

Coventry City Council
Minutes of the Meeting of Cabinet Member for Children and Young People held at
1.00 pm on Monday, 27 July 2015

Present:

Members: Councillor Ruane
Councillor H Noonan (Shadow Cabinet Member)

Employees (by Directorate):

People: F Doyle, L Gosling, L Ricketts, J Sembi

Resources: U Patel

Public Business

10. Declarations of Interests

There were no declarations of interest.

11. Minutes

The minutes of the meeting held on 30 June 2015 were agreed and signed as a true record. There were no matters arising.

12. Coventry Fostering Service Annual Report 2014/15

The Cabinet Member considered a report of the Executive Director of People which provided information on the work undertaken by the Fostering Service between April 2014 and March 2015.

The performance of Coventry Fostering Service is critical to delivery of high quality local placements that can meet the diverse needs of Coventry's looked after children.

The report summarised the activity of the service over the past 12 months. It highlighted the challenge of adequately recruiting the number and type of carers who can meet children's needs and the critical requirements of on-going support and supervision of these carers too. The report also considered the role of the senior management Fostering Steering Group and Members Task and Finish group in providing additional scrutiny and input.

RESOLVED that the Cabinet Member for Children and Young People:

- 1. Accepts the Fostering Services Annual Report 2014/15.**
- 2. Approves the updated Statement of Purpose.**

13. Adoption Financial Support Policy

The Cabinet Member considered a report of the Executive Director of People which sought approval to the proposed changes for financial support provided to adopters.

The Council would provide financial support to an adoptive parent or prospective adoptive parent, for the purpose of supporting the placement of the adoptive child or the continuation of adoption arrangements after an adoption order is made.

The Adoption Support Services Regulations 2005 specify the conditions for providing adoption support services including the provision of financial support.

Eligibility for financial support would be based on an overall assessment of the child and adoptive family's support needs. Coventry would undertake an assessment of support needs and this would include the undertaking of an assessment at the request of an adoptive parent, after the granting of an Adoption Order, if the adoptive parent feels there have been significant changes to a child's needs and circumstances or their own financial circumstances.

The adoption financial support policy was reviewed in 2009 and this review sought to update the policy in line with the review of other allowances. Key elements of the policy were detailed in the report.

RESOLVED that the Cabinet Member for Children and Young People approves the revised policy as detailed in the report for awarding adoption allowances with immediate effect for new cases and from the allowance review date for existing allowances.

14. **Update on the Troubled Families Programme**

The Cabinet Member considered a report of the Executive Director of People which provided an update on the Troubled Families Programme.

Phase 1 of the Troubled Families Programme was completed in May 2015 with Coventry achieving 100% success in turning around 905 complex families. Coventry was invited by the Department of Communities and Local Government to be an 'Early Starter' in Phase 2 of the expanded programme. The report provided an update of progress and performance to date and challenges in going forward with Phase 2 of the Government Programme through 2020.

The programme had so far successfully supported 905 Coventry families to turn their lives around, helped them to secure a better future for their children and in the long term improve their communities by lifting them out of poverty and empowering them to take control of their future.

The programme had been a catalyst for the transformation of services, it has supported greater collaboration, integration and co-location and has made joined up working a reality. For families, it provided a 'One Stop Shop' approach where services can be easily accessed. All of this was not only good news for Coventry, but had provided the promised platform to continue the full transformation of services highlighted through Phase 2 of the programme which would include a full alignment of partner agencies to provide a holistic way of working in delivering

services to families. This approach challenged traditional service delivery and allowed families to be met at their point of need without requiring escalation to crisis point or referrals into statutory service in order to manage risk and need.

The report further provided information on 'Phase 2 – Expanded Troubled Families Programme', the governance arrangements, challenges facing the programme and the timescales involved.

RESOLVED that the Cabinet Member for Children and Troubled Families Programme notes the progress achieved to date on the Department of Communities and Local Government (DCLG) Troubled Families Programme within Coventry and acknowledge the challenges faced for phase 2 as outlined in section 4 of this report.

15. **Outstanding Issues Report**

The Cabinet Member noted a report of the Executive Director of Resources that identified those issues on which further reports had been requested and were outstanding, so that progress could be monitored.

16. **Any Other Business**

There were no other items of business.

(Meeting closed at 2.15 pm)