

Item 6a

Report of the Director of Human Resources,
Performance & Communications,
to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee (OSC)
on Tuesday 9th February 2016

Barnsley Metropolitan Borough Council's (BMBC) Draft Corporate Parenting Panel Annual Report 2014-15 – Cover Report

1.0 Introduction and Background

- 1.1 The attached report 'Item 6b' is an annual update of the work of the Council's Corporate Parenting Panel (CPP). The role of the CPP is to ensure that BMBC, through its elected members, officers, carers and partner agencies fulfils its corporate parenting role. This means providing commitment and leadership to 'being there' for children in care and care leavers as well as monitoring performance in terms of improving outcomes.
- 1.2 ALL Elected Members have a responsibility as Corporate Parents to ensure that all children at the edge of care, in care or who have left care are given opportunity to reach the best possible outcome they can. They should act as 'pushy parents', with the litmus test being "Would this be good enough for my child or me if I was a child?"
- 1.3 As a result of Corporate Parenting responsibilities, it was agreed at the OSC meeting on 10th February 2015 that the CPP Annual Report should be brought to the OSC on an annual basis, enabling challenge to be provided by Members who are not directly involved with the CPP.
- 1.4 National data shows that children who are in care are one of the lowest performing groups in terms of educational outcomes. They also have poorer employment prospects and health outcomes than the general population. Research indicates that there are a number of factors which need to be considered to maximise positive outcomes for children in care, some of which include placement stability, interventions being tailored to the characteristics and experiences of the individual and the need for professionals to have a good understanding of children's social, emotional, mental health and educational needs.
- 1.5 It is therefore essential that the quality of services for our children and young people at the edge of care, in care or who have left care, are monitored and challenged. The attached Draft Annual Report outlines the work of the CPP during 2014-15 (Item 6b) including:
 - The responsibilities and statutory duties of the Council to protect children
 - The role and responsibilities of Councillors as Corporate Parents
 - Progress and areas covered by the CPP during 2014-15

- Governance arrangements
- Children in Care Council
- Priorities for the CPP during 2015-16
- Performance information

2.0 Invited witnesses

2.1 The following witnesses have been invited to today's meeting:

- Mel John-Ross, Service Director, Children's Social Care and Safeguarding, BMBC
- Liz Gibson, Head of Virtual School for Looked After Children, BMBC
- Sharon Galvin, Designated Nurse-Safeguarding Children, Barnsley Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG)
- Cllr Margaret Bruff, Cabinet Spokesperson - People (Safeguarding)
- Cllr Ralph Sixsmith, Dearne South Ward
- Wayne Jones, Barnsley Foster Carer
- Ann Murphy, Barnsley Foster Carer
- Paul Johnson, Barnsley Foster Carer
- Natalie Chappell, Barnsley Foster Carer

3.0 Possible areas for discussion

3.1 Members may wish to ask questions around the following areas:

- What impact has the CPP had on the outcomes for our children in care? How is this evidenced?
- To what extent is the voice of our children in care reflected in the design and improvement of services?
- Are all key stakeholders represented on the board and engaged in its work?
- What is done to ensure that Barnsley children in care placed out of the area receive high quality services?
- What plans are in place to improve the educational attainment of our children in care?
- How are the views of carers incorporated into the work of the CPP to help improve services?
- How confident are you that the right decisions are being made to safeguard children at the right time?
- How can Members not involved directly in the meetings support the work of the CPP and our children in care?

4.0 Background Papers and Links

- Copy 6b (attached) – Draft Corporate Parenting Panel Annual Report 2014-15
- DfE Report: Children looked after in England (including adoption and care leavers) year ending 31 March 2015:
https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/464756/SFR34_2015_Text.pdf
- Study into the educational progress of children in care (2015):
<https://www.gov.uk/government/speeches/children-in-care-can-achieve-and-succeed>

5.0 Glossary

BMBC – Barnsley Metropolitan Borough Council

CPP – Corporate Parenting Panel

DfE – Department for Education

Ofsted – Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills

OSC – Overview and Scrutiny Committee

SSC – Safeguarding Scrutiny Committee

6.0 Officer Contact

Anna Morley, Scrutiny Officer (Tel: 01226 775794)

Email: annamorley@barnsley.gov.uk

1st February 2016