



PEOPLE OVERVIEW COMMITTEE

Minutes of the meeting held on 20 November 2019

10.00 - 11.27 am in the Shrewsbury/Oswestry Room, Shirehall, Abbey Foregate, Shrewsbury, Shropshire, SY2 6ND

Responsible Officer: Emily Marshall

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Present

Shropshire Councillors

Councillor Peggy Mullock (Chairman)

Councillors Roy Aldcroft, Rob Gittins, Christian Lea, Elliott Lynch, Cecilia Motley, Kevin Pardy and Roger Evans (Substitute) (substitute for David Vasmer)

26 Apologies and Substitutions

Apologies were received from Councillors Kevin Turley, David Vasmer (Substitute: Roger Evans) and Sian Lines (Hereford Diocese).

27 Disclosable Pecuniary Interests

There were none.

28 Minutes

RESOLVED:

That the minutes of the meeting held on 17th July 2019 be approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

29 Public Question Time

There were none.

30 Members' Question Time

There were none.

31 Chair's Update

The Service Manager, LAC and Care Leavers provided an update on the Care Leavers Covenant and circulated a brief report summarising the event to the Committee.

A Member expressed concern at the percentage of young care leavers that were not in education, employment or training and also at the percentage of young care leavers that were not in suitable accommodation. The Interim Assistant Director of Children's Social Care and Safeguarding responded that these were local and

national concerns and was one of the reasons the Care Leavers Covenant had been established, to provide wider options for young people leaving care. These issues were also looked at by the Corporate Parenting Panel and suggested that a report be brought to a future meeting to examine the issues relating to young care leavers transition into adulthood in more detail. Members agreed this suggestion.

Councillor Cecilia Motley provided an update on the work of the Youth Activities Task and Finish Group. Councillor Motley explained that the work had been intensive, and the Group had received input from West Mercia Police, Shropshire Youth Association and experienced Youth Workers. The Task and Finish Group identified that there was a need for open access provision and outreach access for young people. The proposals put forward were to have a period of transition and to work with Parish and Town Council's and encourage support from them, it was reported that there had a mixed response to date. The Task and Finish Group concluded that outreach workers were needed to meet up with vulnerable children and that these workers were needed wherever children meet. A further report would be presented to Cabinet in December.

The Chairman thanked the Service Manager and Councillor Motley for their updates and for the good work that was being carried out.

32 Children's Services Performance Dashboard

Members received the report of the Children's Social Care EH&F Specialist, Information, Intelligence and Insight Officer which presented the Committee with Children's Social Care performance measures for Quarter 2 2019/2020.

In response to a question from a Member relating to social worker caseloads and the use of agency workers, the Director of Children's Services and Safeguarding explained that the aspiration was to have social workers with caseloads of no more than 19 – 20, however there were some with caseloads of 25 and it was added that there were plans in place to address this. It was further explained that the reality was that most authorities used agency workers and although there had been quite a high level of "churn" there were steps being taken to reduce this, such as a retention strategy, incentivised recruitment, training and development of existing staff and a trainee recruitment program.

In response to a question relating to the percentage of care leavers in education, employment or training, the Children's Social Care EH&F Specialist, Information, Intelligence and Insight Officer provided further information as to the national averages and brief breakdown of the cohort who were not in education, employment of training and the reasons for this.

RESOLVED:

That the Children's Social Care Performance measures for Quarter 2 2019/20 be noted.

33 Residential Care for Looked After Children

Members received the report of the Interim Assistant Director, Children's Social Care and Safeguarding which presented the Committee with an update on the progress of the Shropshire residential children's homes developments.

In response to a question, the Interim Assistant Director, Children's Social Care and Safeguarding reported that the development had been overseen by a tightly chaired project group and she was extremely pleased to see them nearing completion.

In response to a question relating to neighbourhood engagement, the Interim Assistant Director, Children's Social Care and Safeguarding that feedback had been positive and there had been questions mainly around parking and fencing, there were no ongoing issues or concerns. Councillor Potter commented that as the local member for one of the properties and the neighbouring local member for one of the other properties it was important to keep the engagement going.

Members were pleased to note the update and commented that it was pleasing to note that savings would be achieved but importantly the project was beneficial to those children in need of care.

RESOLVED:

That the report be noted.

34 Ofsted Feedback and Action Plan - Focussed Visit into Achieving Permanency

Members received the report of the Director of Children's Social Care and Safeguarding, providing an update on the recent focused visit made by Ofsted to Shropshire Children's Services, along with a copy of the Ofsted feedback letter and Shropshire's Permanency Action Plan.

RESOLVED:

That the content of the Ofsted feedback letter and Shropshire's Action Plan be noted.

35 Unregistered Placements

Members received the report of the Interim Assistant Director, Children's Social Care and Safeguarding which set out information and assurance for Members regarding Shropshire's approach to the use of unregistered and unregulated settings for children and young people.

RESOLVED:

That the report be noted.

36 Work Programme

The Scrutiny Work Programme had been circulated.

The following January agenda items were agreed:

- Shropshire Music Service
- Budget 2019/20
- Transition into adulthood.

37 Date of Next Meeting

Members were advised that the next meeting of the People Overview Committee would be held on Friday, 29th November 2019 at 2.00 p.m.

Signed (Chairman)

Date: