

SUPPORTIVE PARENTING PARTNERSHIP

**Minutes of the Meeting held on Monday 15 January 2024 at 4.00pm in the
Training Room, Sandhill Centre, Grindon Lane, Sunderland, SR3 4EN**

Present:

Members of the Board

Councillor Iain Scott (in the Chair)	Deputy Cabinet Member, Children, Learning and Skills Sandhill Ward
Councillor Margaret Crosby	Washington East Ward
Councillor Logan Guy	Non-Executive Director, Together for Children
Catherine Hearne	

All Supporting Officers

Jill Colbert	Chief Executive, Together for Children
Tracy Jelfs	Head of Service for Cared for Children, TfC
Jo Morgan	Designated Nurse, Cared for Children
Sharon Willis	Head of Service, Residential and Care Experienced Services
Mark Christie	Registered Manager, Together for Children
Michael More	Registered Manager, Together for Children
Kaye Fox	Foster Carer
Gillian Kelly	Democratic Services

Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Williams, Smith and Tye together with Samantha Diston.

Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest.

Minutes

18. RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting held on 16 October 2023 be agreed as a correct record.

Overview of Consistent Care for Children and Young People in TfC Children's Homes

Mark Christie, Registered Manager at Revelstoke Road delivered a PowerPoint presentation on the trauma repair model of care which was undertaken at the home.

It was highlighted that repeated trauma shaped how the mind and brain of a young person grew and resulted in trauma driven behaviour. The model of care being practised trained carers to: -

- Understand why children do the things they do
- Treat trauma driven behaviour with trauma-based responses
- Plan, do, measure and review plans with the Consultant Clinical Psychologist

Members were shown the cycle of trauma repair and a case study of how this approach had made a real difference in the journey of a cared for child. Mark highlighted that often to fix something, you needed to see the break, and it was a case of encouraging children and young people to let trauma out and not squash it down.

Catherine Hearne asked where the child or young person's voice came in the process and Mark explained that a signs of safety page was used in a child friendly part of the plan to capture their views.

Jill Colbert noted that the young person in the case study had a very close relationship with their link worker and Mark commented that this was very different to what workers used to be told but the close relationship was very beneficial for the young person.

Kaye Fox asked if this kind of work could be done if a child was still involved with their birth family and Mark said that this was possible depending on how the child had been hurt.

Councillor Crosby queried if workers got involved with schools as part of this process and Mark advised that this would be on a need to know basis. Sharon Willis added that there was a current situation in one of the homes where workers were liaising with the school very closely to mirror the work that was taking place in the home.

Jill asked if Mark and his colleagues had any ask of the Supportive Parenting Partnership and he commented that he felt that the trajectory was towards a trauma-based service. He noted that joint working with schools really did have an impact on the model of care.

From the foster carer perspective, Kaye said that they were also receiving support and she was currently working with Louise Hamilton to help a young person in her care.

Councillor Scott was delighted to hear that the trauma informed response was being pursued by Together for Children.

Members then received a presentation from Michael More, Registered Manager at Colombo Road on working with unaccompanied asylum-seeking children.

Unaccompanied asylum-seeking children was a growing area of work in which Together for Children were developing their skills, working in collaboration with the National

Transfer Scheme. It was highlighted that this was a frightening time for these young people, many of whom had travelled for many months and had lost their homes, their families and the people they loved.

Developing a network for unaccompanied children had become very important and links have been established through the National Transfer Scheme, other local authorities and local religious groups. Communication methods had also been adapted and good use had been made of interpreters and translators along with digital applications. This has helped to develop positive relationships, engage with the young people and to be able to take their feelings and views into account. Michael commented that celebrating diversity and culture was also important.

It was noted that these young people were dealing with different kinds of trauma and referrals were made to CYPS where appropriate. Michael stated that the three young people currently at Colombo Road were accessing different health services and key partners were crucial in helping young people to feel comfortable in their new environment.

Ofsted had made very positive comments about the experience of children and young people in the home and this reflected the ethos that children should be valued and cared for, no matter where they came from.

Jill referred to the trauma repair environment in Revelstoke Road and asked if this was the same in Colombo Road. Michael said that there were different types of trauma being observed and Dr Christie had carried out consultations with the young people; what they were feeling was normal, it was natural for them to miss their family and friends and their parents wanted the same thing for their children as Together for Children.

Sharon explained that all children's homes were trauma informed and trained in PACE (Playfulness, Acceptance, Curiosity and Empathy), however only Revelstoke Road was completely delivering trauma informed care with another two homes working up to that position.

Catherine Hearne commented that it was great to hear about the progress being made and she was interested in work with artists and musicians and links to shared culture and asked if there had been any connections made with Sunderland Culture.

Michael said that this had not yet been tapped into, workers were finding out what the young people were interested in as part of building up trust and initially sport had been a good starting point.

Jill highlighted that this was a topical issue as the recent residents' survey had flagged up social cohesion and culture and music were good ways of creating a shared experience.

Councillor Crosby asked what happened to the legal status of these young people when they reached the age of 18 and Sharon said that this would depend on whether they were granted the right to remain; there had been some young people who had been through the system and then were deported. It could be a challenge for services if a young person was over 18 and involved in an appeal process then accommodation had to be provided and this would come at a cost; in these circumstances an unaccompanied asylum seeker

would become a care experienced young person. Together for Children had good links with the Home Office but delayed decision making could have an impact.

Having thanked Mark, Michael and Sharon for their presentations, it was: -

19. RESOLVED that the information be noted.

Health of Cared for Children

The Designated Nurse for Cared for Children submitted an update report on the health of cared for children.

Jo Morgan reported that the Health Partnership for Cared for Children had continued to meet as a multi-agency group which was improving relationships across services working with children in care in the city. It was felt that a clear strategic plan was needed and ideas were being developed for this. A Practitioner Forum was planned to focus on cared for and care experienced young people and this would also look at how the trauma informed response could be promoted.

Young people had asked for emotional wellbeing support with life story work and it was planned to meet with the Change Council to gain greater understanding of what was required.

Jo advised that 124 Initial Health Assessments had been carried out in Quarters 1 and 2 of 2023/2024 however only 17% were within timescale in Q1 and 42% in Q2. These concerning timescales were due to capacity and the Foundation Trust had put in place an advanced nurse practitioner to manage the shortage of doctors and there was assurance that health needs were being followed up at ICB level. The Designated Doctor post was currently vacant and Dr Mills was the Safeguarding Designate. As the ICB was undergoing a restructure it was possible that there might be a different approach in the future and it was envisaged that the position would be known by the end of March.

Jill asked if there was a risk register which would reference the absence of the Designated Doctor and Jo advised that this would be within the Foundation Trust and ICB register. Jill said that she would follow this up and Jo agreed that more voices were needed to highlight this issue.

Jill added that concerns had been raised via the Council's Chief Executive about the impact of the restructure. It was also highlighted that the current Service Level Agreement was out of date and that more could be offered if this was reviewed.

Having thanked Jo for the report, it was: -

20. RESOLVED that the report be noted.

CNTW Children and Young People's Cared for Pathway

The Board received a report covering the period June to December 2023. Unfortunately, the representative from CNTW had not been able to attend but was happy to respond to any queries on the information contained within the report outside of the meeting.

The detail provided in the report was as follows: -

Month	Total rec'd	Not accepted	Reason for those not accepted	Other	Total accepted for CFC
June 2023	8	2 declined / discharged	1 x Adult 1x additional information required	0 seen outside of CFC pathway	6
July 2023	10	1 declined / discharged	Social care issues priority / clarity needed around legal status & living arrangements	2 seen outside of CFC pathway	7
August 2023	8	3 declined / discharged	2 x interim care orders. 1x lack of information about current concerns re mental health	0 seen outside of CFC pathway	5
Sept 2023	6	1 declined / discharged	1x about to be subject to open care proceedings	0 seen outside of CFC pathway	5
October 2023	10	3 declined / discharged	2 x additional information required. 1 x ongoing care proceedings	0 seen outside of CFC pathway	7
Nov 2023	14	6 declined / discharged	1 x current care proceedings 1 x input from Adoption Support Fund 1 x out of area 1 x requires response from f/carer in therapeutic way rather than individual therapy 2 x additional information required	0 seen outside of CFC pathway	8
Dec 2023	14	1 declined / discharged	1 x additional information required	2 seen outside of CFC pathway	9 (+2 pending decision)

21. RESOLVED that the information be noted.

Work Programme 2023/2024

The Board were informed of the work programme for the municipal year 2023/2024 and forthcoming agenda items.

Jill Colbert advised Members that it was Tracy Jelfs last meeting of the Partnership prior to her leaving Together for Children for a new post.

Councillor Scott thanked Tracy on behalf of Members for all of her hard work during her time with Together for Children.

22. RESOLVED that the work programme be noted.

(Signed) I SCOTT
In the Chair