

Corporate Parenting Panel – Meeting held on Tuesday, 16th January, 2024.

Present:- Councillors Hulme (Chair), Dauti, Gill, Qaseem, Rana and Tomar,

Non-Voting Members

Sue Butcher, Executive Director of People (Children) & CE of Slough Children First (SCF)

Caroline Bartos, Accommodation Group Manager (SBC)

Cherie Sears, Virtual School Head (SCF)

In Attendance:

Councillor Puja Bedi, Lead Member for Education, Children's Services

Marc Gadsby, Executive Director People ((Adults) (SBC)

Ben Short, Director of Operations (SCF)

Kay Jones, Head of Service, Sufficiency & Permanency (SCF)

Kate McCorriston, Head of Service, HR & OD (SCF)

Yemi Ukwenu, IFA Registered Manager (SCF)

Ranbir Sidhu, Registered Manager (SCF)

Tony Rawlings, Youth Worker (SCF)

Saima Arif, Head of Regulated Services (SCF)

Apologies for Absence:- James Mather, Jones-Jardine and Lianne Garstang

PART 1

33. Declarations of Interest

Councillor (Cllr) Dauti declared a personal interest by virtue of providing an individual support group for Kinship Carers, and as a carer.

Cllr Gill declared a personal interest as her niece worked for Slough Children First.

34. Minutes of the last meeting held on 21 November 2023

The Panel Resolved to: Agree the minutes of the meeting held on 21 November 2023 as a correct record.

35. Corporate Parenting Panel Scorecard

The Slough Children First (SCF) Head of Service, Sufficiency & Permanency provided a summary of the Corporate Parenting Panel Scorecard to 12 December 2023.

(Cllr Tomar joined the meeting).

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The following were highlighted:

- There had been a reduction in the number of children looked after (CLA) to 210 compared to the same period in 2022.
- The number of unaccompanied asylum seeking children and percentage of CLA unaccompanied asylum seeking children had also fallen.
- CLA Health Assessments had gone down in the last 12 months but still remained on target and in line with comparator groups.
- Long term placement stability had decreased in December 2023. The Panel had requested this area be explored further and details were set out in the report.
- Although 93.5% of children had been seen within timescales compared to 88.4% in the same period last year, this was still work in progress.
- Change of social Workers had gone down compared to last year due to a reduction in staff turnover with an upward trend.
- Suitable Accommodation of Care Experienced Young People (aged 19 -21) had remained static at 90% but further work was needed. It was noted that some Care Experienced Young People (CEYP) may be from other boroughs. Members were reassured that CEYP in unsuitable accommodation were identified by the Commissioning team during the appraisal assessment process and followed up as part of the operational proceedings. The Commissioning team worked closely with housing and officers in housing carried out spot checks.
- The average number of young people allocated to a CEYP Advisor had risen to 27.3 compared to 24.8 in the same period in 2022. The Director of Operations advised that young people would be invited to a CPP meeting to give a talk about pathway plans.

The Panel Resolved to: Note the Corporate Parenting Panel Scorecard to December 2023.

36. Regulation 45 Report (Breakaway - short breaks provision)

The SCF Registered Manager introduced the Regulation 45 Report (Breakaway - short breaks provision) for the period June to November 2023.

Breakaway was a short break home which provided respite for children aged 6 -18. A review of the service provision had been undertaken for this period which had led to the development of a service improvement plan. It was a statutory requirement to provide this data to Ofsted.

Feedback from parents had been sought as part of the review process through various means including coffee mornings as well as online. Key working sessions had been developed for each child to have a set of targets, which were maintained and measured quarterly.

It was noted that the home had been refurbished and provided a measurable service, with the venue being used by other services once a month. It had

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also achieved 9 quality standards and generated an action plan in accordance with the improvement plan.

It was reported that the Health and Safety committee had welcomed the recording of incidents. Members were reassured that although there were 22 children in the home with 6 new children admitted (4 had been discharged), there was still 20% capacity and noted that the service could also be accessed through day care, thus providing flexibility.

The Chair requested for arrangements to be made for CPP members to visit the home and it was noted that the SCF Registered Manager would send an invitation to a coffee morning.

The Head of Service, Sufficiency & Permanency advised that part of the CPP's aim was to have a nominated Councillor whose role would be to make regular visits.

The Panel Resolved to: Note the Regulation 45 (Breakaway – short breaks provision) Report.

37. Quarterly Fostering Report (Regulation 35)

The Chair agreed to vary the order of this item.

The SCF, IFA (independent fostering agency) Registered Manager presented the Quarterly Fostering Service Monitoring Report (Regulation 35) for April to June 2023.

Members were informed that it was a statutory duty to regularly report to Ofsted and the following was highlighted for this period:

- 47 fostering households were approved and 3 fostering households were recruited in June 2023. Recruitment would continue with the objective of recruiting carers that could offer stay put arrangements.
- Long term placements continue to be sought.
- In relation to Schedule 6 & 7 incidents (monitoring/notifiable events), carers were trained to manage incidents through events such as mediation.
- Collaboration work was being done with schools to ensure that children were kept locally.
- Staffing was at the maximum level in May 2023 and the Panel Advisor role had been filled thus addressing an Ofsted recommendation following the last inspection.
- 7 out of 8 children that completed the survey had provided feedback to a consultation, and feedback was also received from 10 foster carers.
- Most of the issues of concern relating to payments had been resolved.

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Members noted that risk assessments were carried out and reviewed and were monitored through regular data provision.

It was noted the service had been rated 'good' by Ofsted.

The Panel Resolved to: Note the Quarterly Fostering Service Monitoring Report (Regulation 35) for April to June 2023.

38. Virtual School - Education Report (Key Stage results)

The Chair agreed to vary the order of this item.

The SCF Virtual School Head presented the Slough Children First Virtual School Summary Report for 2022-2023 Academic Year.

Full details were set out in the report but the following were highlighted:

- Children looked after (CLA) GCSE exam results had exceeded national and regional peers for the second year.
- 16 young people had moved on to university with one progressing on to a doctorate and PHD.
- A child's voice was heard through their Personal Education Plan (PEP) and each child in Slough had a PEP compared to 80% in other local authorities, and support continued to be provided when their PEP came to an end.
- 95% of CLAs attended good or outstanding schools.
- As part of service improvement, CLAs were being supported by the same people from reception to aged 16 to ensure consistency.

During discussion it was noted that in relation to kinship care, a Kinship Care policy was in place and the Virtual School was supporting social workers by providing training and advice on education. Young people aged 16-18 were supported to gain education, employment and training and offered advice and work was still ongoing to make more provisions available.

It was highlighted that one of the ways in which the NEET (not in employment, education or training) agenda could be supported was by creating more opportunity across the Council. In addition, the Council had agreed in July 2023, to treat Care Experienced as a Protected Characteristic and work was now needed to identify areas to be targeted.

The CPP would include Equality of Care Experienced People as an agenda item for consideration at a future meeting.

The Panel welcomed the report and acknowledged the excellent outstanding results.

The Panel Resolved to: Note the Virtual School Education report (Key Stage results).

39. Corporate Parenting Strategy & Action Plan - Workshop

The SCF Head of Service, Sufficiency & Permanency invited members to break into groups, and for each group to discuss one of the following topic areas:

- What is the CP (corporate plan) Strategy
- Corporate parenting vision
- Partnership commitment – who?
- CP strategy priorities
- How will it be delivered?

At the end of the discussions, each group was asked to put forward their comments, which were listed on a flip chart for analysis, with a view to incorporate in the Corporate Parenting Strategy 2024-27.

It was anticipated that a draft strategy would be reported to the next meeting with ideas of how it could be shaped.

40. Corporate Parenting Panel Annual Reporting Schedule/Themed Topics

Noted

41. Members' Attendance Record 2023-24

The Panel Resolved to: Note the Members' attendance record.

42. Date of the next meeting: Thursday 4 April 2024

The date of the next meeting was confirmed as Thursday 4 April 2024.

Chair

(Note: The Meeting opened at 5.35 pm and closed at 8.29 pm)