

## Corporate Parenting Panel Minutes

<b>Committee name</b>	Children, Families and Education Select Committee
<b>Officer reporting</b>	Ryan Dell, Democratic Services
<b>Papers with report</b>	Appendix A – Draft Corporate Parenting Panel Minutes
<b>Ward</b>	All

### HEADLINES

The Corporate Parenting Panel met on 24 January 2023.

### RECOMMENDATION

**That the Children, Families and Education Select Committee notes the Corporate Parenting Panel minutes.**

### SUPPORTING INFORMATION

The draft minutes from the Corporate Parenting Panel from the meeting on 24 January 2023 are included as Appendix A. For the Select Committee's purposes, these minutes are for noting and will be approved by the panel at the next meeting.

#### Implications on related Council policies

The Panel provides an important voice for children in care and care leavers, ensuring their views are heard as part of the council's policy making and decision-making processes

#### How this report benefits Hillingdon residents

The Panel gives young people in Hillingdon a valued role within our democratic process and enables Councillors to work directly with them and hear their views.

#### Financial Implications

None at this stage.

#### Legal Implications

None at this stage.

### BACKGROUND PAPERS

NIL.

## Minutes

### CORPORATE PARENTING PANEL

24 January 2023

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



HILLINGDON  
LONDON

	<p><b>Voting Panel Members Present:</b> Councillors Nick Denys (Chairman), Heena Makwana (Vice-Chairman)</p> <p><b>Non-Voting Panel Members Present:</b> Helen Smith (Principal Social Worker), Alex Coman (Director of Safeguarding, Partnerships and Quality Assurance), Kathryn Angelini (Head of Education for Vulnerable Children), Siobhan Appleton (Designated Nurse for Children Looked After in Hillingdon), Deborah Price Williams (Named Doctor for Children Looked After in Hillingdon), Representatives of the Children in Care Council, and Care Leavers</p> <p><b>Officers Present:</b> Marie Hennessey (Named Nurse for Children Looked After in Hillingdon), Emma Kavanagh (Head of Corporate Parenting), Ryan Dell (Democratic Services Officer), Nikki O'Halloran (Democratic Services Manager)</p>
71.	<p><b>APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE</b> (<i>Agenda Item 1</i>)</p> <p>Apologies were received from Councillor Gursharan Mand.</p>
72.	<p><b>DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST IN MATTERS COMING BEFORE THIS MEETING</b> (<i>Agenda Item 2</i>)</p> <p>None.</p>
73.	<p><b>MINUTES OF THE MEETING ON 20 JULY 2022</b> (<i>Agenda Item 3</i>)</p> <p><b>RESOLVED:</b> That the minutes of the meeting held on 02 November 2022 be agreed as a correct record.</p>
74.	<p><b>VIRTUAL SCHOOL HEADTEACHER'S ANNUAL REPORT 2021-2022</b> (<i>Agenda Item 4</i>)</p> <p>Officers noted the academic success of the Virtual School. Pupils' overall Attainment 8 scores were better than the target for the year. The average Attainment 8 score was 25.8, which was higher than the London average, and the young people were commended for their efforts. This year saw the lowest ever annual average for the number of young people on the Virtual School's roll that were reported NEET (Not in Education, Employment or Training) for more than one calendar month, at 10%, which represented a three-year low. It was noted that careers guidance had likely contributed to the drop in NEET numbers.</p> <p>Additional support and interventions such as the Flash Academy (an English as an Additional Language platform which supported English language acquisition) and My Maths (an interactive online teaching and homework website that built pupil engagement and consolidated maths knowledge) were noted. The Virtual School was</p>

also able to return to residential visits to Jamie's Farm. The Virtual School's long-standing partnership with Brunel University London had been re-established, with several events run in conjunction such as a 'Space Day', which consisted of a range of Science, Technology, Engineering and Maths activities. Furthermore, new links with Oxford University allowed a group of Key Stage 4 students an opportunity to visit Oxford and experience university life.

An extension of the Virtual School's remit to include all children with an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP), and not just Looked After Children (LAC), was noted.

Members commended the report and questioned how much work had been done with the Stronger Families Hub. Officers noted that there had been increasing collaboration with the Stronger Families Hub, especially in bridging any gaps that might appear. The Virtual had School acted as a translator between the Stronger Families Hub and schools, with a concentration on Looked After Children.

The report noted that children with no school or those in other small settings, such as secure units, were receiving, on average, less Pupil Premium Plus (PPP). This was questioned by Members and officers noted that in these cases, the Education, Health and Care Plan was often meeting needs.

Members questioned the reasons for the decrease in attendance at around April 2022. Officers noted that there were several factors including the Omicron COVID-19 variant. The report noted that during the last academic year 7.03% of school days were lost due to authorised absence, of which 50% was due to illness, with 15% being linked to COVID-19. This had led to the average attendance for the Statutory School Age (SSA) cohort being slightly lower than expected. Officers further clarified that there was a Virtual School Officer for every child, who would follow-up quickly in the event of non-attendance. Officers were encouraged to discuss with schools, social workers and placements how they could best support children to engage in education and to encourage them to attend school.

Members also questioned the post-18 support and what was available. Officers clarified that care leavers were having more contact although this was more informal and there was no Personal Education Plan (PEP). Post-18 support was more driven by the young people and could include support for UCAS applications for example. It enabled care leavers to know that they still had support, even if it was in a different way to pre-18.

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

75. **LOOKED AFTER CHILDREN ANNUAL HEALTH REPORT FROM CNWL PROVIDER SERVICES** (*Agenda Item 5*)

A presentation was given by the Named Nurse and Named Doctor for Looked After Children, who clarified that CNWL was the Central and North-West London NHS Foundation Trust.

There were 682 children who were looked after during 2021-2022 in Hillingdon. It was noted that there had been an increase in the number of unaccompanied asylum-seeking children (UASC). This was an increase of 10.4% compared to 2020-2021 and was significantly higher than both the London and England average. A large number of the unaccompanied asylum-seeking children cohort were aged 16-18 and had often experienced traumatic journeys and experiences, so emotional wellbeing was a key

factor here.

COVID-19 had been noted as a significant challenge and so phone calls and virtual appointments (via Zoom) had been implemented to complete health assessments. These were more suitable for some age groups, although a return to face-to-face assessments had been implemented by August 2020 and was the appointment of choice.

During 2021/2022, 100% of initial health assessments were completed. 348 requests for initial health assessments had been received, which included 12 requests to see children placed in Hillingdon from other authorities. In relation to unattended initial health assessments, there had been a month-to-month fluctuation and the LAC Health team offered flexible times and virtual appointments to try to reduce non-attendance. It was noted that liaising with carers, social workers, the appropriate named nurse, and the young people could lead to an increased understanding of the reasons for missed appointments. There were regular monitoring meets with the named nurse. Appointments missed through illness could be re-arranged and there was a revised process for Looked After Children and their carers to be contacted by the LAC health team nurses for other reasons for non-attendance.

Some of the main challenges faced included: the increased number of unaccompanied asylum-seeking children; an insufficient and inconsistent availability of interpreters; and a deterioration in the mental health of Looked After Children leading to an increase in A&E attendance for mental health reasons.

Some examples of best practice included: the trial of a Saturday clinic to support the increase in unaccompanied asylum-seeking children; an ongoing review of young people attending A&E and their needs and involvement in strategy discussions to manage complex children more frequently; and that health recommendations continued to be of high a quality and to identify the health needs of this vulnerable group.

Members questioned the Transition role and officers clarified that there were 40-50 care leavers supported via the Transition role, and that over 30 of these were aged 16-20. My Health My Plan had been launched to increase the understanding of what young people would like from the service. A new information leaflet had been compiled, and the Transition nurse had been able to attend EHCP reviews and transition panel meetings.

Members questioned the main challenge relating to the increase in A&E attendance, and how this was being dealt with. Officers clarified that the strengths and difficulties questionnaire was being completed by young people. This provided an overview of emotional health and wellbeing. It was also clarified that officers were monitoring referrals to A&E and following up with social workers. Officers stated that: a lower score on the questionnaire indicated a better outcome; a score of 17 was the threshold for a referral to Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS); and that the Hillingdon average was 12.7 (which was below the national average of 13.7). It was noted, however, that more scores of 17 were appearing. Reference was made to the Link Counselling Service, which had priority for Looked After Children.

Members questioned why the number of complex cases was increasing and officers clarified that this included: those missing from care; those who had made frequent moves; links to Child Sexual Exploitation; and those with more complex health needs. It was noted, for example, that young people who moved placements were often moved to the bottom of the new waiting lists for NHS treatment. It was hoped that better

communication could improve this.

Children in Care Council Members highlighted an issue they had experienced around the structure of health assessments, namely that some felt that the questions asked of them were too personal, or that the meetings themselves were too direct. It was also noted that officers/ professionals taking notes while talking to the young people could be off-putting, and that easing into the discussion could lead to the young people feeling more comfortable, which could then lead to more detailed responses. As the assessments were once yearly, it was suggested that if it were possible for the young people to see the same nurse at each visit, this would lead to them building a rapport. It was noted that young people sometimes refused to answer personal questions, as was their right to do so. Related to this, 'Walking In Our Shoes' training was available and had been beneficial to officers in identifying areas for improvement. Further to this, officers noted that although the way certain questions were asked could be amended, some questions were necessary to ask. The young people present were asked to think about how they would like to be asked these questions. The young people also suggested being able to see the questions in advance of the meetings.

The role of the Transition nurse at post-18 was discussed, and their role in building relationships; acting as a point of contact; and providing help with, for example, changing doctors was noted.

**RESOLVED: That the report and outcome of the review be noted.**

76. **NATIONAL SAFEGUARDING REVIEW** (*Agenda Item 6*)

In October 2022, the Child Safeguarding Practice Review Panel published phase 1 of its review into the safeguarding of children with disabilities and complex health needs in residential settings. It looked specifically at the experiences of 108 children and young adults from 55 local authorities at three specialist residential settings between 01 January 2018 and 21 March 2021. The settings were located in Doncaster and run by the Hesley Group. As the report uncovered serious findings, the Child Safeguarding Practice Review Panel asked Directors of Children's Services to initiate urgent assurance actions about children placed in similar types of provision. Directors of Children's Services were asked to report the findings of their review to the Children Partnership Safeguarding Board and to the Corporate Parenting Panel.

The first part of the review was an assessment of the care received within the provisions provided by the residential special schools. It was noted that Hillingdon had three children within these residential, and that there were no concerns over the care received.

The second part of the review was to identify if the residential were based in Hillingdon, and conduct a review over any allegations that had been made in relation to the care provided. As none of the residential settings were based in Hillingdon, no review was required.

The third part of the review was to report these findings to the Panel.

It was noted that phase 2 of the review would take place at the end of 2023.

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

77. **SUPPORTING CARE EXPERIENCED YOUNG PEOPLE'S EDUCATION, TRAINING AND EMPLOYMENT (ETE) OPPORTUNITIES** (*Agenda Item 7*)

Officers introduced the new Head of Service for Corporate Parenting.

It was noted that the London Borough of Hillingdon was a corporate parent to 528 Young people over the age of 18 who were eligible for leaving care support. As of December 2022, 52.65% of care experienced young people in the London Borough of Hillingdon were engaged in full time education, training or employment, which was marginally higher than the national average of 52%.

Being a port authority, the London Borough of Hillingdon had a high number of unaccompanied asylum-seeking children within its boundaries. As of December 2022, 88.6% of unaccompanied asylum-seeking children in the Borough were in education, in comparison to 52.65% overall. 11.4% of unaccompanied asylum-seeking children were not currently in education, employment or training (NEET), with 5.7% (two young people) who were NEET due to their immigration status.

Following an audit of young people's career aspirations, healthcare had featured in the top five aspirations. The Nurse Cadet programme in conjunction with Uxbridge College was noted, which provided BTECs in health and social care. The programme was planning to offer healthcare assistant roles to those who completed the programme. It was also noted that 37 young people were currently at university.

A number of case studies of young people were listed in the report. Members suggested the possibility of establishing an alumni network, where young people could share their experiences, provide mentoring, and increase aspirations of other young people.

Members also suggested the possibility of a session with Hillingdon Councillors as, for example, starting a business was one of the top aspirations. Officers noted that Ward Councillors' local knowledge could be beneficial for means of work experience.

The 'creative arts' aspiration, which was top of the audit of aspirations, was defined to include art and design, media, and street art among others. The 'education' aspiration was noted to not just include teachers, but other educational roles.

The Family Group Conference (a way for care experienced young people to maintain a connection with a supportive adult after they leave care) was noted as an interesting concept by Members, who questioned how it worked. Officers noted that Family Group Conference support could take many forms, such as mentoring, advocates, or simply linking in with a trusted adult who could provide guidance and support as the care leaver navigated adulthood. The goal of the Family Group Conference was to help care experienced young people feel connected and supported as they transitioned to independence, and to improve their outcomes in areas such as education, employment, and mental health.

Officers noted that there was a ring-fenced Business Administrator post for young people at the London Borough of Hillingdon, and it was further noted that the Civic Centre was a comfortable place for young people. Some young people had attended meetings of the Corporate Parenting Panel and experienced co-chairing. A future 'Skills Day' was noted to assist with CV writing and other skills.

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

78.

**CHILDREN'S SERVICES PERFORMANCE DATA – Q3 (Agenda Item 8)**

It was noted that this update had been based on performance data as at 31 December 2022. At this point there were 364 Looked After Children and 528 care experienced young people. The 5 Desired Outcomes for Our Children were noted: to be the best version of themselves; to enjoy good physical and mental health; to have pride in their unique identities; to live somewhere where they feel they belong; and to be and feel safe.

It was noted that 100% of PEPs had been completed and 97% had been of a high quality. It was noted that the average attendance of Statutory School Age Young people was 85.8%, which was slightly lower than expected and lower than the average for all pupils in Hillingdon (89.9%). Average attendance of post-16s was 77.3% and this reflected a national trend.

At the end of the quarter, there were 19 young people who were Not in Education, Employment or Training (NEET). Seven were unchanged from the previous quarter; three had frequent missing episodes and so were difficult to re-engage in Education, Employment or Training (EET); and the remaining nine became NEET during the current quarter as a result of leaving their EET placements early. New opportunities were being sought. The total of 19 was the highest for the previous five years. Hillingdon had 53% of 19-21 year olds in Education, Employment or Training (EET), which was slightly above the national average of 52%.

The Strengths and Difficulties Questionnaire was referenced – this was an annual screening of behaviour for children aged 4-16. The lower the score the better on this questionnaire. The average score was 12.7, which compared positively to the national average in England (13.7) and Statistical Neighbours (13.6). It was noted that children who scored 17 or above were referred to the in-house Multi-Agency Psychology Service (MAPs) and/ or early therapeutic intervention.

62% of the Looked After Children had had a dental check within the previous 12 months, which represented a 9% increase over the last quarter.

16% of the Looked After Children (as at 31/12/2022) were in residential children's homes. 52% of our children had been placed inside the Borough, and most within 20 miles.

95% of young people had had a LAC review within the previous 12 months.

There were currently four newly qualified social workers (NQSW) who were completing the Assessed and Supported Year in Employment (ASYE), enabling their social work learning by holding reduced caseload, additional study time and reflective time, and support from the Advanced Practitioner in the teams. Two of these NQSW's had undertaken their student social work placements with Hillingdon in Spring/ Summer 2022.

Children's Social Care's social work apprenticeship programme enabled non-qualified staff to be supported throughout their social work training. The first cohort, recruited in 2019, commenced their first year as newly qualified social workers within Hillingdon in September 2022. The second cohort, recruited in May 2021 were now in "contrasting" placements within adult social care, with their adult peers now placed within children's

	<p>social care teams, which enabled all apprentices to gain experience across social care and to develop transferable social work skills. In September 2022, the third cohort commenced their first year of social work education whilst placed in the Stronger Families Key Working service.</p> <p>The service was liaising with Bucks New University in planning for a September 2023 intake of new apprentices, enabling career progression opportunities for staff across Hillingdon.</p> <p>A small error within the 'Activity types of 19-21 year old current care experienced young people on 31/12/2022' graph was highlighted, to be corrected and re-shared outside of the Panel.</p> <p><b>RESOLVED: That the report be noted.</b></p>
79.	<p><b>MULTI-YEAR WORK PROGRAMME</b> (<i>Agenda Item 9</i>)</p> <p>Consideration was given to the Panel's Work Programme.</p> <p>It was agreed that a new item would be brought to the parent Children, Families and Education Select Committee in order to update the Panel's Terms of Reference.</p> <p><b>RESOLVED: That:</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>1. the Work Programme be noted; and</b></li> <li><b>2. a new item on updating the Panel's Term of Reference be added to the work programme for the parent Children, Families and Education Select Committee.</b></li> </ol>
	<p>The meeting, which commenced at 5.30 pm, closed at 6.50 pm.</p>

These are the minutes of the above meeting. For more information on any of the resolutions please contact Ryan Dell on 01895 25 0636. Circulation of these minutes is to Councillors and officers.