

Minutes

SOCIAL CARE, HOUSING AND PUBLIC HEALTH POLICY OVERVIEW

18 March 2019



HILLINGDON
LONDON

Meeting held at Committee Room 4
Civic Centre, High Street, Uxbridge

	<p>Committee Members Present: Councillors Jane Palmer (Chairman), Duncan Flynn (Vice-Chairman), Judith Cooper, Ian Edwards, Tony Eginton, Janet Gardner, Becky Haggar and Paula Rodrigues</p> <p>LBH Officers Present: Debby Weller – Policy and Strategy Manager (Housing), Rod Smith – Service Manager – Tenancy Manager and Anisha Teji – Democratic Services Officer</p>
71.	<p>APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE AND TO REPORT THE PRESENCE OF ANY SUBSTITUTE MEMBERS (<i>Agenda Item 1</i>)</p> <p>Apologies received from Cllr Alan Deville.</p>
72.	<p>DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST IN MATTERS COMING BEFORE THIS MEETING (<i>Agenda Item 2</i>)</p> <p>Cllr Cooper declared a non – pecuniary interest in agenda item 5 as she had a relative who was applying for Universal Credit. She remained for the discussion of the item.</p>
73.	<p>TO RECEIVE THE MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING (<i>Agenda Item 3</i>)</p> <p>RESOLVED – That the minutes from the meeting on 7 February 2019 be confirmed as an accurate record.</p>
74.	<p>TO CONFIRM THAT THE ITEMS OF BUSINESS MARKED AS PART I WILL BE CONSIDERED IN PUBLIC AND THAT THE ITEMS MARKED AS PART II WILL BE CONSIDERED IN PRIVATE (<i>Agenda Item 4</i>)</p> <p>It was confirmed that there were no Part II items and that all business would therefore be conducted in public.</p>
75.	<p>COMMITTEE REVIEW - UNIVERSAL CREDIT AND OTHER WELFARE BENEFIT CHANGES (<i>Agenda Item 5</i>)</p> <p>The Committee discussed the major review and possible recommendations and conclusions for the draft report.</p> <p>In addition to financial risk to residents claiming Universal Credit (UC), it was noted that there was also a risk to the Council's finances in respect of residents being unable to pay rent and council tax.</p> <p>Areas for recommendations and conclusions noted included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">- The Council had taken steps to ensure that it was in the best position it could be in respect of UC and supporting its residents.

- Collaborative working between different agencies ensuring that people with vulnerabilities and mental health issues were not lost in the system. It was noted that there was already a lot of collaborative work ongoing and it was still early days for Hillingdon going live with UC.
- An update report be provided to the Committee in 6 – 12 months about the position of UC in Hillingdon, particularly detailing the claimant's experience. Real life examples to be provided.
- That there were steps taken for early intervention /identification of vulnerable claimants and relevant signposting in place.
- The Council considered ways to continue to support claimants to develop IT skills and look into identifying other partners who may be able to assist with this. It was noted that there is already support from the DWP and Uxbridge College.
- Members discussed whether possible triggers/alerts triggers could be placed on Council's housing and social care databases. For example, if a claimant only had £20 left in their account and it was the beginning of the month, whether alarms would be raised and whether officers would be able to work with the claimant and ascertain ways to support them to prevent issues from escalating. It was noted that in practice this may be difficult to implement as the Council has a number of different databases used for different reasons.
- Ongoing training for staff across the Council to raise awareness of UC.

RESOLVED:

- 1) **That the Committee noted the information.**
- 2) **That the Chairman and Labour Lead work with Democratic Services to finalise the appropriate wording for the recommendations.**
- 3) **That Democratic Services commence drafting the final report for the review.**

76. **ESTABLISHMENT OF A CORPORATE PARENTING PANEL** (*Agenda Item 6*)

The Committee had regard to the report on the Establishment of the Corporate Parenting Panel (CPP). The Chairman provided a summary of the key points in the report, mainly that the CPP would be embedded in the Council's governance arrangements and there would be a direct line in the Council's decision making process.

Members welcomed the progress report and the establishment of the CPP. Members considered that the process seemed streamlined and would be an effective way to move forward. Members had regard to the presentation it received in January 2019 from the Children in Care Council and how well the arrangement worked. Members were of the view that this would be a fantastic opportunity for children and young people to get involved and would provide a sense of empowerment.

During Member discussions, concerns were raised about the time it had taken to establish the CPP and whether quarterly meetings would be sufficient given that there were over 300 children in care/young people and 300 care leavers. It was noted that the previous Corporate Parenting Board met more often with a number of sub groups. Concerns were raised about not having substitute members listed, however the Chairman confirmed that consistency was necessary. Questions were also raised about whether Members took their role as Corporate Parents seriously. It was noted the CPP minutes would be provided to the Committee. Concerns were also raised in relation to how meetings would be managed with children present, particularly when discussing sensitive information.

	<p>RESOLVED:</p> <p>That the Committee:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Agreed the establishment of a Corporate Parenting Panel and its Terms of Reference and Operation. 2. Appointed Councillors Susan O'Brien, Nick Denys & Tony Eginton to be the voting Elected Members on the Panel on the basis of political balance (2 Con: 1 Lab). 3. Agreed that Councillor Susan O'Brien be the Chairman of the Corporate Parenting Panel with Councillor Nick Denys as the Vice-Chairman.
77.	<p>CABINET FORWARD PLAN (<i>Agenda Item 7</i>)</p> <p>RESOLVED: That the Cabinet Forward Plan be noted.</p>
78.	<p>WORK PROGRAMME (<i>Agenda Item 8</i>)</p> <p>RESOLVED: That the Work Programme be noted.</p>
	<p>The meeting, which commenced at 7.00 pm, closed at 7.54 pm.</p>

These are the minutes of the above meeting. For more information on any of the resolutions please contact Anisha Teji on 01895 277655. Circulation of these minutes is to Councillors, Officers, the Press and Members of the Public.

The public part of this meeting was filmed live on the Council's YouTube Channel to increase transparency in decision-making, however these minutes remain the official and definitive record of proceedings.