

Corporate Parenting Board

A meeting of Corporate Parenting Board was held on Friday, 12th February, 2021.

Present: Cllr Barbara Inman (Chairman), Cllr Carol Clark, Cllr Pauline Beall, Cllr Robert Cook, Cllr Mick Moore, Cllr Hilary Vickers, Cllr Sally Ann Watson

Officers: Michael Henderson, Rhona Bollands, Martin Gray, David Willingham, Jamie Wassell, Janet Wilson (SBC)

Also in attendance: Cllr Lisa Evans

Apologies: Vicky Davison- Boyd, Lorraine Mulvey, Emma Groves, Steve Rowland, Sarah Massiter, Karen Grundy

1 **Declarations of Interest**

There were no declarations of interest.

2 **Minutes of the meeting held on 11 December 2020**

The minutes of the meeting held on 11 December 2020 were confirmed as a correct record.

3 **Adoption Tees Valley Update**

Members considered the biannual report of the Adoption Tees Valley for the 6 months' period, to 30 September 2020.

Discussion:

- The regulatory framework, relating to Adoption Panels had been amended by the Adoption and Children (Coronavirus) (Amendment) Regulations 2020. These regulations eased some Panel requirement and had initially allowed Adoption Agencies to stop holding Panels if they wished. ATV had continued to hold Adoption Panel's, throughout the pandemic. It was noted that the regulations would be reviewed, by Government, and were likely to be extended beyond March 2021.
- There had been some very positive practices identified during the pandemic and specific reference was made to using face time, in introducing children to prospective adopters. This had presented different opportunities for them to get to know each other e.g. reading bedtime stories. When the child and prospective adopter(s) finally met, in person, there was already a positive level of familiarity and warmth. This practice would continue moving forward, where appropriate.
- It was explained that research supported longer periods of transition from children placed with foster parents to their adoptive parents, with links with foster parents continuing for some time. ATV was working with researchers and would pilot implementation. Face Timing would be a feature of the pilot

RESOLVED that the update be noted.

4 Children in Our Care Strategic Group - Update

Members were provided with an overview of work and discussions at the Children in Our Care (CIOC) Strategic Group meeting.

The Strategic Group had considered several areas including:

- Covid-19 agency operational plans
- Children's Services
- Virtual School
- Early Help
- CIOC Health. It was noted that initial and review health assessments were offered face to face.
- CAMHS
- CIOC Action Plan 'our priorities' revisited
- Prevention and edge of care
- Sufficiency Strategy review

It was explained that, although partners continued to experience a very difficult period, there remained a real commitment to refocus the current CIOC action plan and drive forward the operational delivery of the priorities, set out in the CIOC and Care Leaver's Strategy.

Board discussion:

- Members noted that, last month, there had been more children returning home than had been placed in care. It was suggested that this may be an indication that some of the work being undertaken was beginning to take effect.
- Members noted that the time, from referral to CAMHS, to first appointment, was around 4 weeks. It was explained that an information gathering session was undertaken, to understand what a child's needs were. A clear plan was then formulated, which may include further assessments. Sometimes, direct therapy was considered appropriate and there could be a slight wait for this.
- The Board was informed that the use of remote technology had been very useful and work within CAMHS had continued, as close to normal as possible.
- It was explained that the Council worked with Police, to raise awareness with CIOC, of the dangers and risks of absconding. Figures, for children who went missing, from residential homes, had decreased during the latest lockdown.

RESOLVED that the update and discussion be noted.

5 Forward Plan

The Board noted the Forward Plan