

Corporate Parenting - Select Committee Recommendation Progress Update

Recommendation	Progress to date	Status
<p>Recommendation 1: KCC should adopt a simply-worded and practical corporate parenting guide (handbook) for all Members that clearly sets out what we need to know, including information about the fundamental areas crucial to running an effective children’s services in fulfilment of our corporate parenting responsibilities. The handbook must include contact details of key officers within each division.</p>	<p>A Members’ Corporate Parenting handbook has been completed and is available to all members, accessed through the Members’ area of Knet.</p>	<p>Complete</p>
<p>Recommendation 2: KCC should make available information about the fundamental areas of children’s services such as education and health outcomes, placement stability and support for care leavers for all Members on a regular schedule starting from March 2016.</p>	<p>A monthly Child in Care scorecard is produced by the Management Information Unit (MIU). This scorecard captures performance activity against a broad range of key indicators, including placement stability, health and education outcomes. The scorecard is presented to members at every Corporate Parenting Panel with a covering report, highlighting any key changes within performance.</p> <p>There is detailed scrutiny of specific areas at each Corporate Parenting Panel. Members have been provided with further information to understand the management information; this has included reports in relation to placement stability, alongside annual reports from the Adoption Service and Virtual School Kent.</p> <p>A Corporate Parenting Annual Report was introduced in 2018, to capture an overview of the progress in each of the services</p>	<p>Complete</p>

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	<p>and a summary of the work presented to the Corporate Parenting panel over the year. Our apprentices presented the Corporate Parenting Annual Report to the County Council cabinet meeting on 13th December 2018. This achieved wider member engagement in the work of Integrated Children's Services and our aim to be the best Corporate Parents we can be.</p>	
<p>Recommendation 3: KCC should introduce a refreshed training programme for all KCC Members as part of their induction after every county council election or upon their appointment. In the event of significant changes to corporate parenting, KCC Members should be updated through additional training. All Members are strongly advised to take advantage of this training offer. Consideration should be given to the best option for overseeing and reporting on training attendance.</p>	<p>Officers have worked with Democratic Member Services to design a comprehensive training plan. An on line training module on Corporate Parenting has been designed and is accessed through the members area on Knet. Corporate Parenting services have presented at all members' induction meetings, alongside the Corporate Director and the Directors for Integrated Children's Services.</p> <p>The Assistant Director for Corporate Parenting has also met individually with new members, as and when requested.</p>	<p>Complete</p>
<p>Recommendation 4: KCC should write to the Children's Minister to ask that a review of compliance to the new Regulations 2010 and the sufficiency duty should be carried out to ensure that responsible authorities are held to account in maintaining the welfare of the children in their care.</p>	<p>A letter to the Children's Minister, Edward Timpson was written in March 2016 and a response was received in April 2016. The issue has been raised with the Department for Education and the Lead Member for Specialist Children's Services also wrote to the Children's Commissioner in September 2016. In the letter to the Commissioner, Kent provided information on the numbers of children and the local authorities who have placed children in Kent and provided a case study to reflect the lack of compliance by local authorities with updated Care Planning Regulations (2015) when placing in Kent.</p>	<p>Work completed but this remains a significant pressure for Kent County Council and partner agencies.</p>

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	<p>The Association of Directors of Children’s Services have also been made aware that local authorities should undertake due diligence when considering Kent as an area to place their looked after children and should have been provided with an outline of the accompanying risks including gangs, child criminal exploitation and the risk of young people going missing.</p> <p>This particular pressure for Kent, has also been raised with Ofsted, during the inspection in 2017 and more recently in the Annual Conversation in February 2018.</p> <p>The impact of this work has not resulted in a reduction in the numbers of looked after children placed in Kent by other local authorities. In April 2016 there were 1,254 placed by other local authorities and in April 2019, this had risen to 1,377.</p> <p>The placements are being monitored and challenged for appropriateness on a case by case basis. Where necessary, individual cases are raised by the Corporate Director for Children, Young People and Education with the Director in the placing authority.</p>	
<p>Recommendation 5: KCC should adhere to the ‘simplification’ principle and merge the Corporate Parenting Panel and the Corporate Parenting Group to strengthen the focus on corporate parenting for a more powerful and streamlined oversight. This is to be backed by the development of a memorandum of governance between the new group and</p>	<p>The officer led Corporate Parenting Group and Member led Corporate Parenting Panel were combined in April 2016 with a revised term of reference and membership. The new format was reviewed in January 2017 and has been a positive change. Virtual School Kent apprentices are now members of the Corporate Parenting Panel, giving the voice of our children and young people.</p> <p>In May 2019, there will be the first “takeover” day of the</p>	<p>Complete</p>

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<p>relevant existing groups to reduce any avoidable overlap and/or duplication.</p>	<p>Corporate Parenting Panel, by our Children in Care and Care Leavers.</p>	
<p>Recommendation 6: All KCC Members should commit to actively championing and engaging with divisional and countywide participation events (e.g. Virtual School Kent activities, Achievement Award ceremonies and organised foster carer events) to hear about the achievements of our children and young people as well as finding out about those emerging issues that concern those in our care. It must always be made the responsibility of the relevant service managers to extend an invitation to all Members to events and meetings and ensure that this happens automatically and that relevant information is included in the Member Bulletin (or the Members' Calendar) to give all Members adequate notice and opportunity to attend.</p>	<p>Calendar dates are made available to all Members, through the calendar of events on the Members' intranet area of Knet. A number of participation events have been held, which Members have attended along with the Director of Children's Services and the Assistant Director for Corporate Parenting. These have included activity days, the summer awards ceremony with Virtual School Kent (VSK) and the autumn celebration event which acknowledges the achievements of looked after children and Care Leavers.</p> <p>These events have been well attended by members and the VSK young people undertaking apprenticeships have been key to delivering them.</p> <p>The Foster Carers Awards Ceremony is now an annual event, well supported by Senior Officers and members. Members have also been fundamental in promoting Kent Fostering recruitment events, to increase attendance of potential new families interested in fostering.</p>	<p>Complete</p>
<p>Recommendation 7: KCC should identify a lead participation officer to coordinate how the views of children, young people and their carers are taken into account at the service level and for such information to be made available to Members annually.</p>	<p>There is a full-time Participation and Engagement Manager within the Virtual School Kent, who manages a team of participation workers and apprentices. They are working across the county to engage with our children and young people, to ensure their views are taken into account. They are responsible for delivering our Children and Young People's Councils. Details of their achievements and work are outlined in the Virtual School Annual Report 2018. They are members of the Corporate Parenting Panel and provide members with regular</p>	<p>Complete</p>

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	<p>updates on their participation and engagement work. Over the last year, their work has included attending workshops and training days with the Senior Leadership teams to work on co production and design of our future services.</p> <p>A Foster Carer Survey was undertaken in 2018 and the feedback from carers incorporated into service development including the restructure of the Kent Fostering Service in April 2019.</p> <p>A Care Leavers Survey was undertaken in October 2018, which has been used to develop and expand the service following the publication in December 2018, of the “Local Offer”. This followed the implementation of The Children and Social Work Act (2017) in April 2018, extending our responsibility to Care Leavers, up until the age of 25; formerly this was up to 21 years.</p>	
<p>Recommendation 8: KCC should continue to strengthen work with our district partners (through council leaders and Joint Kent Chief Executives) to prioritise the needs of care leavers in gaining access to social housing and support. This partnership work should consider district partners supporting corporate parenting responsibilities in relation to the accommodation needs of care leavers through mechanisms such as the Kent Housing Strategy and the Joint Housing Protocol.</p>	<p>The Kent Housing Strategy and Joint Housing Protocols are fully implemented into practice. Housing options for Care Leavers remain a priority for the 18plus Care Leavers Service, supported by Commissioning.</p> <p>Social housing is managed by Kent’s 12 district and borough councils. Demand for social housing outstrips supply and social or ‘affordable’ housing is allocated as it becomes available. All Kent district/borough councils use a similar but not identical ‘banding’ system to define who will have priority over the large number of people who apply for social housing. The district councils have recognised care leavers as having complex needs but this does not automatically mean that district</p>	<p>Complete</p>

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	<p>councils will have sufficient accommodation or the right type available.</p> <p>There is increased joint working with the district councils to ensure ongoing sufficiency for accommodation for our care leavers.</p> <p>Some 'Supporting People' monies have been refocused to meet the housing needs of Care Leavers whereas previously these were not given priority.</p> <p>In June 2018, KCC started a Rent Guarantor Scheme for our Care Leavers, to give them greater access to the private rental housing market. This is a 12-month pilot, open to 25 young people, to test out the impact upon KCC acting as a rent guarantor. As of April 2019, we have 19 Care Leavers who have been able to access the private rental property market, under the Rent Guarantor Scheme. This will be reviewed in June 2019, with analysis of financial risk before a decision on a wider policy change is made.</p> <p>Our work around increasing options of quality accommodation for our Care Leavers is detailed in the Sufficiency Strategy 2019-2021, due to be presented to Corporate Parenting Panel in May 2019.</p>	
<p>Recommendation 9: KCC should review the independent living skills support arrangements for care leavers (including the training provision and who care leavers should contact for support at whatever time).</p>	<p>All young people are now allocated a Personal Advisor earlier, at aged 17.5 years. The Personal Advisor will work jointly with the child's social worker and young person, to complete a pathway plan, for their transition to adulthood. This includes a review of their independent living skills and any areas of</p>	

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	<p>support needed to help in the transition.</p> <p>A transition policy is being written, with young people from Young Adult Council (YAC) which will detail the Local Offer and the entitlements for Care Leavers. Foster Carers are provided training on supporting young people into independence and Staying Put arrangements are discussed at a much earlier stage, to achieve longer term permanency for our young people.</p>	
<p>Recommendation 10: KCC should conduct a review of the fostering service with the objective of improving the matching process and reducing the number of placement breakdowns. The review should take place six months after the county council has endorsed this Select Committee Report and report back to the Corporate Parenting Panel.</p>	<p>The Assistant Director for Corporate Parenting commissioned an independent review of the fostering service in June 2016. The review was comprehensive and noted some areas of good practice as well as areas of practice that needed to improve; there was a detailed RAG rated business plan to deliver the improvements. This prepared the Fostering Service for the Ofsted inspection in 2017, with the outcome of Children's Services being rated as Good.</p> <p>The review and the business plan were presented at Corporate Parenting Panel in September 2016. This was followed by presentation of the now annual Kent Fostering Business Plan and summary of the national Fostering Stocktake in 2018. The performance of the Fostering Service is included within the Child in Care Scorecard at every Corporate parenting Panel.</p> <p>In 2019 a successful bid to the Transformation Fund was made to fund a Placement Stability workstream.</p>	<p>Complete</p>
<p>Recommendation 11: KCC and its commissioning partners produce regular</p>	<p>NELFT was awarded the contract to deliver a Children and Young People Mental Health Service in Kent following a</p>	<p>Ongoing</p>

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<p>progress reports to the Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee regarding the provision of Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS), including evidence of the impact in relation to children in care – particularly the support offered to care leavers, disabled children and UASC and adopted children. Updates are to include key performance information, including waiting times and any geographical variances in access to services.</p>	<p>procurement process undertaken in 2017. The new model, was developed alongside the principles and approaches articulated within Future in Mind (DoH 2015) and sets out a whole system approach to emotional wellbeing and mental health for which there is a Single Point of Access (SPA), and clear, seamless pathways to support, ranging from Universal ‘Early Help’ through to highly specialist care with better transition between services. KCC invests £2.65m annually into the NHS contract for the delivery of specific services, including Early Help and services for Looked After Children across Kent. The CCGs invest £13,844m per annum, giving a total contract value of £16,501m per annum.</p> <p>A report was presented to members of HOSC on 1st March 2019 which provided an updated position regarding the needs, referral, discharge and waiting times regarding the service. Key highlights included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • At end January 2019 there were approximately 11,700 children and young people on the caseloads of all NELFT Kent teams. Combined locality teams held 5,038 open cases and; Neurodevelopmental and Learning Disability (NDLD) held 6,675 open cases. • The service has received over 25,000 referrals since commencement in September 2017. All children and young people referred are triaged by a clinician via the SPA within two working days. The purpose of the triage is to seek clarity on current needs, complete a risk assessment, agree next steps including determining if crisis/urgent/planned intervention is required and agreeing a safety plan as needed. On completion of triage and acceptance, the 	

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	<p>referral is sent to the appropriate locality where a clinician is allocated to complete an assessment to determine treatment pathway.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The number of new referrals to enter the service continues to increase so therefore the number of children waiting may also grow, as the service sees new service users whilst dealing with those who have already started treatment. However, despite the increase in demand, a high number of CYP in community teams are now starting treatment within 18 weeks of referral, for example, in West Kent 82.60% of CYP were seen as at the end of January 2019 (up 15% from September 2018). <p>The new model has delivered a significant increase in universal provision and a new clinical model has been designed and implemented. However, there have been several challenges in some delivery of the parts of the model funded by KCC. These challenges include underperformance in relation to numbers of young people receiving a service through the Early Help pathway, a change in the structure of the workforce to that planned, and a lack of available performance data. There has therefore been a dispute in relation to payment for the contract.</p> <p>On 28th March 2019, a paper was presented to CYPE Cabinet Committee setting out the current position in relation to the KCC funded element of the contract. It provided members with a performance update and the new contract commissioning arrangements. Due to continued poor performance across the KCC funded elements of the contract, work is on-going between KCC, NELFT and West Kent CCG, to amend the S76 agreement to enable KCC to contract manage this part of the</p>	

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<p>Recommendation 12: KCC should investigate what further measures can be adopted as part of the Not in Education, Employment or Training (NEET) strategy development to address the high numbers of care leavers not in education, training or employment and to improve the life skills 'offer' for the post 18s. Measures should be defined and implemented to address any areas in need of improvement. A report on progress should be brought to the Corporate Parenting Panel by June 2016.</p>	<p>There has been significant work undertaken within VSK and the Care Leavers service to improve performance in this area which is reported on within the Performance Scorecard and presented at each Corporate Parenting Panel. It is covered in more detail within the VSK Annual report, with figures for Kent achieving their young people being within education, training or employment, exceeding the national average.</p> <p>The extended remit of VSK up to the age of 18 is now having an impact upon outcomes and a specific focus is being placed on options for UASC who will increasingly form the majority of care leavers. A new policy is in place and a focus on the young people who are NEET has paid dividends with a further reduction in the number of young people who are NEET in the last 12 months.</p> <p>The Care Leavers service now has dedicated engagement workers, who work directly with the small cohort of young people, who have historically been more difficult to engage in education, training or employment. They work alongside the transition education worker for 18plus who is assisting young people to move from NEET into Education, Training or Employment (ETE).</p>	Complete
<p>Recommendation 13: KCC and our partner agencies should explore the viability of developing opportunities for care leavers to have apprenticeship positions with KCC and/or partners, thus increasing the range and</p>	<p>KCC have increased the number of apprenticeships offered within the Virtual School and there is now a drive to expand this to other departments. In October 2018, the "Corporate Parenting Pledge Scheme" was set up on Knet, enabling KCC staff/teams to make pledges of support to those children and</p>	This continues to be a focused area of the work for Corporate Parenting, in terms

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<p>access to further education and employment opportunities for young people in care who are in the NEET position.</p>	<p>young people whom they are Corporate Parents for. This has been successful in securing a range of offers of work experience and apprenticeships across KCC.</p> <p>The Care Leavers Service is also working with The Education People, through Skills and Employment to secure work opportunities with Local Businesses.</p> <p>The Assistant Director for Corporate Parenting is a member of the Kent Housing Group and this has led to some further offers of apprenticeships and training with local housing developers and businesses.</p> <p>Working with KCC Human Resources Team, Care Leavers are now given priority interviews for KCC jobs where they meet the criteria for the role. The Senior leadership team is also able to identify staff who can mentor Care Leavers to support with writing a job application and interview preparation.</p>	<p>of wider offers of opportunities from partner agencies and local businesses.</p>
<p>Recommendation 14: KCC should ensure that work is undertaken to improve the information we collect regarding our children in care and care leavers and their health needs. The result of this work should be fully reflected in the revised Joint Strategic Needs Assessment and future commissioning arrangements.</p>	<p>There are now two working groups in place with health partners to oversee both the strategic and operational aspects of the health needs of children in care. Health colleagues are now part of both the Corporate Parenting Panel and the Children in Care monthly management meeting where health targets are tracked. A Senior Business Support Officer now has direct oversight and liaison with health to monitor performance across the county, which has achieved significant improvements in meeting our health targets.</p> <p>Performance in this area is presented through the Child in Care scorecard at the Corporate Parenting Panel.</p>	<p>Complete</p>

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<p>Recommendation 15: Processes need to be established to ensure all Members take an active role in getting to know our frontline staff and their concerns, informally as well as via formal consultation exercises. We should also ensure that feedback from our social workers is informing the development of activities and planning at all levels of the organisation. Protocols must be established to clarify this process.</p>	<p>Members are involved in quarterly meetings which are led by the Assistant Directors. This provides an update on the key developments in Integrated Children's Services and an opportunity for Members to visit offices and meet staff. As part of the Change for Kent Children Programme there have been staff forums to meet the Senior Leadership Team and an annual staff survey completed.</p> <p>The Corporate Director and Lead Member for Children, Young People and Education have visited all the offices and teams within Integrated Children's Services and staff have really valued the opportunity to meet them and engage in discussion about their work.</p> <p>The Corporate Director for Integrated Children's Services introduced a regular staff newsletter giving key information, which has been very well received by the staff group.</p> <p>All staff within Integrated Children's Services are encouraged to observe the Corporate Parenting Panel and meet their local members.</p> <p>Participation events including the Awards Ceremonies for children, young people and foster carers are well attended by members and all enjoy meeting members in these more informal environments.</p>	<p>Ongoing</p>