

Minutes

CORPORATE PARENTING PANEL

17 September 2019



HILLINGDON
LONDON

Meeting held at Committee Room 6 - Civic Centre, High Street, Uxbridge

	<p>Committee Members Present: Councillors Susan O'Brien (Chairman), Nick Denys (Vice-Chairman) and Tony Eginton</p> <p>Non – voting Panel Members Present: Children in Care Council Members, Helen Smith (Corporate Parenting Manager), Lisa Fenaroli (The Virtual School Head Teacher), Claire Walsh (The Local Authority's designated LAC Nurse) Deborah Prince Williams (The Local Authority's designated LAC Doctor) and Lesley Deville (Foster Carer Representative)</p> <p>LBH Officers Present: Anisha Teji (Democratic Services Officer), Zafer Yilkan (Assistant Director of Corporate Parenting), Poppy Reddy (Head of Service and Leaving Care) and Sandra Taylor (Director of Provider Services and Commissioned Care)</p>
10.	<p>APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE (<i>Agenda Item 1</i>)</p> <p>There were no apologies for absence.</p>
11.	<p>DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST IN MATTERS COMING BEFORE THIS MEETING (<i>Agenda Item 2</i>)</p> <p>There were no declarations of interest.</p>
12.	<p>MINUTES FROM THE PREVIOUS MEETING (<i>Agenda Item 3</i>)</p> <p>RESOLVED: That the minutes of the meeting held on 22 May 2019 be agreed as a correct record.</p>
13.	<p>PRESENTATION BY YOUNG PEOPLE - YOUNG INSPECTORS (<i>Agenda Item 4</i>)</p> <p>The young people updated the Panel on recent work and activities undertaken in the field of childrens' services, supported by the Assistant Director of Corporate Parenting, the Head of Service Looked After Children (LAC) and Leaving Care and the Corporate Parenting Manager.</p> <p>The panel received a presentation detailing activities undertaken throughout the summer period. It had been a busy period as a number of children and young people had been involved with service development and activities including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• An EID celebration event hosted by the Hillingdon Refugee Support Group.• A summer BBQ with 59 young people and due to the success of the BBQ steps were being take to arrange a Christmas party.• Trips to Thorpe Park/LEGOLAND and Brighton Beach.• Family trips to the theatre.• Five young people successfully completed Coding Club with Giffgaff and 18 young people had their aspirations raised at careers day where they were

offered help with their CVs.

- Attendance at the annual Family Justice Young People's board conference.
- Celebrating foster carers at the annual Foster Carers event.
- Trips to the Tower of London, London Eye and the Thames Clipper.
- Involved in foster carer training and co presented presentations.
- Visit to the Cocoon in Havering, a Council funded centre providing a safe drop in space for children and young people living in care or leave care.
- Young people have been invited to take part in the training for social workers at Royal Holloway University.
- Developing "Walking in Our Shoes" training sessions. 29 professionals were trained in May and July 2019 including social workers, managers, independent reviewing officers (IRO), virtual school officers, LAC health and members of the multi-agency psychology service (MAPS) team.
- The young inspector programme which included visits to three care homes in the Borough and grading them.

The young people shared their experience from visiting the Cocoon in Havering. It was described as a having a homely feeling where young people could drop in, meet key workers and receive support with various things. It was confirmed that this initiative had been considered in Hillingdon however there was a lack of engagement during the consultation. Although Hillingdon did not have a Cocoon type centre, a number of other initiatives took place in the Borough to support young people in care or leaving care to help adjust to independent living. Following the feedback received from the young people, it was agreed that young people would be consulted again about the prospect of drop in centres in the Borough. Officers explained that there was a potential to expand the use of children's centres to accommodate a drop in for LAC and this could be explored.

There were a number of events and programmes for Unaccompanied Asylum Seeker Children (UASC) and it was highlighted that it was important for UASC to attend different types of events to help with integration and improving language skills.

It was noted that the young inspectors' visits to two care homes in the Borough and one out of the Borough had been a success. The young inspectors graded the homes and gave feedback on how to improve. The young inspectors met with children, met with staff and looked around the facilities. Many of the areas for improvement were already known by the care homes however the feedback was well received as it offered a different perspective.

It was suggested that the "Walk In My Shoes" training sessions could be included in teacher training sessions so that the impact of care could be seen from a different perspective. The Panel welcomed this initiative.

It was agreed that the drop in/ youth centres and the inclusion of "Walk In My Shoes" in teacher training would be considered further.

RESOLVED: That the presentation be noted.

14. **INDEPENDENT REVIEWING OFFICER (IRO) ANNUAL REPORT** (*Agenda Item 5*)

The Assistant Director of Corporate Parenting presented the IRO Annual Report.

The report provided information about the work undertaken by the IRO and the services offered to LAC. It also detailed the core functions of the IRO as set out in s25

of the Childrens Act 1989 which included:

- Monitoring the performance of the local authority's work in relation to LAC.
- Participating in any reviews of the LAC's case.
- Ascertaining independently the wishes and feelings of the child.
- Performing other functions as prescribed in the regulations.

The number of LAC had increased from 284 in April 2019 to 326 at the end of March 2019 however much of this increase was due to the Borough being a port authority.

It was noted that IRO worked closely with different teams and there was partnership working to ensure that the best interests of the child were maintained. This included liaising with the virtual school, Corporate Parenting Manager and collaborative partner agencies to ensure the best possible care and safeguarding was provided for LAC. The IRO met every two months for case reviews and attended Health Liaison meetings to consider themes, timescales and services improvements within the health service. There was also regular contact with children's social workers.

Recommendations to improve services were also highlighted including allowing older young people to chair their own LAC reviews, ensuring all LAC reviews were conducted within time scales and developing consistent practice in relation to how the voice of the child and adult was reflected in the review minutes. Continued with work and reporting to the Corporate Parenting Panel was also significant.

It was noted that when matters were escalated, attempts were made to resolve issues at a lower level through informal discussions with social workers and team managers. If matters were not resolved at that stage, they would then be escalated to the formal process. 32 escalations during 2019/19 had been resolved by IROs at an informal level.

It was confirmed that missing numbers data referred to a small number of young people who had gone missing on repeated occasions. Every missing person was followed up and there was robust scrutiny in place.

RESVOLED: That the report be noted

15. **CHILDREN'S PERFORMANCE DATA** (*Agenda Item 6*)

The Assistant Director of Corporate Parenting and The Virtual School Head Teacher presented the Children's Services Performance Date report.

It was reported that the virtual schools team had increased its establishment size to build on the good practice from the ILAC inspection, but also to meet the new statutory requirements associated with Post LAC and Post 18 and to manage increasing caseloads. There were 13 CLA without school places at the end of July. During the summer periods there will always be higher unplaced numbers as there are no school or college intakes.

It was reported that 99% of PEPs had been quality assured and graded as being to a high standard.

Attendance and exclusions to be a priority area for the Virtual School, albeit that we have seen improvements in attendance and fixed term exclusions on the previous academic year. However, it was noted that there had been one school incident of permanent exclusion last year, the first issued in 4/5 years

and by a Hillingdon School. Despite this, outcomes were generally good with 69% of 216 statutory school age CLA making progress against national standards. Further details about progress levels were provided to the Committee and it was noted that there were exceptional KS2 outcomes, initial outcomes for KS4 were better than targeted and 50% of KS5 level 3 learners were going on to university in Sept 2020. In order to reduce the number of children and young people who were not in education, employment and training Post 16, a partnership had been created with Drive Forward Foundation to support care leavers accessing further training and employment.

Hillingdon had a lower than national average scoring in the strengths and difficulties questionnaire that all local authorities were required to use for all LAC in England.

Data demonstrated that 84% of LAC had had a dental checking within the last 12 months and bi monthly health liaison meetings were held regularly.

It was reported that a new designated LAC nurse had been appointed. There had been joint working towards the creation of a digital health passport however there were concerns that this would not be utilised. The health passport was considered a good idea and a physical version where it could be easily accessed was suggested by the young people.

RESOLVED: That the report be noted.

16. **HILLINGDON LOCAL SAFEGUARDING CHILDREN'S BOARD (LSCB)** (*Agenda Item 7*)

The Panel received the Local Safeguarding Children's Board (LSCB) report that had been put before the Social Care, Housing and Public Health Policy Overview Committee in July 2019. It was noted that the report would be presented to Cabinet in October 2019.

The report contained information regarding the work undertaken by the LSCB in 2018/19 and it was the last report under the current arrangements. The new arrangements would be implemented in September 2019, however, it was confirmed that in the meantime the LSCB continued to function and discharge its statutory duties.

It was confirmed that Hillingdon alongside seven other West London authorities formed a new partnership with the North West London Project in order to fulfil the new legal requirements.

A contextual overview and further details were provided about the new safeguarding arrangements including the development of partnership working between the police, CCG and Council.

RESOLVED: That the report be noted.

17. **WORK PROGRAMME** (*Agenda Item 8*)

It was agreed that a report on MAPS would be prepared for the meeting on 17 December 2019 and that the Virtual School Annual Report would be presented to the Corporate Parenting Panel on 19 March 2020.

RESVOLED: That the work programme be updated.

The meeting, which commenced at 5.30 pm, closed at 7.10 pm.

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.