

## Minutes

### CORPORATE PARENTING PANEL

26 July 2021

Meeting held at Committee Room 5 - Civic Centre,  
High Street, Uxbridge



	<p><b>Voting Panel Members Present:</b> Councillors Heena Makwana (Vice-Chairman), Kerri Prince</p> <p><b>Non-Voting Panel Members Present:</b> Siobhan Appleton (Designated LAC Doctor/Nurse), Helen Smith (Principle Social Worker and Corporate Parenting Manager), Alex Coman (Assistant Director, Safeguarding, Partnership and Quality Assurance), CiCC Representatives, and Beverley O'Dwyer (Virtual School Representative, in place of Kathryn Angelini)</p> <p><b>LBH Officers Present:</b> Neil Fraser (Democratic Services Officer)</p>
33.	<p><b>APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE</b> (<i>Agenda Item 1</i>)</p> <p>Apologies were received from Cllr Denys and Kathryn Angelini. Beverley O'Dwyer was present as Kathryn's substitute.</p>
34.	<p><b>DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST IN MATTERS COMING BEFORE THIS MEETING</b> (<i>Agenda Item 2</i>)</p> <p>None.</p>
35.	<p><b>MINUTES OF THE MEETING ON 27 MAY 2021</b> (<i>Agenda Item 3</i>)</p> <p><b>RESOLVED:</b> That the minutes of the meeting held on 27 May 2021 be approved as a correct record.</p>
36.	<p><b>ANNUAL REPORT FOR LOOKED AFTER CHILDREN AND CARE LEAVERS</b> (<i>Agenda Item 4</i>)</p> <p>Alex Coman - Director, Safeguarding, Partnership and Quality Assurance, introduced the annual report for Looked After Children and Care Leavers.</p> <p>The report was summarised, including detail of the impact of Covid-19, rising numbers of unaccompanied asylum seeker children (UASC), placement stability, engagement, education, and health and dental checks. The achievements of the service in what had been a challenging year were set out as per the report, with achievements in participation particularly highlighted. Broadly, performance remained very good, and in some cases significantly higher than that of statistical neighbours. It was accepted that the number of young people receiving annual dental checks had reduced, owing to the reduced availability of dentists throughout the pandemic.</p> <p>Visits with Looked After Children (LAC) continued to take place throughout the pandemic, whether face to face or by phone or remote meeting tools. Any child</p>

deemed to be risk was visited in person. In an instance where a social worker could not attend a meeting, other professionals such as health or school representatives would engage with the young person.

All missing children are being offered a return interview with their choice of interviewer, with most choosing to carry out the interview with their allocated worker, demonstrating trust and engagement with the Council and its professionals. Children missing from care were regularly reviewed alongside partners such as the Police or Schools in order to ensure the child's safety. All children were assigned a dedicated Independent Reviewing Officer who ensure the relevant information is used in LAC reviews and care plans.

In line with national trends, foster homes in Hillingdon had reduced in number due to some foster carers choosing to retire or end their fostering, (often due to changes in familial circumstances or pressures felt during the pandemic). To address this reduced number, there were currently six foster carer households under assessment. The majority of foster carers choosing not to continue were without child placements, though if a young person was in such a placement, the Council would ensure an appropriate handover to a new placement.

Following Brexit, LAC and Young People who were nationals of an EU country had been supported to engage with the EU Settlement Scheme (EUSS) to change their status and allow them to retain lawful residence in the UK.

Regarding UASC young people contesting the Home Office assessment of their age, in previous years the service had received low numbers of requests to undertake a new Age Assessment (under 10). As the number of UAS referrals from the Home Office was increasing, requests for age assessments were in turn increasing, which would have an impact moving forward.

The report referred to 16% of LAC in 'unsuitable' accommodation. The provision of suitable accommodation to meet the needs of young people was one of the priorities for the year ahead, and anyone in unsuitable accommodation would be found a more suitable home as soon as possible. Where young people were not ready to move into independent accommodation, they remained in semi-independent provisions, for instance to ensure the move to independence was successful and well supported.

**RESOLVED: That the report be noted.**

37. **CHILDREN'S SERVICES PERFORMANCE DATA Q1** (*Agenda Item 5*)

Alex Coman - Director, Safeguarding, Partnership and Quality Assurance, introduced the report detailing the Children's Services data from Quarter 1 of this financial year.

The report was summarised. Regarding Unaccompanied Asylum Seekers (UAS), it was confirmed that numbers were rising and, due to the pandemic some Local Authorities on the South Coast were unable to cope with the increase in number of new arrivals.

The government had therefore made additional provision available to house UAS (over the age of 18) in hotels and other accommodation, while assessments were carried out. It was forecast that the increase in UAS from across the channel would continue throughout the summer months, while the relaxation of travel restrictions was likely to result in an increase in new arrivals in Hillingdon through Heathrow from September 21

	<p>onwards. The increase in the demand for age assessments, and subsequent appeals, was expected to be reflected in performance data in later quarters.</p> <p>Regarding Hillingdon's UAS numbers versus other boroughs, the government had proposed a National Transfer Scheme that would assess capacity nationally and place young people into boroughs that could accommodate them safely. It was confirmed that, once settled in Hillingdon, Looked After Children would not be moved to other boroughs.</p> <p><b>RESOLVED: That the report be noted.</b></p>
	<p><b>CICC TAKEOVER</b></p> <p>The Children in Care Council representatives in attendance hosted a 'take over', comprising a question and answer session, role play, and a short presentation.</p>
38.	<p><b>WORK PROGRAMME</b> (<i>Agenda Item 6</i>)</p> <p>Consideration was given to the Committee's Work Programme. It was agreed that the KICA Feedback item, currently scheduled for the January meeting, be incorporated into the Review of Summer to be considered in October.</p> <p><b>RESOLVED:</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>1. That the Work Programme be noted; and</b></li> <li><b>2. That the KICA Feedback item, currently scheduled for the January meeting, be incorporated into the Review of Summer to be considered in October.</b></li> </ol>
	<p>The meeting, which commenced at 5.30 pm, closed at 6.45 pm.</p>

These are the minutes of the above meeting. For more information on any of the resolutions please contact Neil Fraser on 01895 277655. Circulation of these minutes is to Councillors and officers.