

# **MINUTES OF THE MEETING Children and Young People's Scrutiny Panel HELD ON Monday, 29th July, 2024, 7.45 - 8.55 pm**

## **PRESENT:**

**Councillors: Makbule Gunes (Chair), Anna Abela, Mark Grosskopf,  
Anna Lawton and George Dunstall**

**Attending Online – Cllr Gina Adamou**

### **57. FILMING AT MEETINGS**

The Chair referred Members present to agenda Item 1 as shown on the agenda in respect of filming at this meeting, and Members noted the information contained therein'.

### **58. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

There were no apologies for absence.

### **59. ITEMS OF URGENT BUSINESS**

There were no items of urgent business

### **60. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

There were no declarations of interest

### **61. DEPUTATIONS/PETITIONS/PRESENTATIONS/QUESTIONS**

None.

### **62. MINUTES**

#### **RESOLVED**

That the minutes of the meeting on 5<sup>th</sup> March 2024 were agreed as a correct record.

### **63. HARINGEY YOUTH JUSTICE PLAN 2024 - 2027**

The Panel received a copy of the Haringey Youth Justice Strategic Plan 2024-2027. The Panel was asked to note the plan and the priorities contained within it, and to provide any comments and observations to the AD: Early Help, Prevention & SEND. It was noted that the plan had been approved by the Youth Justice Strategic Partnership

Board on the 26<sup>th</sup> June and submitted to the Youth Justice Board ahead of the statutory publication deadline of 30<sup>th</sup> June. The Youth Justice Strategic Plan and covering report was introduced by Jackie Difolco, AD: Early Help, Prevention and SEND as set out in the agenda pack at pages 9-82. The following arose during the discussion of this agenda item:

- a. In response to a question about the reasons behind why some of these young people entered the criminal justice system, officers advised that there were a number of local factors in Haringey linked to deprivation and the cost of living. A lot of work was done to work with these children as they came into the system and the Council was also rolling out a 'whole family' approach to work with the whole family to try and address some of the underlying causes. Officers highlighted that there hadn't been a CAMHS service in Haringey for some time and that the DCS had pushed partners hard to ensure that services were in place. The Panel was advised that joint funded speech & language therapy and a substance misuse service had been secured to ensure that, going forward, the Council was able to offer targeted services.
- b. In response to a question about disproportionality in the youth justice system, officers advised that a lot of work was being done to tackle disproportionality. The YJS received funding from MOPAC through the disproportionality fund. The service also offered tailor-based interventions, particularly for young black men. An example was the Ether programme which focused on raising aspirations. Officers also set out that they had training across the YJS and wider partners around disproportionality and inequality. The service also has a trauma informed approach across the service to ensure that they fully understood what was happening with the child, so they could provide an appropriate response.
- c. In response to a question about what was being done to work with looked after children to ensure they did not fall into criminality, officers advised that there had been an improvement from a position where one third of the youth justice cohort being looked after down to one quarter. Officers advised that one of the key priorities for the next 12 months was a dedicated focus on improving experiences and outcomes for children who were looked after as well as SEND children. Dedicated resources were in place along with targeted interventions. Officers were reporting to CPAC on performance indicators to ensure improvements on education, employment and training, mental health and wellbeing, and substance misuse.
- d. In response to a question about reoffending rates, officers advised that Haringey had lower levels of reoffending than most of its neighbours and that was largely down to the targeted work that had been done with this cohort and the tailored approach to interventions. The reasons behind reoffending were similar to those outlined for offending, namely; cost of living, increased levels of deprivation, poor parenting, and mental health problems. The Director added that the context was that we lived in a society where crime and crime related to drugs was prevalent. Young people were groomed into crime through the drugs trade.
- e. The Panel sought assurances about what other agencies that Council was working with around young people and drugs. In response, officers advised that

- the service worked with a range of partner agencies and VCS organisations. Officers agreed to share the Youth at Risk Strategy with Members so that they could get a better understanding of the partner agencies involved in reducing serious youth violence in the borough. **(Action: Jackie Difolco).**
- f. The Panel welcomed the process of embedding restorative justice and suggested that in general they would like to see more of this. Members raised concerns about seeing young people wearing Hi-Viz clothing in Highgate with 'Community Payback' written on the back. It was suggested that this terminology seemed to be in contradiction to the child-led interventions set out in the plan. In response, officers agreed that using appropriate language was important. Officers responded that young people didn't wear vests when doing reparations in Haringey, it was suggested that they were likely to be adults. Reparation work for young people in Haringey was oriented towards volunteering. The Director added that it would be administered through the courts rather than Haringey. Officers agreed to check to make sure that under 18's were not wearing branded clothing, and that if they were, that clothing used appropriate language. **(Action: Jackie Difolco).**
  - g. The Chair welcomed the approach taken to adopt a three-year strategy, rather than a one-year strategy. The Chair commented that she recognised the hard work involved in producing the Youth Justice Plan and also recognised the future challenges.

## RESOLVED

That Members noted the report and provided comments on the Youth Justice Plan 2024-2027.

## 64. PERFORMANCE UPDATE

The Panel received a report which provided an analysis of the performance data and trends for an agreed set of measures relating to looked after children. It was noted that the report covered the 4<sup>th</sup> quarter of the year 2023/24 with updates for April & May 2024 where appropriate. The report was introduced by Beverley Hendricks, AD for Safeguarding and Social Care as set out in the agenda pack at pages 83-90. The following arose during the discussion of this report:

- a. In relation to the table at paragraph 4.5 of the report (comparing the primary need of CLA starters), the Panel requested that future reports provide some comparative data showing trend/movement of travel, so that Members can see how it compares to previous years. **(Action: Beverley/Richard).**
- b. In relation to a question about care plans, officers advised that 77% of children had an up to date care plan against a target of 85%. Officers advised that there were a number of reasons why performance on this indicator was below target. One of the reasons was around a lack of availability to have the care plan updated in the required timeframe. Officers also advised that the implementation of the new Liquid Logic system had a negative impact on the timeliness of being able to upload care plans. It was noted that these problems had been resolved and improvements were expected in the next report.

- c. In response to a question about sickness and vacancy rates, officers advised that they had taken a decision to have very low vacancy rates in the team and that meant that if there were staffing shortages, then agency staff would be used fill gaps.
- d. In relation to pathway plans, officers advised that performance was affected by the same issues detailed above for care plans. If performance was low, this would have a knock on effect on agency staffing figures.
- e. The Director advised that she would include some more narrative in the next report to explain some of the factors involved with the performance around care plans. **(Action: Ann Graham)**.
- f. The Director commented that in essence, she took the view that it was more important to prioritise the quality of care plans over having all of them done on time to a lower standard.
- g. In response to a questions about under-performance against the target for Unaccompanied Asylum Seeking Children (UASC) and the extent to which this related to delays in processing by the Home Office, officers advised that this related to children at 18 becoming care leavers. Previously, it was possible to apply pressure to the Home Office for timely processing of these applications along with cases involving people with No Recourse to Public Funds. However, since Covid the Home Office had been less willing to engage. The AD Safeguarding and Social Care advised that she was looking to meet with officials from the Home Office to discuss the matter.
- h. Officers also advised the Panel that delays to the UASC indicator also related to the National Transfer scheme. Haringey like some other authorities was meeting its quota and was willing to take additional cases from other authorities that were struggling, however this still did not result in Haringey meeting its central government set target. Officers commented that there was clearly a problem with the system if Haringey took all the cases it was asked to, and was even taking additional cases, but still couldn't meet the target. The Director reiterated that the service was very keen for all the young people that should come here, do so. The issue was historical and complicated. Previously the targets were 0.07% of the number of children in care. London as a region was doing better than most, the government sought to transport children across the country. This resulted in the target becoming 0.01%. The DCS advised that as and when the picture settled down, Haringey may meet the 0.01% in time.

## **RESOLVED**

Noted

### **65. HARINGEY LOCAL AREA SEND CQC/OFSTED INSPECTION OUTCOME**

The Director of Children's Services advised that the Panel would be receiving a full presentation on the Local Area SEND CQC/Ofsted inspection outcome at its September meeting and that this would also include an update on the broader action plan. It was noted that the report was included in the agenda pack in order to give Members an opportunity to read it in detail.

The Director advised that the Haringey Children’s Safeguarding Partnership were extremely pleased with the outcome of the inspection with Haringey being awarded the best outcome that ‘The local area partnerships arrangements typically lead to positive experiences and outcomes’ for children and young people with SEND.

A follow up report will be provided to the following meeting of the Panel. **(Action: Jackie/Philip).**

**66. NEW ITEMS OF URGENT BUSINESS**

N/A

**67. DATES OF FUTURE MEETINGS**

- 9<sup>th</sup> September 2024
- 19<sup>th</sup> November 2024
- 13<sup>th</sup> January 2025
- 13<sup>th</sup> February 2025

CHAIR: Councillor Makbule Gunes

Signed by Chair .....

Date .....