

GATESHEAD METROPOLITAN BOROUGH COUNCIL
CORPORATE PARENTING SUB OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE
MEETING

Monday, 21 March 2016

PRESENT: Councillor M Brain (Chair)
Councillors: B Oliphant

CO-OPTED MEMBERS: Jeremy Cripps and John Wilkinson

CP23 APOLOGIES

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor McNally, Councillor Simcox and co-opted members Ann Page, Sasha Ban and Julie McCartney.

CP24 MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting held on 11 January 2016 were agreed as a correct record subject to the Committee's endorsement at the next meeting.

CP25 E-SAFETY - YOUNG PEOPLE'S PRESENTATION

A presentation by young people was given to the Committee around e-safety. The presentation outlined the training that is available to foster carers and residential staff and noted that work is underway with Workforce Development to further roll out the training to more foster carers.

The young people discussed their experience of internet safety, including their use of social media and the MOMO (Mind of My Own) app.

It was noted that the following link allows parents to report any e-safety issues <https://www.net-aware.org.uk/>.

RESOLVED - That the Committee noted the information presented.

CP26 LOOKED AFTER CHILDREN PERFORMANCE OVERVIEW

The Committee received a performance report for looked after children's services for 2015-16, up to the end of February 2016. During Ofsted's recent inspection it was

reported that achieving performance is good in Gateshead, it stated that decisions are timely and the service 'knows young people well'.

As at the end of February 2016 there are 358 looked after children in Gateshead, this is a decrease since September 2015, however is still high in terms of the England average and that of statistical neighbours. It was reported that figures are stable in terms of the age range of looked after children. The number of 15-17 year olds looked after remains high in comparison to other local authorities, however it was noted that there is a significant proportion of complex needs within that cohort.

It was reported that the number of looked after children accommodated under a section 20 order has reduced. Stability of placements remains good and it was noted that this is partly due to the positive support provided to foster carers. The majority of looked after children are placed within the region and of those placed out of borough the vast majority are placed in foster care. It was noted that most placements are still within the region, however 19 young people are placed further afield, five of whom are in Barnet in order to protect their Jewish heritage.

Performance is strong in terms of LAC reviews and the use of MOMO has improved young people's engagement with their review. It was also recognised that adoption performance is good, performance in relation to timeliness of adoptions has decreased, however this is due to two cases where there was complex needs. It was noted that there is expected to be fewer adoptions this year.

Committee was advised that use of the MOMO has been taken up well, with Gateshead having the highest number of users of the app across the country, 112 users and the youngest user is eight years old. It was reported that any issues arising through MOMO are reported through the Children's Rights Officer who can point young people to independent advocacy if required.

RESOLVED - That the Committee was satisfied with the performance as reported.

CP27 ANNUAL WORK PROGRAMME 2016/17

The Committee received its provisional work programme for the municipal year 2016/17.

- RESOLVED -
- (i) That the Committee endorsed the provisional work programme for 2016/17 and referred it to Council for agreement, subject to Committee's endorsement at the next meeting.
 - (ii) That the Committee noted that further reports will be brought to the Committee to identify any additional issues which the Committee may be asked to consider.

CP28 EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC

RESOLVED -

That the press and public be excluded from the meeting during consideration of the remaining business in accordance with the indicated paragraphs of Schedule 12A to the Local Government Act 1972.

CP29 CASE STUDY - OUT OF BOROUGH PLACEMENTS

RESOLVED -

That the item be deferred until October 2016 meeting.

CP30 INSPECTIONS BY OFSTED OF GATESHEAD CHILDREN'S HOMES AND REGULATION 44 VISITS

The Committee received a report on the Ofsted inspection outcomes and regulation 44 independent visits carried out in the Council's children's homes. The reports written as a result of the visits are circulated to the Service Director, Social Work, Care Wellbeing and Learning, Service Manager for Looked After Children and the Registered Manager of each Home.

RESOLVED -

That the information be noted.