

## Minutes

### CORPORATE PARENTING PANEL

20 May 2025

Meeting held at Committee Room 6 - 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 Jan Sweeting</p> <p><b>Non-voting Members:</b> Representatives of the Children in Care Council, and Care Experienced Young People Ash Knight, Participation Manager Bridget Owen, Designated Nurse Looked After Children (Harrow and Hillingdon) (NHS North West London ICB)</p> <p><b>Councillors Present:</b> Councillor Colleen Sullivan Councillor Narinder Garg</p> <p><b>Officers Present:</b> Poppy Reddy, Assistant Director, Permanence &amp; Specialist Service Lisa Steel, Virtual School Headteacher Ryan Dell, Democratic Services Officer</p> <p><b>Also Present:</b> Katie Randall, Clinical Services Manager, Harrow 0-19 Service, CCN Team, Special School Nursing and Looked After Children, CNWL</p> <p>* This meeting was co-chaired by a Children in Care Council member</p>
1.	<p><b>APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE</b> (<i>Agenda Item 1</i>)</p> <p>Apologies had been received from Dr Kate Head.</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>Members highlighted that the minutes had stated that “The young people noted that sessions such as Goals can be expensive and there was a lack of female activities”, and asked if there was an update on this.</p>

	<p>Officers advised that there was now a programme to train 25 girls in using hair extensions; free football and basketball sessions; and a new female youth group called Unique Swagger, which was an addition to previous similar sessions.</p> <p><b>RESOLVED: That the minutes of the meeting dated 06 February 2025 be approved as an accurate record.</b></p>
4.	<p><b>YOUNG PEOPLE'S PRESENTATION: SUMMARY OF THE LAST YEAR</b> (<i>Agenda Item 4</i>)</p> <p>Officers and the young people presented a summary quiz of the last year. Highlights included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A Wordle game</li> <li>• Over 700 young people had been nominated for a KICA (Kids in Care Award) in 2024, which was the highest ever total. (The number of attendees at KICA was not the same as the number of nominees)</li> <li>• 18 young people attended the trip to the Isle of Wight</li> <li>• 25 young people attended the trip to the Kent</li> <li>• One young person had recently graduated from Kingston University with a first in biomedical science</li> <li>• 100% of Walking In Our Shoes attendees said the training was valuable. A further session was due to take place next week</li> <li>• The young people had supported in recruiting to 42 roles across Children's Social Care</li> <li>• On average, 25 children and young people attended each Youth Council session</li> <li>• There were currently six young people with lived experience working for Hillingdon</li> <li>• Six young people had started English and maths tuition, with the Virtual School and Children's Participation Team. The young people noted that they were grateful for this opportunity, and that this opportunity had been opened up to care experienced young people. This would help the young people with college opportunities. The Virtual School had been helpful with resources, and the young people could contact their tutors over WhatsApp. The young people had exams coming up in June</li> <li>• Four young people attended the new youth group, called Aim High – this was a group for young people with SEND and disabilities up to the age of 25. These young people had observed Walking In Our Shoes training and were developing their own version to present to the SEND Youth Forum</li> <li>• Pictures were shown of recent activities included Eid, the trip to Kent, Participation Day and the summer BBQ</li> <li>• A number of entries from the young people for the KICA logo were shown</li> <li>• A summary quote from Walking In Our Shoes was: "if it's not good enough for your child then it's not good enough for me"</li> </ul> <p>Priorities for 2024/25 were:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Support more recruitment of young people with lived experience working for the Council</li> <li>• Another life changing residential trip</li> <li>• Continue working on the Safer Hayes Project</li> <li>• Deliver Walking In Our Shoes training to more external candidates than ever before</li> <li>• Complete the 'crime and safety project' with Hillingdon Youth Council</li> </ul>

Members commended the young people, and the impressive stats including on young people involvement in recruitment and KICA.

Members requested that an update on the Safer Hayes Project be brought to the next Panel meeting.

The young people asked about shadowing opportunities with Members. They noted that they had a lot of experience of social workers, but it would be a good opportunity to have more experience of other workplaces. The Chair noted that he would be happy to set this up. The young people cited a previous trip to Parliament. Members further suggested that the young people could attend ward events. Colleagues from the health team noted that there could be similar opportunities with them such as a day in the life of a health professional.

**RESOLVED: That the Panel noted the presentation**

5. **CARE LEAVER OFFER UPDATE** (*Agenda Item 5*)

Officers introduced the report on the Care Leaver Offer, which referred to supporting young people into independence. This included financial assistance such as a subsistence allowance that matched Universal Credit. There was also a setting up payment of £3,000 which was monitored by Personal Advisors and Social Workers. The young people noted that this had recently been increased from £2,500 which was very helpful.

Members asked about any pressures in accommodation and the subsequent need to place young people out of borough. Officers noted that housing was always challenging, and young people were placed in Hillingdon wherever possible. It was noted that there were 11 properties for Staying Close.

There had recently been new flats designated for care experienced young people in Hayes.

There was a university bursary for £2,000 and driving lessons available to young people up to the age of 21.

50% of naturalisation and ceremony costs were paid for for non-citizens; there was a £100 birthday bonus when young people reached 18 years old; 13 weeks of summer rent could be covered for university students; and a Council Tax exemption had been implemented for young people under 21.

On the Council Tax exemption, the young people noted that this was needed for those young people aged 21-25. Officers noted that, while there were some exemptions, up to 21 was the statutory age.

Staying Put allowed young people to stay with their foster carers post-18.

For Staying Close, officers always looked at the possibility of family reunification.

Relating to access to education, employment and training, CV and interview help was available. There were ringfenced posts for care experienced young people in Hillingdon, with guaranteed interviews if minimum requirements were met.

	<p>Young people also sat on interview panels, including for the new Named Nurse, and candidates have given very positive feedback on the young peoples' interview skills.</p> <p>The young people acknowledged the increase in support offered to them in recent years, especially at turning 18.</p> <p>The Chair highlighted that young people were making a positive difference.</p> <p><b>RESOLVED: That the Corporate Parenting Panel noted the content of the report</b></p>
6.	<p><b>CHILDREN'S SERVICES PERFORMANCE DATA</b> (<i>Agenda Item 6</i>)</p> <p>Members asked about the roughly 2% drop in attendance. Officers noted that there had been a spike in authorised absence due to winter illnesses which had contributed to this. It was clarified that the looked after children cohort of statutory school age children was small, and therefore small numbers could represent larger percentage changes.</p> <p>Members asked about delays in transferring young people under the National Transfer Scheme (NTS). This was not a challenge specific to Hillingdon and was mainly due to age disputes which required an Age Assessment to be carried out. If there was an age dispute, suitable accommodation would have to be found for the young person in the interim. It was noted that age disputes were becoming more common. The scheme dealt primarily with secondary aged children. Regarding smaller numbers of primary aged children, the young people noted that methods of migration had changed, and that it was not appropriate for 6/7 years olds to travel by small boat. The young people also noted cultural differences; that some unaccompanied asylum-seeking children were very young and so did not go through the school system.</p> <p>Colleagues from the health team noted that there were approximately 60 unaccompanied asylum-seeking children awaiting health assessments, which was in part a capacity issue. There had been a surge in the last two months.</p> <p>On fostering, Members asked about the mockingbird family hub model. This was currently being embedded, and feedback would be sought from foster carers and young people. It was hoped that this model would lead to a reduction in placement breakdowns.</p> <p>Members highlighted the spread of placements of looked after children across the borough, noting a larger cluster in the centre of the borough. Officers highlighted that the new fostering model was working across the borough, and suggested that there may be more foster carers located in specific areas.</p> <p><b>RESOLVED: That the Panel noted the content of the report</b></p>
7.	<p><b>SELECT COMMITTEE REVIEW UPDATE</b> (<i>Agenda Item 7</i>)</p> <p>Councillor Makwana outlined the draft recommendations included in the draft review report.</p> <p>Colleagues from the health team suggested that there may be an issue around incontinence among primary and early years children. The young people also suggested that there were a proportion of school age children who were not ready for school, including not being potty trained. Health in school sessions such as toilet training for 3½ - 4½ year olds had low uptake. Teachers often did not want to be involved in personal health matters. The Chair asked officers to look into this to see if this was a known issue.</p>

	<p>These points had not been included in the draft review report as they had not been reported during any of the witness sessions held by the Select Committee.</p> <p>It was suggested that some parents, specifically young parents, may be afraid to ask for help in such matters and may be more comfortable searching online. Online resources were often also easier to access.</p> <p>The young people also suggested that nutrition training was needed for young people.</p> <p><b>RESOLVED: That the Panel gave feedback on the draft report</b></p>
8.	<p><b>WORK PROGRAMME</b> (<i>Agenda Item 10</i>)</p> <p>Members considered the work programme.</p> <p>Members requested that an update on the Safer Hayes Project be brought to the next Panel meeting.</p> <p>Members asked to be kept informed of upcoming events such as KICA.</p> <p>Colleagues from the health team gave an update, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Named Nurse for Children Looked After in Hillingdon (CNWL) was leaving their post next week, and their replacement was being recruited</li> <li>• Funding for the Transition Nurse had been restored, and this was commended by the young people</li> <li>• The Designated Nurse for Looked After Children advised that there were due to be resource reductions in the ICB, with potential implications for the jobs of the Designated Nurse and Designated Doctor. This would also have implications for CNWL. The Clinical Services Manager had written a letter in support of the ICB, which was commended by the young people.</li> </ul> <p><b>RESOLVED: That the Corporate Parenting Panel:</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>1. Considered the report; and</b></li> <li><b>2. Added an update on the Safer Hayes Project to the next Panel meeting</b></li> </ol>
	<p>The meeting, which commenced at 5:30 pm, closed at 7:00 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.