

CORPORATE PARENTING BOARD

A meeting of the Corporate Parenting Board was held on Wednesday 17 March 2021.

PRESENT: Councillors A Hellaoui (Chair), M Nugent, Z Uddin, C Wright and J Walker

PRESENT BY INVITATION: Councillors

ALSO IN ATTENDANCE:

OFFICERS: S Blood, V Banks, R Farnham, M Jackland, J McNally, S Butcher, R Scott, D Skaife, P Jemson and L Hunter

APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE: Councillors T Higgins, A High, J McTigue, M Smiles, J Thompson, C Dodds, R Brown, K Dargue, T Dunn, T Parkinson, P Rudd and Fenny

69 **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies were received from Councillor Higgins, High, McTigue, Dodds and Smiles.

70 **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

Name of Member	Type of Interest	Item/Nature of Interest
Councillor Walker	Non-Pecuniary	Agenda Item 8 – Chair of Linx Project Hemlington

71 **MINUTES- CORPORATE PARENTING BOARD- 10 FEBRUARY 2021**

The minutes of the Corporate Parenting Board held on 10 February 2021 were read and accepted as a true record.

72 **MINUTES- CORPORATE PARENTING BOARD- 23 FEBRUARY 2021**

The minutes of the Corporate Parenting Board held on 23 February 2021 were read and accepted as a true record.

73 **CORPORATE PARENTING BOARD ACTION PLAN**

The Democratic Services Officer presented the Corporate Parenting Board action plan.

The Chair added the following actions:

Health passports

Further clarification on progress of digital health passports.

Initial Health assessments (IHA)

Further information to be obtained regarding engagement with those reluctant to attend IHA's.

Mental health and Headstart

Further information on mental health engagement within schools to be brought back to a future meeting.

The Director of Children's Services outlined that as a fall -out from the Corporate Parenting Strategy, an action plan will be presented to the Board on a regular basis.

The Director also advised that a yearly Corporate Parenting Board work programme would be devised, which would ensure key statutory documents are presented to the Board and other items would be fitted into the work programme accordingly.

The Director also advised the Board that the Corporate Parenting Board Strategy had been formally signed off by Executive on 16 March 2021, who endorsed all matters included within the strategy.

AGREED

That the action plan and addition actions be noted.

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COVID-19 UPDATE

The Director of Children's Services provided a verbal update in respect to Covid 19.

The Director outlined that the directorate has stepped down the Bronze meeting, which was to look at specific aspects of Covid and the service has now operating as a covid business as usual, and fitting the practice through covid.

Children Service's staff are in the main still continuing to home working, although there are plans in place to slowly bring staff back into the office, however this will be blended with home working.

Face to face meetings taking place with the appropriate safeguarding measures in place, unless there are exceptional circumstances to prevent this (family are isolating or covid symptomatic).

All Middlesbrough schools returned on 8 March, which all schools staggering their year group returns over the week. Generally the return has gone well and children are happy to be back and eager to learn. In terms of our vulnerable children (those with a social worker, children in need, children on child protection orders and children looked after) the attendance has been very good and positive.

Schools are operating back working with their bubbles. There are some staff and pupils currently self -isolating, however the department received daily updates from Public Health on numbers.

In terms of mental health, the service was seeing a slight increase in referrals as well as those in respect to domestic abuse. They also has seen some numbers (although not has high as some local authorities) of elative home educating children. Whilst this was not affecting our looked after children, the Director felt the Board should be aware of this.

A Board member queries about Middlesbrough Council staff, in particular their sickness statistics, mental health and vaccinations.

In response, the Director advised that sickness was reasonably good. The service have to provide a return to the Department of Education on a fortnightly basis, including the number of staff who are unavailable. The figures compare well to the rest of the region and country, so there was no specific concerns.

In terms of mental health, the Council have provision in place to support those individuals. If staff feel their mental health would benefit from working at the office, this has to be authorised by HR and signed off by the Director. Staff in general are becoming covid weary and there is a great deal of willingness to return to the office. However staff have been adaptable and imaginative in their way of working.

In terms of vaccinations, these go in line with the national government age roll out, and therefore staff would not be called unless they are considered vulnerable. All residential staff and foster carers have been vaccinated due to their carer responsibility. All foster carers have been offered a vaccine and those wishing to be vaccinated have been.

AGREED- That the update be noted.

75

MALAP SPOTLIGHT UPDATE

The Chair provided a verbal update in relation to the progress of spotlight 1 report. The Chair advised that at present, she was waiting to speak to officers/ Chairs of Corporate Parenting Board from other authorities and once this was completed, a report would be provided to the Board.

In terms of spotlight 2, a small group would be meeting on 6 April 2021 to discuss Care Leavers and NEETs. Feedback from this initial meeting would be discussed at the next meeting of the Board.

AGREED- That the updated be noted.

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PARTICIPATION / VOICE OF THE CHILD UPDATE

The Chair firstly welcome Phoebe Teasdale, one of the members of Middlesbrough's Youth Council. Phoebe provided the Board with the following update:

Hi everyone, I firstly wanted to start by saying what an honour and privilege it is to talk to you all today about youth council, thank you for listening to me and giving me the opportunity to tell you about it. Youth council is a group of like minded young people from all walks of life across Middlesbrough who meet every other Thursday to discuss issues effecting our youth population and what we can do to make Middlesbrough the best possible place for young people to live in.

We have had quite a few meetings now and have already started to get things moving. Our first meeting was a get to know you session and we discussed what we wanted to get out of Youth Council and in our second we discussed our priorities. After completing a short google form we listed these priorities from most to least important and from there have developed an agenda to decide how to approach issues. Then we were given the opportunity to put ourselves forward to partake in certain roles such as the chair, the vlogger / blogger influencer and the minute taker. I personally applied to be the chair and ended up being chosen to chair a meeting in February. Our roles are on a rota which gives every young person an opportunity to give the roles a go and develops vital life skills such as teamwork, leadership, confidence, critical thinking and problem solving.

What makes Youth Council so good is the opportunities it provides to us young people. My dream and ambition is to go into Politics and Youth Council has given me and many others a place to express and debate our opinions and beliefs. We are currently working on improving Citizenship lessons in Schools across Middlesbrough and giving local businesses the MYC Stamp of Approval as an Incentive to work with us. Youth Council has given its members an opportunity to make amazing new friends and look forward to speaking to people that maybe don't go to our respective schools. This is particularly important in the current situation as many of us are quite lonely and feel isolated from others. Youth council has been an absolutely invaluable opportunity and one that me and my fellow members continue to enjoy every other Thursday. Thank you again for giving me the opportunity to talk to you today and I would welcome any questions that you might have.

The Chair and Board welcomed Phoebe's update and thanked her for her contribution.

Following Phoebe's presentation, the Chair introduced Paula Jemson, Head of Corporate Parenting and Looked after children to provide an overall update in relation to Participation.

Middlesbrough Youth Council

- Numbers have dipped slightly (to be expected after the initial high turnout), but 16 young people are actively engaged and attended the last meeting.
- Young people are now assigned roles and this is going really well, the chair of the meeting has a meeting with Muskaan, Batool and me beforehand so they can practice/feel more confident- this worked well!
- Middlesbrough Youth Council priorities have now been decided, which were voted upon through the National British Council Council, they are as follows (most popular first):

-	A	Curriculum	for	Life	with	69%
-	Tackle	Child	Poverty	with		61.5%

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- Increase racial awareness in the curriculum with 61.5%
- Free University with 53.8%
- Take Action on the Climate Emergency with 53.8%
- Middlesbrough Youth Council are linking in with Public Health and analysing the Curriculum4Life Service, that provides schools in the Tees Valley with PSHE lesson plans, in the last meeting they went over everything and gave brilliant suggestions. (next time, they will collate all their responses and contact Curriculum4Life with their recommendations).
- An MYC 'Stamp of Approval' was something the Youth Council wanted to do with businesses/programmes that provide services for young people. The idea was that it may incentivise their involvement, by giving the stamp of approval (the stamp is given when the services have been analysed and have been judged as being of a high standard to help young people.)
- Anonymous Feedback forms are now sent at the end of the meeting, so we can get some insight into what we can do to enrich members' experiences.
- One of our young people has said she would like to attend the next Corporate Parenting Board with Laurie
- They are all interested in meeting some of our Councillors to find out more about what they do.

Children in care Council/ Mini Children in Care Council

- In the past, engagement to this groups has been difficult and there are still low number. However the Participation Team are working together with Tia and Xavier (Care Leavers who are now apprentices with the Council) to increase engagement with the groups.
- Tia is interested in helping run the sessions
- Going to do a push to our Children Looked After to increase engagement (this will be done with support from the Participation Officer)
- 3 children are involved in the Children in care council and 1 child is involved with the mini children in care council, however there are recruitment campaigns underway to increase numbers.

Care Leavers

- Pathways CAHMS worker, John has taken on board a suggestion from the Care Leavers Forum (CLF) which was to create contact cards – he has created this and also added a 'what is a mental health crisis?' section on the card and contact details for the crisis line.
- John has also suggested that the CLF can have 5/10 minute mindful exercises that he will lead on and guide through - this was met with positive response.
- The CLF have come up with ideas for engaging more care leavers, such as them designing leaflets/letters to be sent to care leavers.
- They have also expresses interest in ensuring young people in residential placements (including those with additional needs) are aware of the CLF and have their voices heard.
- The existing leaflet has also been send to Pathways and Helen Dempsey is sending to PA's for them to signpost.

Next steps

Participation Officer:

- Marcus started with Middlesbrough Council in March 2021 and will be coming into post to help facilitate our improvement journey by ensuring the voice of the child is prevalent in Social Care.
- Marcus will also facilitate in the running of our young people's groups, and form a positive rapport with the young people (ultimately act as a role model)

Mini CiCC/CiCC:

- To increase engagement levels by working with Xavier, Tia and Marcus (new Participation Officer).
- To create an updated plan of action with support from Marcus/the work he is doing

with Practice Lead.

Care Leavers' Forum:

- To increase engagement with the support from Pathways
- To have the Forum more Youth Led, by Xavier and Tia deciding agenda items/presenting
- To increase mental wellbeing by doing short mindful sessions with John (Pathways CAMHS worker)

Youth Council:

- To continue with the Curriculum4Life work, get ducks in a row and contact the programme with their recommendations

Good News story

- Middlesbrough Council were successful in securing £30,000 to promote online safety for young people in Middlesbrough.
- Our Care Leavers' Forum were consulted and gave their experiences that were used in the bid.
- A number of staff were consulted with, and gave input to the bid- great example of collaborative working.
- The money will ultimately aid our young people in becoming more digitally resilient and ensuring digital inclusivity (ensuring all those who need access are given this).
- The above point is explained in our Digital Resilience Mission Statement: *"To develop an online world where children and young people can be nurtured, safe, self-confident and compassionate digital citizens"*.
- Finally, The Head of Service outlined that in terms of young people NEET, a NEET Task and Finish group in place to support looked after children in to education, training and employment.
- NEET panel commenced with engagement from Community Learning, Virtual Schools and Youth Offending Service to enhance multi agency support around young people
- Work underway to support apprenticeships within the council

The Chair thanked the Head of Service for her update.

ORDERED- That the update be updated.

77

REGULATION 44 REPORTS

The Service Manager for Future for Families provided a presentation in relation to Regulation 44 reports in respect to Future for families, Rose croft, Willow Tree, Gleneagles, Holly Lodge and Firtree.

The Service Manager covered the key themes which were brought out from the Regulation 44 visits.

The Service Manager outlined that the theme of the month was: How does leadership and management use monitoring and review systems to make continuous improvements in the quality of care provided in the home?

From the visits the key themes were as follows:

1. Workforce development plans are comprehensive
2. Reg 45 reports are completed Bi-annually and shared with Ofsted – focus - Improving the services over the proceeding 6 months
3. Feedback from Professionals and staff is positive regarding the service offered to young people
4. Children and young people are involved in care planning
5. Risk assessments are robust and reviewed within timescales – including environmental assessments and Covid 19 assessments
6. The homes are well decorated, homely and well maintained

7. Staff training is provided in a timely way
8. Incidents are well recorded with clear actions – restraints are rarely used.
9. Young people's records are detailed
10. Comprehensive risk assessments are in place to assess the risk of young people going missing
11. Staff have access to regular supervision

The Service Manager outlined that feedback from the Regulation 44 Officer was as follows "The service continues to have strong leadership with a clear vision and robust quality assurance processes in place"

AGREED- That the regulation 44 reports be noted.

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FUTURE FOR FAMILIES - UPDATE

The Service Manager for Future for Families provided a presentation to update the Board on the progress in relation to Future for Families.

The Service Manager outlined that this quarterly report was based on the data requirements set out in the Ofsted Fostering Data Set, which is a statutory return compiled using data as of the 31 March each year. The data returned for the statutory year 2019/20 has been included as a benchmark.

The table below defines each quarter. It also shows the date the data is collated for each 3-Month period.

Quarter 1 - 0April, May and June – (Data taken on the 30 June 2020)

Quarter 2 - July, August and September – (Data taken on the 30 September 2020)

Quarter 3 - October, November and December – (Data taken on the 31 December 2020)

Quarter 4 - January, February and March – (Data taken on the 31 March 2021)

The Manager provided the following update:

- The service have worked with 55 Young people since the service opened in September 2020.
- There are 16 young people on the edge of care who are receiving support from the service.
- There are 19 young people who are looked after who have a plan of return from external residential placements to family or foster care who are supported by FFF.
- The service have stepped away from 20 young people – the support offered by FFF has stabilised the placement and the service is no longer required.

The service regularly received Regulation 44 visits and received regular feedback from young people, their parents/ carers and professions. Some of the comments received in relation to the service are outlined below:

"I like the hub the staff are lovely. My son has now got used to going there; it did take him a while. I feel he is getting all of the support he needs there. I have no problems with them at all and no suggestions; they're just lovely, they do all that they can". – Parent

"Staff listen to me and talk to me before this wouldn't happen in my last home". – Young person

"Xmas was mint given, even though I only came here a few days before! I was a bit down about not being with younger kids. The staff made me have the best time. I got nice presents." – Young person

"The member of staff working with a young person returning home was praised at how well they had built a relationship with a young person they are currently working with. And that the work is really valuable. – Allocated Social Worker

"I just wanted to take the opportunity to thank you for all the support you and your team

offered a young person. The situation had reached crisis and it was only down to the flexibility, support and commitment of you and your team, to young people that we were able to progress a safe robust plan. Since working in Middlesbrough I feel that your service has been invaluable in supporting the cohort of children we have been working with. This has not only improved outcomes for children and young people in Middlesbrough but also provided a valuable support the role of the SW team". –Director of Therapeutic Care Innovate Service

The Service Manager finally outlined that the Futures for Families service was inspected by Ofsted on the 19th February 2021. The report has not been shared at this stage as it was currently being reviewed through Ofsted's Quality assurance process, however feedback at this stage was extremely positive.

AGREED- That the update be noted.

79 **THE FAMILY YOUTH JUSTICE BOARD BRIEFING**

Item deferred.

80 **CORPORATE PARENTING BOARD SCORECARDS**

The Director of Children's Care and the Analytics Manager provided the Board with the Corporate Parenting Scorecards. From the Scorecards, the Board were made aware that performance was starting to show signs of improvement, with numbers moving in the right direction in key areas. It was very early days though and sustained improvements were still required in order to continue the positive trend.

Key themes from the scorecards were as follows:

- Numbers of children in care are coming down from a high of almost 700
- Ratio of children entering to leaving care has reduced to almost 1.1, from a high of nearly 2.0
- % of children placed more than 20 miles from their home postcode remains below 20%
- Positive performance independent reviewing officers (IRO) challenges resolved informally, or by Stage 1

Following the presentation it was agreed that the following would take place:

- Future updates on the scorecards would be brought to Corporate Parenting Board.
- That the scorecards include numbers/figures as well as percentages to provide the Board with a more accurate picture.
- That an explanation of each graph be provided to Board Members prior to the next presentation
- That fewer graphs be presented on the screen to allow ease to members.
- That the age range of children who have been adopted be brought to the Board
- That if possible a 'colour' aid e.g traffic light system be incorporated into the scorecards for ease of reference.

AGREED-

- That the scorecards be noted
- That the agreed actions as outlined above, be taken into account for future presentations.

ANY OTHER URGENT ITEMS WHICH IN THE OPINION OF THE CHAIR, MAYBE CONSIDERED

PURDAH

THE BOARD WERE MADE AWARE THAT DURING PURDAH, THE CORPORATE PARENTING BOARD WOULD OPERATE AS NORMAL.