Homes.

16.2 The Panel discussed the way in which the CPP works, focusing in particular on the regulation 44 reports. The Panel agreed that by receiving these reports on a monthly basis it would enable Members to read through thoroughly the reports and prepare questions ahead of the meeting. It was also agreed that, unless urgent, answers would then be provided at the meeting.

16.3 The Panel also discussed residential homes visits and agreed to continue with the current rota, although a level of flexibility would be applied in arranging these visits.

16.4 RESOLVED to note the report.

## 17 LOOKED AFTER CHILDREN ANNUAL REPORT

17.1 The Panel considered a report by the Director of Children's Services which provided an update on the annual performance of the Looked After Children's service for 2015-16. It was explained that the national figures for 2016 had not yet been published and further comparison would be given at the next meeting of the CPP. Sally Carnie, Joint Head of LAC Services, highlighted in particular the LAC trend data and the number of children entering and leaving care for the period 2015-16; placement capacity within East Sussex and the South East as a whole; and the position of the dispersal scheme for Unaccompanied Asylum Seeking Children.

17.2 The Panel discussed the use of agency residential placements; the number of approved adopters waiting to be matched; the number of LAC who have been convicted, reprimanded or issued final warnings; and the care leaver's service.

17.3 RESOLVED to note the report.

## 18 THE VIRTUAL SCHOOL ANNUAL REPORT INCLUDING THE USE OF PUPIL PREMIUM

18.1 The Panel considered a report by the Director of Children's Services which highlighted the work of the Virtual School for the period 2015-16 and the educational outcomes for LAC in East Sussex, and the use of Pupil Premium.

18.2 The Panel were informed of the work of the East Sussex Virtual School and its good practice (as recognised by the Department for Education); work experience placements and internships provided to Care Leavers by ESCC; inter-team working across the department with teams who work with, or make decisions that may impact on LAC; and the educational outcomes of ESCC LAC.

18.3 The Panel discussed the objectives for the 2016/17 year; and the use of Pupil Premium for those children who have been adopted.

18.4 RESOLVED to note the report.

## 19 LOOKED AFTER CHILDREN (LAC) STATISTICS

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

19.2 The Panel were informed by Liz Rugg, Assistant Director, Early Help and Social Care that there has been a slight rise in LAC within East Sussex. This rise includes an increase in the number of Unaccompanied Asylum Seeking Children (UASC) entering the system. The Panel were further advised that a high proportion of LAC are placed with East Sussex County Council approved foster carers, whilst the number of those in agency placements has decreased. The Assistant Director informed the Panel about the number of complaints received from East Sussex LAC during the last quarter and advised that these complaints have been investigated and dealt with appropriately.

19.3 RESOLVED to note the report.

Councillor Roy Galley  
Chair

The meeting ended at 12.35 pm.

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**Report to:** Corporate Parenting Panel  
**Date of meeting:** 27 January 2017  
**By:** East Sussex Foster Care Association  
**Title:** Annual Report of the East Sussex Foster Care Association (ESFCA)  
**Purpose:** To inform the panel of the Annual Report of the ESFCA

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**RECOMMENDATION:** The Panel is recommended to note the Annual Report

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## **1 Background**

1.1 East Sussex Foster Care Association (ESFCA) is an independent charity. It was launched in March 1993 in a direct response to the needs of the children/young people in public care across the county and the demands this place on their foster families.

Since its introduction, carers have designed a range of support, advice, advocacy, activities and training services for their fellow carers, families and the children in foster care throughout East Sussex.

## **2 Supporting information**

2.1 The Annual Report of the East Sussex Foster Care Association is attached at Appendix 1.

2.2 Additional information submitted by the ESFCA is attached at Appendix 2.

## **3 Conclusion and reasons for recommendations**

3.1 The Corporate Parenting Panel is recommended to note the contents of the report.

**Susanne Beesley**  
**Chair of the East Sussex Foster Care Association**

Local Members: All

BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS: None

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# **East Sussex Foster Care Association**

## **ANNUAL REPORT 2015/16**



Registered Charity No. 1092668  
Company No. 04216137  
Company Offices: 3<sup>rd</sup> Floor, St marks House, 14 Upperton Rd,  
Eastbourne, BN21 1EP  
Tel: 01323 747045

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## Letter from the chair



Welcome to our annual report for 2015-2016; a year of ongoing development for East Sussex Foster Care Association (ESFCA). Although, unexpected and perhaps gently cajoled by others, I found myself stepping into the chairperson's role when Fred Livings stepped down in October 2015.

Taking on the chairperson's role was not a decision I took lightly particularly as I, like many of us, lead a very busy life. However, my passion for the work of the Association and the children and families we serve, alongside my belief in our enthusiastic and experienced team spurred me on. As someone who believes in the importance of team-work and having key players, I am delighted to have the support of two vice-chairs in Chris Thornton and Mark Thornborough, both of whom have many years' experience of working with ESFCA. Having Ann Holder's (MBE) support and guidance as our longest serving committee member, has been fundamental to bringing us back to re-focus on our core values and mission statement which is central to all we want to achieve.

ESFCA has come a long way in the last 24 years. However, change in my view, is a factor of the reality of our situation and a positive necessity and summed up in the words of Marshall Goldsmith I believe that:

*'.....What got us here won't necessarily get us there.....'*

Therefore, the trustees have spent time auditing existing systems, roles, responsibilities and this consolidation was aimed at eliminating overlap and to create greater efficiencies. Above all I wish to create opportunities in which our members feel able to bring their ideas to the table in a supportive, inclusive environment. In this regard, you will read within this report of the extensive list of new innovative ideas, developed by our team. This includes Ronnie Archers's already much loved performing arts project 'Inspire' and Ru Petratis-William's unique Super Hero's project. These have been run alongside some of the older and much loved projects including PGL breaks and a visit to the X-factor, to name but a few.

My sincere thanks goes to everyone who has played their part in ESFCA's achievements including our valued committee members, staff and of course funders, including East Sussex County Council (ESCC), each one being as important as the next in ensuring the success of our organisation.

We welcome the return of Tina Henderson to the Association as a trustee and acknowledge her tireless work behind the scenes. In addition we welcome Ru Petratis-William (trustee), Jane Hollobone and Liz Chalcraft (committee members) . I extend my thanks to our regular guest members; Ade Sewell, Operations Manager for fostering; Colin Belsey, Chair to ESCC and to all the social workers who offer their time and interest including our newest guest social worker, Justin Baker.

While proud of our independence, our organisation is strengthened further by our valued partnership and close working relationship with staff and managers of ESCC who attend our monthly committee meetings. However, a group of unsung heroes amongst us, who I must mention, are our respective partners who are often volunteered (by us) in hands-on roles and take on the challenge without so much as even questioning it!

While acknowledging that our team will operate somewhat differently, our mission is to increase our effectiveness and maximise our efficiency within a revised framework, yet continue to uphold existing values that support the holistic fostering community. It is also important that we remember that our members all give up valuable time freely to the Association and its undertaking. To keep us motivated and cohesive I am planning some more team building days; there are many more fun times ahead.

We are a diverse group of people with one vision, which is to provide positive memories for our cared for children and recognition and support to the whole fostering family, which in turn strengthens relationships and helps underpin the stability of the placement. If you are interested in joining us we actively welcome new foster carer members and or guest visitors from all areas of the fostering community. We meet on the second Monday of each month at Little Dunbar in Hailsham. For more information please contact Hannah Carter on 01323 747045

With Kind Regards

Susanne Beesley Chair



## **East Sussex Foster Care Association**

East Sussex Foster Care Association (ESFCA) is an independent charity run by foster carer, for foster carers and their families, who are registered carers for East Sussex County Council.

It was launched in March 1993 in a direct response to the needs of the children/young people in public care across the county and the demands this place on their foster families. Since its introduction, carers have designed a range of support, advice, advocacy, activities and training services for their fellow carers, families and the children in foster care throughout East Sussex.

We have monthly meetings and we currently have 6 Trustees who have overall responsibility for our charity

There are approximately 610 children in care within East Sussex at any one time, from age ranging birth to 25 years old. The majority of the children live within foster families. Most of the children have come into care having experienced abuse. A significant number have been physically, sexually or emotionally abused and many have suffered chronic neglect. Some may have witnessed domestic violence and parents struggling with alcohol and drug abuse.

We are keen to show these vulnerable children and young people, that by offering help, support, guidance, education and inspiration, we can help them succeed and enable them to build a brighter future for themselves.

When people think about foster families, they often think about the carers, looked after children, but very few people stop to think of the impact of fostering on carers own children (Children who foster). These remarkable children share their homes, parents, toys, wider family with some of our most vulnerable children, yet their input is often unrecognised. ESFCA is keen to offer additional support to children who foster and find ways of saying 'thank you'. They are often the role models for our foster children and they are influential in building trust and relationship with children in care.

## PROJECT INSPIRE- PREFORMING ARTS



During February half-term, an all inclusive group of young people, enjoyed three fun filled days of voice training, movement and dance, delivered by two extremely experienced and capable Tutors associated with the Pauline Quirke Academy of Performing Arts.

It was delightful to witness a group of apprehensive young people, grow in confidence and bond closely as a group. To celebrate the conclusion, Operations Manager for the fostering team, Ade Sewell, attended the final presentation performance, offering each child a certificate relating to individual achievement.

This was the fourth Inspire opportunity for our young people, two being twelve week projects held in Eastbourne and Hailsham. We had also previously held a very successful holiday club in Eastbourne and wished to extend this experience for those living in the Bexhill/Hastings area.

The feedback from our young people was in itself 'inspiring', with comments such as "I Love Inspire" and "Can we do this again"? These positive responses from the young people themselves are testimony to the continued success of an 'Inspiring' project



*Action & Adventure*

ESFCA funded a 3 day residential trip to PGL for 27 foster children and 12 adult helpers, most of which were the social workers for the children. We were keen to allow relationships to flourish and grow between children in care and their social workers and by spending good quality time together, many relationships took on a deeper meaning.

This also allowed children in foster care the opportunity to try many new experiences like BMX biking, Raft Building, Giant Swing, Archery, Abseiling, Zip Wire and tunnel trails. This allowed the children to build on their confidence and self-esteem. Every child achieved something new (as well as their social workers). It also broke the isolation that many children feel about being in the care system, as they realised that they were not the only ones. These residential adventures bring the children together for mutual support, encouragement, respect and team work. Every child received a medal and a camera to collect their individual photographic memories.



## **NO MORE BLACK PLASTIC BAGS**

No child (and especially foster children) should have to face the distressing sight of having their belongings packed into black plastic bags, when being moved either from birth family or to new foster placements. Black plastic bags are designed for rubbish and not children's personal belongings.

Most of the 200 suitcases/holders we purchased have been distributed to children and young people in most need of this luggage, including children with disabilities who regularly travel to respite to give their birth families a break.

We also have a stock of luggage available to social services duty and assessment teams, so that if a child needs to be moved as an emergency, social workers will have immediate access to suitcases.



## **Computers for LAC**

Working in partnership with the Local Authority and the Virtual School the Association has helped provide a considerable number of laptops to LAC, over the period 2014/15. These machines are allocated by the Virtual School to support our children's education and usually go to older children, since they are not as 'robust' as traditional desktop systems. This process will continue into next year, 2016, when a further 20 or so of these machines will become available.

It's worth noting that these machines have been freed by the Local Authority during an upgrade programme, so if you happen to work for a Company which is reviewing its IT set up, it's always worth us asking, as we've done before, if the Association might receive some of the old equipment.

We will also be approaching the local Universities again to see if they might have any surplus equipment, which our children might benefit from. These are likely to be desktop machines, which can more easily be repaired and might be more suitable for younger children.

None of the machines are brand new, but all are tested as being functional and useable, before being allocated.



## ESFCA HAS THE



**ESFCA** purchased 100 tickets to take children in foster care to see the X factor Live Tour. Most children attended with their social workers and had their first experience of a concert. All the children received a letter from ESFCA to explain that 6 months ago, the stars for the X Factor were nobodies, but they had a dream, worked hard and believed in themselves and went on to achieve great things. ESFCA wanted to inspire our foster children to believe in themselves and work hard to achieve their dream.

It was a privilege to see children dancing, singing and sharing this event. We also were able to bring children together who came from large sibling groups who had been split up and live in separate foster families. This allowed the sibling the opportunity to enjoy each other's company, and build memories that they will be able to reminisce together in the future.

Reggie and Bollie won the hearts of our foster children (as well as some of the social workers)

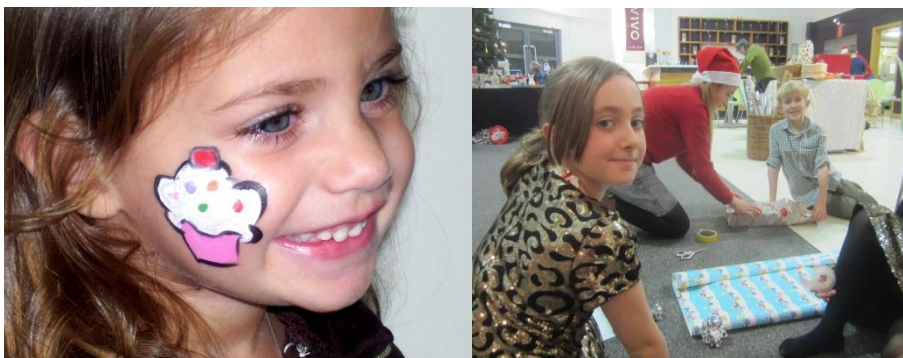


## Christmas Party

The Christmas party was held at the Kings Centre and was a great success and seems to get better every year with the Kings centre allowing us to use their charity initiative again and not charging for the venue. The relationship we have built over the last three years with the Lewes Soroptimists has enriched the party further for all and now includes the Eastbourne group too.



All agreed what a marvellous additional experience having the ladies there added to the party with 121 children wrapping presents for their carer's or parents and experiencing the joy of giving. Face painting was carried out by some of our older children who were a great help.



We were successful in raising funds through Sussex Community Foundation for the party which gave us the opportunity to splash out on extras.



I'm sure all who took part would agree that the collective effort paid off, and the support by so many people made this such an amazing experience. We even were able to put up our special Christmas Tree (Jades Tree) which remained up in the kings centre for all to enjoy.

**Raffle and festive treats**-One of our Trustees made a gingerbread House and another provided cake pops to raise money and books donated by Morrison's were sold off to raise funds at the party.

We were also supplied with helium balloons from Sussex University, mince pies from Brighton University and flowers from Ann's Flowers and our appreciation of their support helps nurture connections for the future.

Our thanks also goes to carers for helping put the food out and for clearing up at the end look what we can achieve when a bunch of carers work together.



**Pantomime – Peter Pan.** In January 2016, ESFCA purchased 224 family tickets for foster families to see Peter Pan in Pantomime. This is a very special event in our calendar and one that our foster children greatly appreciate. Christmas is always a difficult time for our children, as they are often unable to spend the festive season with their birth families. The feeling of isolation and loss are always high around this time of year.

The Panto allowed the whole foster family the opportunity to enjoy a great day out together. We were even lucky enough for a couple of our children to be picked and go on stage with the stars.

## The Foster Carers Choice Award



**Our two winners in the centre – Julie Bourne and Landy Mainwood-Smith along with Senior Managers and foster carers.**

ESFCA run a new initiative on the back of an in house social workers award. We believe that Foster Carers should have their say regarding the service they receive from Social Workers and should be able to acknowledge good practise. We asked foster carers to nominate and we were overwhelmed with responses. Here are some of the examples:-

- is consistent, firm, clear and very caring
- returns calls promptly, never misses meetings and appointments, restored our faith in the department single handed
- has shown a really in depth knowledge about emotional and physical needs of a LAC
- has a strong sense of “children first” and is not afraid to stand up for what she believes is right for the child (even if it goes against the norm)
- always happy, positive, diplomatic but above all, available
- has made sure she is available to us 24/7. We are in awe of her genuine care and concern which extends to each and every member of our family
- we feel reassured that her advice is straight and to the point

We received nominations for 20 Looked after children social workers and fostering social workers. This year’s winners are:

- Julie Bourne, Fostering team
- Landy Mainwood-Smith from the looked after children’s team
- Anne Buchan won outstanding contribution to fostering services.

Thank you to all foster carers who took time to contribute. We hope this event will grow each year and more foster carers feel able to share their positive experiences.

## **We continue to support our foster carers via the following services:**

- By coordinating the services of our allegations and standard of care worker.
- By successfully introducing and setting up monthly surgery sessions for carers to discuss concerns or issues directly with the relevant senior manager of fostering and children's services
- Regular Newsletters
- Our website
- Annual training conference
- Bi Annual training events, attended by foster carers, adopters, children services staff and social workers, education and health professionals as well as other agencies
- Various trips and activities for foster families and children in care as well as children who foster.
- Lobbying local and central government regarding issues relating to foster children
- Seeking feedback from carers through questionnaires and user groups to inform departmental policies and procedures which in turn help to improve services to all three of our stake holder groups, both directly and in-directly

**East Sussex Foster Care Association**

**Statement of financial activities (incorporating the income and expenditure account)**

**For the year ended 31 March 2016**

	Unrestricted funds	Restricted funds	2016 Total	2015 Total
Notes	£	£	£	£
<b>Incoming Resources</b>				
Donations	622		622	1,286
Core funding	20,000		20,000	20,000
Advocacy support		2,665	2,665	10,000
Subscriptions	2,755		2,755	1,190
Fundraising	590		590	3,973
Grants		620	620	2,200
Contributions towards events	840		840	2,674
Conference receipts			-	14,225
Interest	49		49	8
<b>Total incoming resources</b>	<b>24,856</b>	<b>3,285</b>	<b>28,141</b>	<b>55,556</b>
<b>Resources expended</b>				
Conference	2,723		2,723	12,973
Insurance	493		493	493
General running expenses	173		173	648
Party and pantomime	3,508	911	4,419	4,328
Holiday project	2,857		2,857	6,724
Children who care			-	3,362
Performing arts project		1,916	1,916	866
Day trips	4,134	1,280	5,414	2,541
Carers library			-	407
Advocacy support		902	902	1,861
Salaries & pensions	8,848		8,848	11,080
Staff general expenses	125		125	348
Computer costs	170		170	200
Training	1,376		1,376	198
Accountants fees	1,067		1,067	831
<b>Total outgoing resources</b>	<b>25,473</b>	<b>5,009</b>	<b>30,482</b>	<b>46,860</b>
<b>Net incoming/(outgoing) resources for the year/ Net income/(expenditure) for the year</b>	<b>(617)</b>	<b>(1,724)</b>	<b>(2,342)</b>	<b>8,696</b>
Transfers	(291)	291	-	-
<b>Total funds brought forward</b>	<b>38,068</b>	<b>20,523</b>	<b>58,591</b>	<b>49,895</b>
<b>Total incoming resources</b>	<b>37,159</b>	<b>19,090</b>	<b>56,250</b>	<b>58,591</b>

# **List of funders for ESFCA**

ESFCA would like to acknowledge and thank the following organisations and individuals who have supported us during the last financial year.

**Lady Soroptimist from Lewes and Eastbourne**

**Seedcorn Fund**

**Life More Ordinary**

**Happy Days Trust**

**Sussex Community Foundation**

**Skinner Company Lady Neville Trust**

**Kings Centre Eastbourne**

**Rotherfield Bonfire Society**

**Sussex University**

**Brighton University**

**Anne's Flowers**

**East Sussex County Council**

**East Sussex Foster carers who make monthly donations to our charity**

ESFCA continue to work hard to secure funding for more projects and during the financial year 16/17, we have already received funding from Sainsbury's, Spark, The Austin Hope Pilkington trust, Merlin's Magic Wand, the Sussex Community Foundation, Greggs, Santander, The Sussex Masonic Charity, Verity Masonic Lodge and the National Lottery - all in addition to our own Fundraising activities....which is helping develop and expand our future provision for Foster families within East Sussex.

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## **East Sussex Foster Care Association**

# **Additional information for Corporate Parenting Panel – 27<sup>th</sup> January 2017**

### **How we raise funding to support foster families:-**

ESFCA has charity status which has allowed our Trustees and committee members the opportunity to develop some expertise in grant applications. Over the current financial year (since 1<sup>st</sup> April 16) we have raised an additional £24,600.04 in grants. We have also received donations of £2,850.00 in this same period. Foster Carers are also supporting us with many fundraising activities such as bag packing at Sainsbury's, Quiz night, Raffles and Roulette tables, just to mention a few. Our fundraising activities have created £4,702.82 this year.

### **Some of our exciting new projects:-**

## **SIBLING SUNSHINE PROJECT**

Our Sibling Sunshine Days project purposes to reconnect the looked after children who are separated in different foster homes within the County. We want to offer special events dedicated to separated siblings that help them in securing positive memories collectively. Ultimately, we hope to secure the bonds for the siblings in appropriate and enjoyable situations that can help them move into adolescent cohesively and more securely than they would have without sustaining relationships with birth family members.

Phase one of our programme went ahead in September when we took a coach full of excited siblings and their Carers to Chessington World of Adventures. Although the weather wasn't in our favour and it was a damp and drizzly day the children were none the less excited about the day ahead. It was so heart-warming to see children re-connect with their siblings and share the day. There

were rides for all ages; there was a safari ride and wild animals to see and entertainment for everyone. Our young people could be seen around the park laughing, taking photos, enjoying picnics and catching up on news the coach journey. There was a rowdy sing-along on the way home.

Phase two of the Sibling Sunshine day project was on Sunday 30th October. We took 50 people, siblings and their foster carers, to Butlin's at Bognor Regis for a Halloween themed day trip. Fancy dress was optional however the majority embraced the opportunity to dress up. A group of ghosts, ghouls and skeletons gathered in Eastbourne on a bright and crisp Sunday morning. We watched siblings come together and embrace each other, mutually admire fancy dress efforts and be excited to know they had quality time ahead that day. Without intervention activities like this some of the children may only get to see each other three or four times a year. Often this can be in 'sterile' contact centre meeting rooms.

The first task was to decorate the coach. The children excitedly set about hanging paper spiders, pumpkins, bats and ghosts. They strung bunting throughout the length of the coach, affixed window stickers and passed around plastic skeletons. This task really set off our day off to an encouraging start as the children worked out how to share out the decorations and put them up collaboratively. Working and playing together within their sibling groups, and with others families, helped attune the children for the day ahead in a fun and enjoyable way.

Once at Butlin's there was a host of things to do and the sibling groups headed swiftly onto the site. On offer was the funfair, go-carting, tandem bike, football, climbing challenge, cinema, soft play, bowling and arcade machines. Not forgetting live entertainment, the beach, the fabulous indoor swimming centre and more....

Our third and final Siblings Sunshine days funded event for the 2016/17 financial year will be a weekend residential break for siblings, supervised by

their Carers, at Butlins in Bognor Regis. Unfortunately it will be rare for siblings living in separate foster families to have the experience of a holiday collectively. This pilot residential trip is looking to offer that opportunity to family groups in the hope that they can share some valuable, extended leisure time together and tighten the blood bonds they share. Nominations are still being collated for this.

The benefit of enabling stable connections for siblings was our intention but there is so much more to this project and the other relationship stakeholders. The children can draw security from understanding their situation is valued but is also not in isolation. Social workers equally benefit from understanding and being able to connect with their past and existing family cases and the outcomes. The fostering community get to network and provide vital inter-dependent support, advice and empathy.

## **FAMILY FIRST NIGHTS**

Our charity, East Sussex Foster Care Association (ESFCA), is delighted to have been approved by Mousetrap Theatre projects to participate in their Family First Nights (FFN) programme. **From 28<sup>th</sup> July – 29<sup>th</sup> August 2016** almost 70 people from the East Sussex County council fostering community took advantage of the FFN programme through ESFCA.

Family First Nights is a unique opportunity for families with limited resources to enjoy a great London theatre production for just £6.00 a ticket. Family First Nights works for disadvantaged families, young people with special needs and notably for us *children in care*.

From late July to late August families enrolled with FFN were able to access the best seats for a selection of top musicals, plays and other productions. A family is the close unit that supports the child and can consist of guardians and carers but **MUST** include young people between the ages of 3 and 17. Young people **MUST** make up half, if not more of the family group and fall within one of the eligible categories mentioned above.

The FFN project serves new families only. Since Mousetrap has limited resources they must ensure they serve as many new families each summer as possible. Therefore this opportunity may be taken one time only. Mousetrap keeps a data base of families who have benefited from the experience. Families who have/will take part in the programme will continue to be updated on theatre offers.

Families went to see brilliant live shows like the Railway Children, Thriller, Showboat, the Gruffalo and many more. These families are now regularly offered discounted tickets to other London productions throughout the year.

ESFCA are looking forward to facilitating further first time London theatre experiences in the summers to come.

## **STABLE CONNECTION THROUGH INTUITIVE HORSE**

There are over 520 children in foster care in East Sussex at any one time, and this project aims to help the most vulnerable of them to work alongside their foster carers to overcome emotional barriers using the intervention of intuitive horses.

Looked After Children have all suffered adverse experiences of abuse and loss, which often manifests in poor attachment and lack of trust in the people around them.

This project addresses the need of Looked After Children to learn how to: trust and form attachments with both their long-term carers and other people; regulate their emotions, reflect and be calm as well as build their self confidence and esteem.

We are developing this project to help a 25 Looked After Children (LAC or children in care) and this project will be available to 25 LAC and their Foster Carers and each child will have access to a minimum of 6 sessions (3 hours per session). The cohort will spend time observing the herd of horses and their

behaviour and learning the basics of horse communication through interacting with a horse/s. Whilst learning this we would be covering areas like self-regulation, emotional awareness, communication skills, empathy, relationship forming/dynamics, group dynamics with some reflection time for how their time with the horses may be helpful in other areas of their life. There is also the opportunity for interacting with the sheep, dog and cats. All of this will happen surrounded by nature. During this time the child and Carer will be working towards:-

-De-stressing.

-Personal reflection.

-Time to reflect on personal circumstances and situations they may be feeling a little lost with.

-Helps to quieten your mind down.

-Gives you tools to take away and use in everyday life that help towards managing self awareness of your behavioural, emotional and mind states.

-Gives you an opportunity to relax and slow down from the fast pace of life.

-Helps you gain confidence and self-esteem.

-teach children the skills involved with being a team player

## **Partnership with Sainsbury's**

ESFCA were delighted to be picked to be the charity of the year for Sainsbury's in The Arndale Centre in Eastbourne. This has been an amazing partnership which has developed and been so enjoyable for all concerned.

Sainsbury's have held a number of fundraising events to support fostering within East Sussex.

They have also been able to support us to put 'the cherry on top of the cake' with some of our projects. At the Halloween Sibling Sunshine Project, Sainsbury's staff arrived at the coach pick up point with boxes of Halloween decorations so that the children could decorate the coach for their journey to Butlins. Sainsbury's also provided fruit and drinks for everybody on the coach.

On the 7<sup>th</sup> January, ESFCA organised over 200 tickets for foster families to see Snow White and The Seven Dwarfs at the Devonshire Theatre in Eastbourne. Just before the performance started, Sainsbury's staff arrived with sweets and drinks for all the children. The sweets were placed in beautiful bags, tied with ribbon and a label which read 'with love from Sainsbury's XX'. This made the children feel special and valued.

We are working with Sainsbury's to create 'emergency toiletry bags' that can be left with duty and LAC teams, so that when children have to be removed into the care system in an emergency, they will be given a toiletry bag with basics such as a toothbrush, toothpaste, flannel and hair brush'. This idea came from Sainsbury's.

## **PGL**

Last summer ESFCA ran 2 residential trips for LAC. Each residential lasted 3 days and we took 25 LAC on each residential. The children were supported by their Social Workers or Foster Carers. The first residential was for LAC aged 7 – 11 years and the second was aged 11 upwards.

### **More exciting projects include:**

- **Summer garden party**
- **Mally Dams**

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Committee:	<b>Corporate Parenting Panel</b>
Date:	<b>27 January 2017</b>
Title of Report:	<b>Looked After Children (LAC) Statistics</b>
By:	<b>Director of Children's Services</b>
Purpose of Report:	<b>To update the Panel on changes in the last quarter</b>

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***Recommendation:***

**The Corporate Parenting Panel is recommended to note the report.**

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**1. Background information**

1.1 The most recent LAC statistics are attached as Appendix 1. As ever this is a 'snapshot' at the end of each month and therefore masks considerable activity throughout the months. Services for LAC are funded from the Children's Services base budget.

**2. Supporting information**

2.1 At the end of December 2016, there were 15 more children overall bringing ESCC to a total of 567 LAC. A total of 396 children were in foster care with 67 of those children in agency placements, a decrease of 4 over the quarter. 23 children were placed for adoption. 6 children were placed with foster carers who are also approved adopters.

2.3 The number of children with kinship carers now stands at 40, some of whom have been placed at the direction of a judge. It is noteworthy that 3 of the children placed in the previous quarter at the direction of the Court have now been removed again.

2.4 24 children subject to a Care Order were placed at home with their parents, an increase of 8. Planning for placements of this sort is always monitored rigorously in order to mitigate any risk factors and agreement to begin or end a placement with parents is given at a senior level.

2.5 At the end of the quarter 19 children were placed in agency residential placements, a decrease of 2 placements.

2.6 At the end of the quarter 3 children were still secured via a welfare route, one in the context of risk of CSE, one in the context of dangerous substance misuse and the final child still secured due to extremely challenging behaviour in response to trauma within her birth family. All were in Lansdowne at the end of December.

2.7 At the end of the period there were no LAC from ESCC in criminal secure placements.

2.8 The numbers of Unaccompanied Asylum Seeking young people has increased by 5. ESCC has continued to accept young people via the dispersal scheme, prioritising young people already physically in placement in East Sussex.

2.9 There were still 321 children subject to Child Arrangement/Residence Orders and 400 children subject to Special Guardianship Orders, a rise of 13.

2.10 During Q3 of 2016/17 two complaints were received from Looked After Children:

- One was from a young person at Brodrick Road who was complaining that the power sockets were being turned off at 22:00, preventing her from charging her phone which she used as a Wi-Fi hotspot for her tablet. An explanation of why the power was being isolated was provided (safeguarding concern for another resident) and an apology offered for the inconvenience. The decision was reviewed and it was agreed that power would only be isolated in the future if there were serious safeguarding concerns.
- The second complaint was from a young person at Homefield Cottages who disclosed to a social worker that a member of Homefield staff had called her a “selfish cow”. The young person was met with and the complaint discussed. It transpired that she could not actually remember who may or may not have made the comment, and that it may actually have been another young person rather than a staff member. The young person was reminded that she could speak to a manager in the future if she had concerns about a staff member using inappropriate language and that there is an expectation that young people should also treat staff with respect.

2.11 This is a low number of complaints and a reduction on the previous quarter. Both complaints have been investigated fully and are resolved.

### **3. Conclusion**

3.1 Numbers and costs for LAC have remained reasonably stable and continued close oversight will be maintained.

3.2 A small number of complaints have been received. All have been or are being investigated fully.

**STUART GALLIMORE**  
**Director of Children’s Services**

Contact Officer: Liz Rugg, Assistant Director, Early Help and Social Care Tel: 01273 481274  
 Local Members: All

BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS: None

## Children's Services LAC Summary between 01/01/2016 and 31/12/2016

Placement Type	Jan 16	Feb 16	Mar 16	Apr 16	May 16	Jun 16	Jul 16	Aug 16	Sep 16	Oct 16	Nov 16	Dec 16
A3 - Placed for adoption with consent (under section 19 of the 2002 Act) with current foster carer	5	5	5	3	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	1
A4 - Placed for adoption with consent (under section 19 of the 2002 Act) not with current foster carer	8	7	7	3	4	7	8	8	12	12	12	12
A5 - Placed for adoption with placement order (under section 21 of the 2002 Act) with current foster carer										1	1	
A6 - Placed for adoption with placement order (under section 21 of the 2002 Act) not with current foster carer	14	19	17	11	10	9	7	7	7	4	5	5
H5 - Residential accommodation	9	7	6	5	6	6	5	4	4	4	4	5
T1 - Secure unit	2	2	3	3	2	3	5	4	2	3	3	3
G2 - Homes and Hostels	40	40	39	41	42	38	40	42	50	50	51	50
P1 - Placed with own parents	22	17	16	17	17	14	15	14	16	19	22	24
P2 - Independent living	2	1	1	2	4	9	10	13	19	18	18	17
R2 - NHS/Health Trust	1										1	1
R5 - Young Offender Institution or prison	1	1	2	1	1	1					2	2
S1 - All Residential schools	5	5	6	6	6	6	6	6	6	5	5	5
U1 - Foster placement with relative or friend- long term fostering	13	11	11	11	11	11	11	11	10	10	9	9
U3 - Foster placement with relative or friend- not long term or FFA	31	28	27	26	25	22	28	32	34	33	34	31
U4 - Placement with other foster carer- long term fostering	182	181	172	168	168	163	159	153	150	144	141	142
U5 - Placement with other foster carer who is also an approved adopter- FFA	3	3	4	5	6	6	6	6	5	5	6	6
U6 - Placement with other foster carer - not long term or FFA	201	210	223	228	227	225	230	239	234	239	253	254
Z1 - Other placements								1	1	1		
<b>Total</b>	<b>539</b>	<b>537</b>	<b>539</b>	<b>530</b>	<b>531</b>	<b>522</b>	<b>532</b>	<b>542</b>	<b>552</b>	<b>550</b>	<b>569</b>	<b>567</b>

Immigration Status	Jan 16	Feb 16	Mar 16	Apr 16	May 16	Jun 16	Jul 16	Aug 16	Sep 16	Oct 16	Nov 16	Dec 16
Asylum Seeker	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	3	6	6
Indefinite Leave to Remain in the UK (ILR)	2	2	2	2	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
Unaccompanied Asylum Seeking Child	12	14	14	12	12	10	11	15	17	17	17	17

Legal Status	Jan 16	Feb 16	Mar 16	Apr 16	May 16	Jun 16	Jul 16	Aug 16	Sep 16	Oct 16	Nov 16	Dec 16
Child Arrangements Order/Residence Order S8(1)CA'89	309	307	315	316	317	318	320	321	321	323	321	321
Special Guardianship Order S14A CA 89	360	366	369	372	375	384	384	387	391	396	400	400

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