

## Minutes

### CORPORATE PARENTING PANEL

Wednesday 22 May 2024

Meeting held at Committee Room 5 - Civic Centre,  
High Street, Uxbridge UB8 1UW



	<p><b>To Members of the Panel:</b></p> <p><b>Voting Members:</b> Councillor Nick Denys (Chair) Councillor Heena Makwana (Vice-Chair) Councillor Tony Gill</p> <p><b>Non - voting Members:</b> Representatives of the Children in Care Council, and Care Leavers Aisling Knight, Children's Participation Team Manager Emma Kavanagh, Assistant Director Corporate Parenting and Fostering Kathryn Angelini, Assistant Director for Education &amp; Vulnerable Children Bridget Owen, Designated Nurse Looked After Children (Harrow and Hillingdon) (NHS North West London ICB)</p> <p><b>Officers Present:</b> Ryan Dell, Democratic Services Officer</p>
1.	<p><b>APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE</b> (<i>Agenda Item 1</i>)</p> <p>Apologies were received from Councillor Jan Sweeting with Councillor Tony Gill substituting.</p> <p>Apologies were also received from the Looked After Children's Designated Doctor.</p>
2.	<p><b>DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST IN MATTERS COMING BEFORE THIS MEETING</b> (<i>Agenda Item 2</i>)</p> <p>None.</p>
3.	<p><b>MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING</b> (<i>Agenda Item 3</i>)</p> <p><b>RESOLVED:</b> That the minutes of the meeting dated 24 January 2024 be approved as an accurate record.</p>
4.	<p><b>YOUNG PEOPLE PRESENTATION: SUMMARY OF THE LAST YEAR</b> (<i>Agenda Item 4</i>)</p> <p>The young people and officers presented a summary quiz of the last year. This included facts, figures and percentages; a summary of pictures taken throughout the year; and priorities for the upcoming year.</p> <p>The facts, figures and percentages included questions and answers relating to young people volunteering in addition to attending Children in Care Councils; Walking in our shoes training; and young peoples' involvement in recruitment of officers.</p>

The pictures taken included the Children and Young People Awards; football training; and the summer barbeque.

The priorities for the Participation Team for the upcoming year were:

1. To recruit another Talkers volunteer and a Step Up volunteer
2. Develop Youth Council
3. Further embedding young people into interviews into all services in Hillingdon
4. Secure another holiday trip to the NCS
5. Explore and provide further opportunities for children known to services
6. Reaching out to community partners to provide ongoing enrichment opportunities
7. Continue to engage in regional/ national consultations

Members noted that the number of hours that young people had spent volunteering was impressive.

Brentford FC partnered with the borough to provide coaching and Tuesday training sessions for looked after children.

The next Kids in Care Awards was currently being planned.

The Inspiring Learning Trust funded 18 young people to go on a residential (Kingswood) trip this year.

Several external agencies had commissioned the Council to deliver Walking in our shoes training.

The Youth Council now sat under the Participation Team, and there was an ambition for the Youth Council to be more representative of protected characteristics. It was noted that efforts would be made to encourage young people to attend meetings of the Children, Families and Education Select Committee.

The Chair noted the outstanding OSFTED rating for overall performance, further noting that this represented good improvement over recent years.

**RESOLVED: That the Panel noted the contents of the presentation.**

5. **CHILDREN'S SERVICES PERFORMANCE DATA Q4 2023-24** (*Agenda Item 5*)

Officers presented the Children's Services performance data for Q4 of 2023-24.

A part-time Transitions Nurse had been appointed on a 12-month fixed term contract under the Staying Close project. This role will support up to 45 young people residing in Staying Close accommodation, addressing any identified physical and emotional wellbeing needs.

There were good relationships with CNWL.

Officers were planning training on initial and review health assessments.

On Staying Close, a project manager had started in January. There was a target of having 15 young people on this project for the year. This target had been met within four months. There was a new target of 30 young people for the new year. Officers were currently advertising for a Staying Close personal advisor and had 40 applicants so far. There was currently fully funded Council gym memberships for those on the Staying

close programme and officers were looking to expand this to all care experienced young people.

On Fostering, a new offer had been launched and had been well received. There had been a successful soft launch of this, while the main launch took place last Monday, during foster care fortnight. There had been 40 new expressions of interest in becoming a foster carer, compared to only 121 in the whole of last year. Of those 121, eleven had been recruited. Some of the young people did an interview for BBC local news, which was a good opportunity for exposure of the offer. Members congratulated officers on this.

At this point, Councillor Denys left the meeting and Councillor Makwana took over as chair.

The report noted that one child had come into care and had never been in school. Currently a package of tuition had been commissioned for them. Members asked what this looked like. This was bespoke to the child and consisted of no more than 15 hours of 1-2-1 tuition per week. This would be supplemented with activities such as horse-riding or gardening.

The report noted that 83% of current Looked After Children had statutory visits that were up to date. It was noted that this figure needed to be higher. Some visits had not taken place – some young people had moved; some had refused visits; sometimes it was difficult to arrange visits in time. Alternative methods were being sought to address this. There were currently 6 or 12 weekly visits.

It was noted that nine Looked After Children reviews were pending. These would be happening in due course.

A new dashboard style of report was noted for future meetings.

**RESOLVED: That the Panel noted the content of the report.**

6. **CARE LEAVER OFFER** (*Agenda Item 6*)

This item was taken before item 5.

Officers gave a verbal update on the Local Offer.

The current Local Offer was a one-page website with links to further information. It was designed for young people to access when needed, not to be read end-to-end.

Ofsted had noted that there was room for improvement, and it was not as up to date as that of other local authorities.

A re-vamping of the offer was currently underway. This would include 'supporting your learning journey' with separate web pages for each section. It would also include more images to be more user-friendly; more information on health matters; and more information on finance. Health colleagues were commended by the young people.

Next steps would include obtaining feedback from young people, noting that this would be an improvement on the Local Offer.

The possibility of an app was noted, although this would have to be externally commissioned. A social media-based element was also noted, although the young

people noted that having it all online would be preferable, as this may make it more accessible.

The young people further noted that an online glossary and more signposting of services would be useful.

A 'setting up home' allowance of £3,000 was highlighted. This was an increase from the previous £2,000. This was usually accessible at age 18 but could be accessed earlier depending on circumstances. The young people noted that these funds enabled opportunities, and the increase was helpful given the increase in the cost of living. There was also an option for the funds to be added to a P-card, and there were good relationships between the young people and officers.

In terms of the wider offer, it was intended to align with the PAN-London offer. Free prescriptions were available, although there was only a small uptake of this – this may be due to a small need or little awareness of it.

There was lots of good will from external partners. Two partners had created 'Give Space' which offered opportunities in dance, art and drama. Hillingdon provided a venue for this at the Civic Centre. A second year of funding had been secured for this, and it was hoped to engage a younger age group.

On Council Tax, there was a tentative agreement for care experienced young people to not pay Council Tax until the age of 21, where it would then be subsidised. This was subject to agreement at the next Full Council.

Members asked about feedback. While this was not captured as such, this would come through the Participation Team. The Children in Care Council sessions were expanding, and now had two to three guests per session.

Officers had secured 200 sets of bags filled with items to move house with.

There was benchmarking with other local authorities including a quarterly tick-box of what was offered.

There was a regional Children in Care Council website which could be used to compare nationally.

**RESOLVED: That the Panel noted the contents of the verbal update.**

**7. UPDATE ON TERMS OF REFERENCE UPDATE (Agenda Item 7)**

Officers noted that the previously requested amendments to the Panel's Terms of Reference had been submitted to the Children, Families and Education Select Committee, who had approved the amendments.

**RESOLVED: That the Panel noted the contents of the report.**

**8. WORK PROGRAMME (Agenda Item 9)**

Members considered the work programme.

	<p>Members noted that Youth Justice matters would be referred to the Children, Families and Education Select Committee instead of the Corporate Parenting Panel. Therefore, the Youth Justice update would be removed from the Work Programme.</p> <p><b>RESOLVED: That the Corporate Parenting Panel considered the report.</b></p>
	<p>The meeting, which commenced at 5:30 pm, closed at 6:35 pm.</p>

These are the minutes of the above meeting. For more information on any of the resolutions, please contact Ryan Dell on [democratic@hillingdon.gov.uk](mailto:democratic@hillingdon.gov.uk). Circulation of these minutes is to Councillors, Officers, the Press and Members of the Public.