

**CORPORATE PARENTING BOARD**

A meeting of the Corporate Parenting Board was held on Wednesday 11 January 2023.

**PRESENT:** Councillors C Hobson (Chair), B Cooper, D Coupe, A Hellaoui, M Saunders and Z Uddin

**PRESENT BY INVITATION:** Councillors J McTigue and B Hubbard

**ALSO IN ATTENDANCE:** D fenny, E Craigie and K Glew

**OFFICERS:** V Banks, S Blood, R Brown, T Dunn, L Jefferson, A Hart, L Beevers, K Peacock, K Scraton, C Sowerby and S Myers

**APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE:** Councillors D Davison, T Higgins, J Walker, T Parkinson, Dunning and G Nicholson

22/1 **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies for Absence were received and recorded.

22/2 **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

There were no declarations of interest received at this point in the meeting.

22/3 **MINUTES- CORPORATE PARENTING BOARD - 29 NOVEMBER 2022**

The minutes of the Corporate Parenting Board held on 29 November 2022.

22/4 **PARTICIPATION OF CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE.**

The Chair welcomed Kathy Peacock, Voice and Influence Manager and Adam Hart, CAMHS / HeadStart Business Administrator Apprentice who were in attendance to provide the standard item update relating to activities of our care experienced young people from 29 November 2022- 11 January 2023.

Adam firstly advised that the children in care council 'CICC', had now been renamed and were now called 'We matter'. Over the next few months 'we matter' would discuss the calendar for the year as well as discussing further opportunities to get involved with the Corporate Parenting Board.

Between 29 November 2022- 11 January 2023, the team had:

- Delivered a Christmas party on 22 December 2022 which was attended by 35 children and young people and 30 carers. Virtual schools provided the entertainment and the service would like to thank councillors who kindly donated the selection boxes. These were distributed to the children/ young people and also taken to the Pathways service.
- During one of the session our young people discussed ideas on what would be fun to invite other care experienced young people to. Ideas included for example: Information Brunch, Flamingo Land, York, Ice Skating, Laser Tag, Go Karting, Pamper days, Basic First Aid, Boxing, Mindfulness, Motivational speakers, Cooking, Football events, Athletics, Survival techniques, Picnic, Easter hunt and Achievement night.
- The Independent Reviewing Officer Manager was invited to our meeting on 13 December 2022. We talked about how to make Looked after reviews fun and the prospect of including food. A PCSO also attended the session and talked about safety.
- An invitation has been sent to Sue Myers, Interim Director of Children's Services and Claire Sowerby, Interim Director of Children's Care to a future session.
- Plan to work with the Virtual school on what looked after young people told us at the

Jump 360 event.

Over the next few months 'we matter' plan to:

- Work out a calendar of events for 2023
- Continue to work with Pathways and care leavers to write their 'Local Offer'. Kathy and Adam were meeting with the lead at Middlesbrough college on the 11th January to start planning the animation video (with help from Middlesbrough college students)
- Support care experienced young people to share their experiences with the Children and Young people Scrutiny Panel
- Plan a care leaver celebration event in April 2023 .

The participation team are working with Louisa Jefferson, a care experienced apprentice, and pathways leaving care team to develop a care leavers event for April 2023, this event will be a celebration of all care leavers from Middlesbrough to identify and focus on a positive they have accomplished in the last year.

We will also be celebrating the accomplishment of Digiwise and all that the young people have contributed to the new policy development. Care leavers are being consulted as to what they would like at the event and how they want to celebrate. There will be certificates and trophies handed out to young people based on their achievements as a way of individual acknowledgement. There will also be either bongo bingo or a raffle that young people can win prizes from.

If any Corporate Parent would like to donate any prizes, these would be most welcome.

Arrange for care experienced young people to meet with Corporate Parents before Full Council meetings.

**AGREED- That the information be noted.**

22/5

#### **KINGFISHER REPORT**

The Chair welcome Chief Inspector Deb Fenny to the Board to present the Kingfisher report. The Detective advised that she was the Chair of the Learning and Development meeting and from this the Kingfisher report had been discussed, which was a report surrounding a serious care review of 2 children. One sadly passed away and one suffered significant injuries.

The Kingfisher report was a public report which holds to account agencies and partnership. Since the report was written, an action plan has been developed to capture the recommendations and ensure learning is cascaded and built upon.

A general discussion took place regarding communication and best ways to scrutinise the recommendations of the report. The Chief Inspector advised that as part of the ongoing Child Safeguarding Practice Review, challenge review events take place every 6 months. The report and recommendations are signed off by the Executive Board.

Within the report, there was a plea to the corporate parenting board to consider the role of being Corporate grandparents. Whilst in principle, the role was supported, the board felt, the term would need to be explored to ensure it was representative of all age groups.

**AGREED:**

- That the Kingfisher report be noted
- That the subsequent report and action plan be presented to the board at a future date.
- That the term Corporate Grandparent be explored.

22/6

#### **OFSTED UPDATE- OUTCOME FROM MONITORING VISIT**

The Chair welcomed Sue Myers, Interim Director of Children's services to the meeting, she was accompanied by Claire Sowerby, Interim Director of children's care.

The Interim Director of children's services advised that the recent ofsted monitoring visit focused on older children leaving care and care leaver. This visit like other monitoring visits was carried out in line with the inspector of the local authority children's services (ILACS )

framework.

Finding from the monitoring visit showed that most of our older children leaving care felt supported when leaving care and had a good working relationship with their social worker and independent reviewing officer.

Areas for development were as follows:

- Support and choice around housing for care leavers
- Support around budgeting
- Support for young people when they leave custody.

The Interim Director advised the board that, as a council, they would like to offer more to care leavers, in terms of offering work in local businesses and an apprenticeship within every department of the council.

The outcome as it stands from Ofsted was not displeasing, however the service will be audited at the end of February/ March in preparation for the full ILACS inspection. The Interim director outlined that we would work alongside our young people/ care leavers to become an imaginative corporate family. Children's services is improving and she outlined the sole purpose is not to be 'inadequate'.

The Board were aware of the escalating costs of children's services, and the Interim director advised that she had been working alongside Claire Sowerby and Louise Grabham to address these.

There were currently three areas of concern:

1. Family support workers- currently outsourced to an external company and these posts were depleted during a restructure. These posts would be looked to be unfrozen to reemploy Middlesbrough council officers.
2. Independent foster carers- it currently costs the council approx. £6million, compared to our own in-house foster carers which costs approx. £3 million. The service will look to address the support provided to our foster carers, including allowances.
3. Agency social workers - there are currently 3 teams. The service will look to recommission 1 team which would provide dedicated support to the Council.

In terms of social workers, there will be 12 social workers commencing with the local authority in March 2023 and there are currently 15 student social workers going through the academy.

The Interim Director would look to bring a future report to the Board.

AGREED- That the update be noted.

22/7

## **PERFORMANCE AGAINST CORPORATE PARENTING STRATEGY**

The Interim Head of Service Practice Leads/ Children with disabilities was in attendance and advised that as of end of November 2022 there were 509 children looked after. The performance scorecard had been circulated to members prior to the members for information.

The Interim Head of Service Practice Leads/ Children with disabilities outlined that the Board may like to access the way information is provided to the Board.

The Interim Director of Children's services posed to the Board that they may like to re look at the structure of the Board, potentially looking at Themes meetings and inviting care experiences young people/ carers to the Board.

**AGREED- That the structure and content of the Corporate Parenting Board be explored.**

22/8

## **NOMINET – REACH- DIGIWISE.**

The Chair welcomed Ralph Jordinson, Risk and Resilience Manager and Louisa

Jefferson, Digital Policy Apprentice to the Board.

The officers were in attendance to update corporate parenting board on the progress of the Digiwise final young persons summary report and the recommendations, promote the use of the Digital Pledge and promotion of the easy to access support resources. The report was also to seek the board's support and to implement findings into new council adopted policy.

As way of background, the officer advised that In March 2021, Middlesbrough Council were successful in a funding application for £36,220 which is to research, consult and produce a policy/practice document for digital safeguarding for Children Looked After and Children Leaving Care. Funding by Parentzone and Nominet was allocated to 9 interlinked projects under 3 key areas of which Middlesbrough's sits within Design Challenge 3, that is:

Elevating young peoples' voice to influence the services that impact on their digital safety and opportunity.

Care experienced young people have invaluable insight which is currently under-utilised in relation to digital and online safety policy development.

More specifically the project is to ensure care experienced young people can influence the service policies, process and practice that impact on their digital lives.

Middlesbrough need to extend participation; diversify and improve channels of communication and feedback. This is based on significant risks posed to Children Looked After (CLA) being at risk of online grooming and exploitation, exposure pornography, peer pressure to send youth produced sexual imagery and access to drug sales and other harmful products usually via social media. Since the last corporate parenting board in February 2022 the survey is now completed and this report now presents the findings and recommendations.

The two actions allocated at the previous corporate parenting board 13th February 2022 have been completed.

Those were:

- The adoption of the UKCIS Digital Passport to be offered for all children looked after.
- Consideration of all residential and foster care staff completing the 'Fostering Network's, Fostering Digital Skills CPD course or Enable Pathway Digital Skills programme.

Louisa also advised that consultation had been completed with children and young people and a young person's digiwise summary report had been developed.

The next step in the process were as follows:

1. Policy to be signed off by single member executive.
2. Further work would also be completed on a guide for carers and a digital pledge and for a key performance indicator (KPI) to be attached to this.
3. Further online safety training be provided to foster carer.

AGREED:

- That the board note and acknowledge the key findings from the Digiwise young person summary report
- That the board support the implementation of the recommendations from the main Digiwise report and are happy for new policy development.