

## CORPORATE PARENTING PANEL

MINUTES of a meeting of the Corporate Parenting Panel held at County Hall, Lewes on 26 January 2018.

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PRESENT Councillors Chris Dowling, Kathryn Field, Jim Sheppard, Sylvia Tidy (Chair) and Francis Whetstone

ALSO PRESENT Liz Rugg, Assistant Director, Early Help and Social Care  
Teresa Lavelle-Hill, Joint Head LAC Services  
Janet Fairless – Registered Manager – Homefield Cottage  
Antony Julyan - Operations Manager  
Ian Williams – RHM Hazel Lodge  
Scott Lipa – RHM Brodrick House  
Helen Simmons - RHM Lansdowne Secure Unit  
Charlotte De Retuerto – RHM The Bungalow  
Anna Brooks – Head of the Virtual School  
Meshelle Carmody – Children in Care Council  
J&F – Children in Care Council  
Susanne Beasley – Chair of the East Sussex Foster Care Association

### 20 MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 27 OCTOBER 2017

20.1 RESOLVED to agree as a correct record the minutes of the meeting held on 27 October 2017.

### 21 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

21.1 Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Charles Clark.

### 22 CHILDREN IN CARE COUNCIL (CICC)

22.1 The Panel received a presentation from two members of the Children in Care Council (CICC) who spoke about the work they have been involved in and highlighted the following projects:

- **National work** – the CiCC have worked closely with the Children’s Commissioner’s office on projects including takeover days, interview panels and the opportunity to shadow the Children’s Minister for National Takeover Day.
- **Suss It (Speak up Sessions)** – the CiCC have attended 40 holiday activities giving 80 young people who are LAC the opportunity to voice their concerns and raise issues which they felt were important. The CiCC were able to help 47 young people resolve the problems they had raised.
- **Online safety** – the CiCC have been working hard to promote the importance of social media and gaming. Six CiCC Members are now enrolled onto the Childnet’s online digital safety leaders programme which teaches them how to champion digital safety and educate their peers and schools.

- **Work experience** – the CiCC continue to work hard to encourage more availability of work placements for young people, enabling them to develop the placement offer from their schools and to gain confidence and independence.

22.2 The Panel discussed: the use of social media by young people; pocket money for those young people earning a wage through part time work; contact with birth families; and the importance of good relationships between young people and their social workers.

22.3 RESOLVED to: commended the work of the CiCC and thank them for their presentation.

## 23 EAST SUSSEX FOSTER CARERS ASSOCIATION (ESFCA)

23.1 The Panel considered a report by the East Sussex Foster Care Association (ESFCA) which presented an update on the work of the charity. The Chair of the Association was present to introduce the report and highlight the activities undertaken by ESFCA, and the plans for future development. These included:

- **PGL action and adventure** – the ESFCA received funding from both Children in Need and Santander, which enabled the provision of 2 residential experiences for LAC at a PGL centre. This gave the children an opportunity to build relationships with other foster children and gave them some positive childhood memories.
- **Luggage** – the ESFCA continue to provide luggage to those young people most in need of a suitcase to prevent them moving their belongings in black bags, as well as to the social service duty and assessment team for use in emergency situations.
- **Sibling Sunshine project** - sibling sunshine days help to reconnect LAC who are separated from their siblings whilst in care. These events help to create happy memories and build bonds between siblings. The ESFCA took 21 children to Butlin's in Bognor Regis where 4 large sibling groups were able to spend time together.
- **'Stable Connections' project** – the ESFCA received Lottery funding to support the stable connections through intuitive horses project. This programme gives young people in care the experience of building relationships with horses which in turn helps them in areas such as impulse control, empathy and calming skills.

23.2 The Panel recognised the important work the ESFCA does for Looked After Children in East Sussex and thanked the Association for the help and support it provides.

23.3 RESOLVED to: note the contents of the report.

## 24 THE VIRTUAL SCHOOL ANNUAL REPORT, INCLUDING THE USE OF PUPIL PREMIUM

24.1 The Panel considered a report by the Director of Children's Services which highlighted the work of the Virtual School for the period 2016-17 and the educational outcomes for LAC in East Sussex, as well as the use of Pupil Premium.

24.2 The Panel were informed of the work of the East Sussex Virtual School, in particular the close partnership working which takes place across other areas of the Children's Services Department. Such as the East Sussex Behaviour and Attendance Service (ESBAS), Educational Psychology (EP), Children's Integrated Therapy Service (CITS) and the Admissions and Transport Team. The work being done to involve schools and social workers in the Personal Education Plans (PEPs) for Looked After Children; and the support and training being offered to the families of adopted children was also set out..

24.3 The Panel was particularly interested in : the support and work provided through the use of Pupil Premium to those children who have experienced traumatic starts in life; the educational outcomes for Looked After Children; and the assisted boarding school places scheme for East Sussex LAC.

24.4 RESOLVED to: note the contents of the report and commend the hard work of the Virtual School.

## 25 EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC

25.1 RESOLVED to exclude the public and press from the meeting for items 9 and 10 on the agenda (see minutes 26 and 27) 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 was considered that the public interest in maintaining the exception outweighed the public interest in disclosing the information.

## 26 OFSTED INSPECTION REPORT FOR THE BUNGALOW.

26.1 The Panel considered a report from Ofsted on the service at The Bungalow. The home received an overall rating of 'requires improvement to be good'. The Assistant Director, Early Help and Social Care, Liz Rugg, explained that this was largely due to the home being without a Registered Homes Manager for a period of time and hence the process requirement from Ofsted to reach an overall RI judgement . A new manager has now been appointed and is currently undertaking the necessary processes to become registered with Ofsted. It was reported that the home has seen a number of improvements since the new manager has been appointed and that this was recognised by the Ofsted inspector. The inspector plans to re-visit the home as soon as possible to consider whether the improvements will consequently improve the judgement The Panel commented on the good level of care and support the children receive at the home.

26.2 RESOLVED to: note the contents of the Ofsted inspection report for The Bungalow.

## 27 CHILDREN'S HOME REGULATIONS 2015, REGULATION 44: INSPECTION REPORTS FOR THE PERIOD OCTOBER TO NOVEMBER.

27.1 The Panel considered Regulation 44 Reports for the period October to November 2017 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

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

27.3 The Panel discussed the importance of online safety and the measures which are taken to protect young people from potential risk.

27.4 RESOLVED to: note the contents of the reports.

28 LOOKED AFTER CHILDREN (LAC) STATISTICS

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

28.2 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, however there has been a slight reduction in the number of agency placements used.

28.3 The Panel were further informed that the transfer of Unaccompanied Asylum Seeking young people via the national dispersal scheme is now in place again. Despite this, over the past quarter there has been a decrease of two, mainly as a result of young people turning 18.

28.4 RESOLVED to: note the contents of the report.

Councillor Sylvia Tidy  
Chair