

**MINUTES OF THE CORPORATE PARENTING ADVISORY COMMITTEE
TUESDAY, 19 APRIL 2011**

Councillors Alexander, Allison, Reith (Chair), Stennett and Watson

Apologies Councillor Engert and Peacock.

Also Present: Councillor Brabazon and Solomon, Wendy Tomlinson, Debbie Haith, Jennifer James, Chris Chalmers, Sanjay Green.

MINUTE NO.	SUBJECT/DECISION	ACTION BY
CPAC69.	<p>APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE (IF ANY)</p> <p>Apologies for absence were received from Cllrs Engert and Peacock. Cllrs Solomon and Brabazon respectively attended in their place.</p>	
CPAC70.	<p>URGENT BUSINESS</p> <p>There were no items of urgent business.</p>	
CPAC71.	<p>DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST</p> <p>There were no declarations of interest.</p>	
CPAC72.	<p>MINUTES</p> <p>Subject to a couple of minor spelling corrections, the minutes of the meeting held on 17 March 2011 were agreed as an accurate record.</p>	
CPAC73.	<p>MATTERS ARISING</p> <p>The Committee considered the matters arising report and noted the following updates:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Fostering update: it was confirmed that out of date statistics had been removed from the Council's website as part of the ongoing work to review and improve content. It was advised that new key fostering images had been approved and would be used for campaigns and promotional information going forward. As part of this, it was proposed that the Committee consider the new Fostering Strategy at a future meeting. <p>On a related issue, Cllr Solomon advised that she had carried out a mystery shopping exercise on the Fostering Service and provided positive feedback on the quality of service received. The Head of Service (Commissioning & Placements) agreed to feed this back to the team.</p> <p>In response to a question on progress with foster care strategic commissioning, it was confirmed that work was underway as part of the North London Strategic Alliance to map costs across the region</p>	<p>Debbie Haith</p> <p>Wendy Tomlinson</p>

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	<p>which was scheduled for completion in the autumn. Work was also underway to manage the procurement process more effectively within the Council, including running a two day event with providers in May with a view to enhancing working relationships and improving standards and pricing. An update would be provided to the meeting after next.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It was confirmed that the safeguarding element of IT access had now been incorporated within the Virtual School policy. • In relation to publishing the complaints procedure for CiC online, it was proposed that this be added on an interim basis to Youth Space until dedicated CiC pages were established as part of a longer term project. It was agreed that Committee members would be informed once the information was live. 	<p>Wendy Tomlinson</p> <p>Chris Chalmer s/ Jennifer James</p>
<p>CPAC74.</p>	<p>DISCUSSION WITH JUDY MACE, DESIGNATED CHILDREN IN CARE NURSE, ON HER WORK WITH CHILDREN IN CARE</p> <p>Judy Mace from the Children in Care (CiC) Nursing Team gave a short presentation on the work of the team which was centred on the statutory responsibility for health reviews to be undertaken for all Haringey CiC. The function had previously been the responsibility of GPs but transferred to the CiC nursing team at the beginning of the year. The three full time nurses within the team visited all CiC to undertake health reviews, even those placed out of borough, and were achieving good performance overall. Each full assessment took approximately 8 hours to complete including requesting medical records, the appointment and follow up work such as making referrals. It was reported that the most prevalent health issues seen in CiC population were mental health problems, emotional distress and incomplete immunisation history.</p> <p>Anecdotal evidence suggested that the quality of health reviews and the engagement of CiC had increased since the service transferred to the new team. The new service would also allow an overall picture to be gained on the health issues of CiC and generally as a model, facilitated better linkage with other health services including school nurses, the Tavistock Service for mental health issues and with the two residential children's homes.</p> <p>In response to a question on the costs of the new service, it was confirmed that these were currently being calculated but provisionally appeared to be on an equal level to the previous GP model of delivery.</p> <p>Work was underway to incorporate feedback from CiC into the health review process and to consider in particular enhancing support for Southwark young people and those leaving care to help improve the transition to adult services. Consideration would also be given to ways of enhancing the participation of older children who were often the most difficult to engage, for example through adoption of a drop in centre approach etc.</p>	

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<p>CPAC75.</p>	<p>PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT : CHILDREN AND FAMILIES</p> <p>The Committee considered performance management data for the Children and Families Service for February. It was advised that the number of CiC had increased over this period primarily due to the impact of a number of large families becoming looked after, although this was set against a general stabilisation observed over the longer term. It was advised that future performance reports would provide further breakdown of the 10-15 age classification for children coming into care owing to the complexities within this age range.</p> <p>In response to a question about the impact of unaccompanied minors, it was advised that the general trend was a reduction in their numbers, More proactive work practices were also now in place including a weekly Gateway Panel considering cases at the point of referral to look at options other than coming into care including rehabilitation plans etc.</p> <p>In considering the ethnic classification of children entering care and whether further breakdown of groupings could be provided, it was advised that this risked diluting the interpretation of data as a significant proportion of children had complex heritage. It was agreed that a more detailed breakdown of ethnicity data relating to CiC be provided to the Committee on a quarterly basis in order to help monitor demographic trends across the borough. Clarification was also sought on the Council's approach to adoption with regards to recent press coverage highlighting the poorer adoption outcomes for black children. The Deputy Director confirmed that the fundamental consideration in relation to adoption remained what was in the best interest of the child and the imperative of ensuring the stability of placements. Adoption was a complex area with a number of compounding factors including age, family grouping etc. Ethnicity was considered in a broad way in reflection of the importance of ensuring the cultural needs of the child were met and was also discussed regularly at Consortium meetings.</p> <p>In relation to the children missing from care, confirmation was provided that monitoring arrangements were in place for frequent absconders. The Committee asked for further information on how occupancy was monitored at the borough's residential homes, particularly in relation to the impact of frequent absconders. It was agreed that the Chair and Deputy Director would give consideration to the most appropriate format for this to be submitted to the Committee.</p>	<p>Debbie Haith</p> <p>Debbie Haith</p> <p>Debbie Haith/ Cllr Reith</p>
<p>CPAC76.</p>	<p>ATTENDANCE OF THE INDEPENDENT REVIEW OFFICER TO DISCUSS WORK ON THE STABILITY OF PLACEMENTS</p> <p>The Committee were advised that the Independent Review Officer (IRO) due to give a presentation to the meeting was unfortunately unable to attend. As a result, it was agreed that the Deputy Director would provide a short overview of the role and responsibility of IROs as a prelude to an IRO attending the next meeting for a more detailed discussion session. A briefing would also be circulated in advance of the meeting. The Committee requested that this include information on the number of IRO changes for children and on any escalations made by IROs and the</p>	<p>Debbie Haith</p>

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	<p>reasons why.</p> <p>The role of IROs was to provide independent scrutiny of care plans, advocacy for CiC and at a broader level, look at the quality of service provided by the authority. IROs, experienced social workers, were assigned to each CiC. Recent legislative changes had strengthened the role of IROs including new powers for external challenge and establishment of an IRO handbook setting out roles and functions more clearly. Recent changes meant that the separate IRO role covering CiC and child protection care plans would be merged in the future to allow continuity. An annual IRO report would also be produced, identifying trends and issues and would be submitted for consideration by the Committee in the autumn.</p>	Debbie Haith
CPAC77.	<p>DEVELOPMENT WORK ON DEALING WITH THE ISSUES OF ISOLATION FACED BY YOUNG PEOPLE LEAVING CARE</p> <p>The Committee considered a report setting out issues facing young people leaving care, particularly in relation to the potential for isolation if established support networks were not in place. Placement stability and educational engagement were also compounding risk factors. General support provided to care leavers was outlined within a pathway plan including that from social workers and other key workers. Work was underway to improve support offered from other sources, for example the current tendering process for semi-independent accommodation providers who provide formalised support for young people, aimed to improve the quality of accommodation and service.</p> <p>A number of participation pathways were also available for care leavers to help mitigate feelings of isolation including the CiC Council, Total Respect training, Regulation 33 inspections etc. Further work was planned to develop a peer mentoring scheme for care leavers with younger CiC and ultimately establishing a leaving care course to allow a more consistent, consolidated approach to passing on life skills to CiC. The Committee recognised the value of potentially extending any mentoring scheme to include adults volunteers which could potentially be achieved through reactivation of the Independent Visitors scheme. It was also proposed that people making enquiries to the fostering service could also be encouraged to participate in any scheme introduced.</p> <p>It was agreed that a report would be provided to the next meeting or the following one exploring the potential around Independent Visitors and peer mentoring schemes with associated costings.</p>	Chris Chalmers
CPAC78.	<p>CORPORATE PARENTING STRATEGY</p> <p>It was advised that the Corporate Parenting Strategy had been recently discussed at the Children's Trust meeting and would require further revision in order to incorporate comments made including making the Strategy more child focussed. As a result, it was proposed that the Committee defer consideration of the Strategy to the next meeting.</p> <p>Concerns were raised about the time it was taking to progress the</p>	Debbie Haith

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	<p>Strategy. It was agreed that the updated version of the Strategy would be circulated for comment to the Committee prior to the next meeting in order to facilitate the Committee approving the final draft at the next meeting. This would also provide the opportunity for the underpinning action plan to be considered in more detail.</p>	Debbie Haith
CPAC79.	EXCLUSION OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC	
CPAC80.	<p>EXEMPT PERFORMANCE INFORMATION</p> <p>The Committee considered a number of case examples linked to key performance data with the aim of making the data more 'live'. It was agreed that the case examples were useful and it was requested that future examples be provided on larger sibling groups, cases where placement stability had been an issue and cases of young people going missing.</p> <p>Concerns were raised about Committee members not having a full understanding of how cases were progressed and the stages and process for these. It was however recognised that focus needed to be maintained on the overall picture for CiC and not individual cases and as such, it was agreed that this could be an area to be explored with the CiC Council to allow more general discussions on young people's experience of the care system.</p>	<p>Debbie Haith</p> <p>Debbie Haith/Jennifer James</p>
CPAC81.	<p>INDEPENDENT VISITOR REPORTS</p> <p>The Head of Service (Commissioning & Placements) provided an update on recent changes made to Regulation 33 visits process including the piloting of a new reporting template from a preferred provider which allowed for a copy of the report to be left on site following the inspection. Further instruction and training had also been given to staff at both homes to help them manage Regulation 33 visits, including taking a more proactive approach and focussing on outcomes. A recent review had also been undertaken in conjunction with placement officers, residential home staff, Members and representative of young people. A meeting had also been held with Corporate Property to set out expectations in relation to maintenance issues with the children's homes with a view to improving the working relationship and prioritising works required.</p>	
CPAC82.	<p>VERBAL UPDATE ON RESIDENTIAL CHILDREN'S HOMES</p> <p>Confirmation was provided in relation to the outstanding registration of the Manager at Coppetts Road that all required information had been submitted to Ofsted who would be undertaking a final site visit and interview on 5 May. The Chair stressed that lessons needed to be learnt from this protracted process. It was confirmed that this was being looked into carefully.</p>	

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CPAC83.	CHILD SAFEGUARDING There were no issues to be referred to the Committee.	
CPAC84.	ANY OTHER BUSINESS	

Cllr Lorna Reith

Chair