

**MINUTES OF THE CORPORATE PARENTING ADVISORY COMMITTEE
TUESDAY, 6 DECEMBER 2011**

Councillors Reith, Reece, Brabazon, Watson, Allison, Stennett, Solomon

Apologies

Also Present: Debbie Haith, Marion Wheeler, Chris Chalmers, Gloria Stott(Barnardo's) Babette Bleach(Barnardos) Rachel Oakley, Shanti Jacob, Attracta Craig, Sandjea Green.

MINUTE NO.	SUBJECT/DECISION	ACTON BY
CPAC 124	APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE (IF ANY) Apologies for absence were received from Wendy Tomlinson, Head of Commissioning and Placements.	
CPAC 125	URGENT BUSINESS There were no items of urgent business put forward.	
CPAC 126	DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST There were no declarations of interest put forward.	
CPAC 127	MINUTES The minutes of the Corporate Parenting meeting held on the 11 th October 2011 were agreed as an accurate record of the meeting. The minutes of the joint meeting between Corporate Parenting Advisory Committee and Children's Safeguarding Policy and Practice Committee held on the 11 th October were agreed as an accurate record of the meeting.	
CPAC 128	MATTERS ARISING Members of the Committee had been sent a briefing on the outcomes of fostering week publicity activities undertaken in June. There were separate tables both showing different figures for enquiries into fostering and the number of people attending an information session on fostering for the same month. The Head of Commissioning and Placements would provide an explanation of the difference between	

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	these figures to the Committee by email following her return from leave.	WT
<p>CPAC 129</p>	<p>PRESENTATION FROM BARNARDOS</p> <p>The Committee received a presentation from Gloria Stott and Babette Bleach of Barnardo's about their work with the Council on children's rights, sexual exploitation and trafficking. Barnardos had been working, contractually with the Council since 1995 until 2011 on these areas of work. At the start of this financial year they had entered into a spot purchasing arrangement with the Council to provide an advocacy service to identified children , undertake independent visits to children's homes and work with young people who had been identified by the Council as being vulnerable to trafficking, and sexual exploitation. Recently external funding had also secured the services of a practitioner from the Barnardo's to work in the Safeguarding service with missing children, 2 days a week.</p> <p>Although the Children's service had block commissioned 6 places for supporting children at risk of sexual exploitation this did not limit them procuring further places if the need arose. On an influential level, Barnardos' was educating the Safeguarding service about the circumstances that can put a child /young person at risk of sexual exploitation. Barnardo's also shared intelligence about potential cases of sexual exploitation and worked with the services when cases were identified by them. Barnardos also offered a child /young person an alternative support provision separate to the local agencies that they were required to deal with.</p> <p>The Committee further considered information about the Children's Rights services provided by Barnardo's. The Advocacy service had started as a short term project and had been expanded in the last three years. This had culminated in a contract between the Council and Barnardo's to provide advocacy support services to 87 children/young people. This support from Barnardos was about enabling children / young people to provide their views on their care and feel independent of the process.</p> <p>Barnardos also provided independent visits to the Council's children's residential homes and were contracted to support 10 young people living at these homes. Members were reassured by this as there was a separate non statutory body that could make visits to the homes and speak with the young people at the home.</p> <p>A question was asked about how issues raised by young people through advocacy services were taken forward with the Council. In particular concerns about independent living arrangements. The Committee noted that there were regular monitoring meetings held between the Children's service and Barnardo's where each party provided an update on all the cases that they are working on. As part of this working relationship with the council, Barnardo's felt able to raise the</p>	

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individual issues of children/young people as well as are influential in the types of services provided to them. In the unlikely event that they found their views not taken on board by the Children's Safeguarding service, Barnardo's representatives were aware that they could advance their concerns to a higher management level.

Members were interested in how the service decided on the children that would access the services provided by Barnardo's. This information was sought to be assured, as corporate parents, that there was not an over demand being dealt with, meaning some children would miss out on the service. An example was provided on how a child or young person was identified as needing advocacy. Usually this was through a case review which would have the input of the IRO (Independent Review officers) and there would be a criteria followed to help understand whether an independent person was needed to advocate for the young person/child.

A question was asked about the overlap in sexual exploitation and trafficking. Gloria Stott of Barnardos explained that often where children and young people were trafficked for involvement in criminal activity and domestic servitude, unfortunately due to their age and vulnerability they were susceptible to sexual exploitation. The trafficking workers worked with a number of agencies to locate the trafficked children remove them from this situation.

In terms of sharing local intelligence and liaising with government agencies, this was a critical in identifying children that were being trafficked as usually a trafficked child would be moved around rapidly. Where a local concern was reported to housing such as an illegal appropriation of a house involving children from a particular transient community then this information would be considered by the Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH). This team included housing officers who were able to share concerns with the other agencies on the hub and quickly identify if there were any safeguarding issues which needed further investigation and action from local agencies such as the Police and Health.

The Committee noted the nature of Barnardo's work in investigating sexual exploitation in Haringey. Barnardo's further provided yearly training sessions to the Safeguarding team to ensure that Social Workers and officers were able to detect the signs of sexual exploitation.

In response to the question about the number of places available on the advocacy programme it was noted that there was not an impediment to renegotiating the contract with Barnardos to provide advocacy services if there was a demand for places.

Representatives from Barnardo's advised that they were due to provide a presentation of their targeted work with the Council on missing children

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	<p>to a Scrutiny panel. This was a recent project and Barnardo's felt that it would be too early to report on the outcomes of this work in January and asked that Scrutiny colleagues be asked to defer this presentation to an April meeting.</p> <p>The Committee thanked Barnardos for their informative presentation and it was agreed that the clerk re distribute the background information provided on Children's right service, trafficking and sexual exploitation service.</p> <p>Members of the Committee were welcome to put forward any further information requests or questions to Barnardo's after the meeting.</p>	<p>Reith/ DH</p> <p>Clerk</p> <p>All to note</p>
<p>CPAC 130</p>	<p>PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT : CHILDREN AND FAMILIES</p> <p>Members of the Committee were asked to comment on and consider a new format for the regular performance report which contained a set of key indicators. In future, more detailed analysis or data queries were proposed to be considered and reported through separate exception reports.</p> <p>Comment was made on the cost of service per looked after child. The figure of £854 was the weekly cost and included overheads. Members asked that a benchmark figure also be included to provide Members with a comparison. The Committee were advised of the difficulty in providing benchmark figures as local authorities all had dissimilar ways of calculating the cost of LAC. However, there was ongoing work with the NLSA (North London Strategic Alliance) to compile one category of cost, for looked after children, which would be followed by all of the 6 North London boroughs in the NLSA and would therefore provide ready benchmarking figures.</p> <p>Item 3 – Foster Care Recruitment - The Committee recommended that the background to the foster carer that was recruited be added i.e. if they were family or friend.</p> <p>Item 6 - Percentage of referrals to children's social care going onto initial assessment - Agreed that the correct figure for August 2010/11 be distributed to the Committee.</p> <p>Members discussed the increase in the number of referrals resulting in an initial assessment and sought understanding about the reasons for the increase in this number over a two year period. The Committee were advised that these numbers of referrals were post examination by the Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH) and therefore these referrals would not all culminate in child protection plans. This information was included as part of helping the service understands the pathways into care. The Committee concluded that the information</p>	<p>All to note</p> <p>DH</p> <p>DH</p>

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	<p>provided needed to be clearer on the number of children that had moved from an initial assessment to a Child Protection Plan and the timeline of this.</p> <p>It was agreed that overall the comments section of the table provide more detail on the context around the indicators as a public document.</p> <p>There was consensus that performance figures relating to Looked after Children were in the remit and responsibility of this Committee. Performance indicators containing information about referrals which do not lead to child protection plan or a child becoming looked after was the responsibility of the Children’s Safeguarding Policy and Practice Committee and should be separated out of the report. Having accepted this, there was still felt to be a need for the Committee to have a better understanding of the information being considered by the Children’s Safeguarding Policy and Practice Committee and this would need to be explored.</p> <p>Item 23 -Children in Care for a month or more with an up to date health assessment . Statistical averages for this indicator would be available in the following months report. Agreed that the target of 75% be added to the latter column.</p> <p>RESOLVED</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. The format of the report is agreed. ii. That the comments, provided above by Committee Members, be factored in the forthcoming report. 	<p>DH</p> <p>DH</p> <p>DH</p> <p>DH</p> <p>DH</p>
<p>CPAC 131</p>	<p>PERMANENCY STRATEGY</p> <p>The Committee considered a tabled paper outlining the developing Permanency strategy. The Chair asked that in future briefings were not tabled at the meeting but distributed to members prior to the meeting with the despatch of papers.</p> <p>The paper contained some early headlines of the information to be included in the strategy. The strategy would address the key issues which impact on permanency, set out the options for permanency such as special guardianship orders, adoption and residential care, and the circumstances where these options will be considered. The strategy would also contain details about planning for permanency and the set of procedures to inform permanency planning and prevent drift which is caused by the unintended sequential planning for securing a permanent family for a child. Instead there will be parallel planning to enable a secondary plan for a permanent placement to be implemented should</p>	

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	<p>the initial intended placement plan not be workable.</p> <p>Workshop sessions with staff were planned, with the release of the strategy, to reiterate its key messages and ensure that permanency planning was embedded in the work of the service.</p> <p>The Chair recommended adding a vision at the start of the strategy which would advise on the best outcomes for children. The Committee were assured that this was already intended and would be included in the strategy which was to be considered by the Committee at their next meeting on the 31 January 2012.</p> <p>Members sought information on the remit of the Transformation Board and whether the driver for this strategy had arisen from their observations. The Committee noted that this was an internal officer board which contained external representatives that were assigned to consider and provide a critical challenge to the budget issues being faced by the Children’s service. Although the permanency plan fitted in with the strategic improvement plan of the service it was good practice to have this strategy in place. It was noted that the strategic improvement plan could be considered by the Committee at future meetings.</p> <p>The Committee were assured that permanency planning was not a new practice for the service and the strategy would be highlighting how the service would be changing the existing practice of sequentially planning to parallel planning.</p> <p>Comment was made on the need to follow the corporate format for strategies when compiling the strategy.</p> <p>RESOLVED</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. That the briefing be emailed to Committee Members to provide further comments to the Head of Children in Care. ii. That the draft Permanency strategy be considered by the Committee at their meeting on the 31 January 2011. 	<p>Clerk</p> <p>Clerk</p> <p>CC</p>
<p>CPAC 132</p>	<p>INDEPENDENT REVIEW OFFICER MID YEAR REPORT</p> <p>The Independent Review Officers had used a basic checklist to carry out a random sample analysis of looked after children reviews. The audit was designed as quick process that could provide some immediate data and create a benchmark for future audits. At the time of the audit there had been vacant IRO posts which were now in the process of being filled therefore in future there would be more capacity to compile a more sophisticated audit which would highlight any underlying issues that needed attention and resolution in the children’s service.</p>	

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	<p>The IRO officer spoke of the positive findings from the audit which were the rate that decisions from the LAC review were implemented and ensuring that a children were included and prepared for their LAC review. The areas to be further investigated by the IRO officers were the number of social work reports not available and total number of care plans available for inspections. These findings were being discussed with children's service and the IRO's recognised that there was a need to be more rigorous in identifying and reporting where a care plan or social work report had not been found. The increase in IRO officers would assist with this.</p> <p>Regarding the number of total care plans available; Members were assured that the figure reported did not mean that no care plan was in place. There were either legal care plans or draft care plans in place which had not formally been drafted. The Committee were further advised that there would be recommendations coming forward from the IRO officers about the implementation of care plans for Social workers to follow. The Committee suggested alternative ways of looking at the data concerning LAC reviews such as examining the timescale of when the care plans are being completed within. The Committee learned that the IRO's had completed a further audit on the care of LAC examining cases in September, October, November which would be reported back to the Committee in the new year.</p> <p>The Committee were informed that the Quality Assurance and Practice Development service had been in place since June and its role was to provide independent scrutiny on the systems and process in place for the care of children. The service was working on a quality assurance framework and a report on this development work focused on Looked after Children could be considered by the Committee at their January meeting.</p>	<p>Clerk</p> <p>Clerk</p>
<p>CPAC 133</p>	<p>EXCLUSION OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC</p> <p>The press and public were excluded from the meeting for consideration of Item 11 as it contained exempt information as defined in Section 100a of the Local Government Act 1972 (as amended by Section 12A of the Local Government Act 1985): paras 1 & 2: namely information relating to any individual, and information likely to reveal the identity of an individual.</p>	
<p>CPAC 134</p>	<p>REGULATION 33 VISITS</p> <p>Members considered the findings of recent regulation 33 visits to the Council's Children's Homes and noted the recommendations arising from these visits and the actions being taken forward.</p>	

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	<p>Previously Members of the Committee had raised concerns about the understanding key workers had at the children's homes of the use and importance of the SAM codes. This code was allocated to each young person in the home to help them access online learning systems. Key workers were expected to know the importance of these codes and be able to assist the young person in using them. It was agreed that the Haringey Virtual School Head, when making her regular visits to the children's residential homes, discuss the current use of the SAM codes and further gauge the key workers understanding of them.</p> <p>Members referred to a recommendation relating to the use of the Framework 1 system by staff at the children's homes and recalled a previous explanation that agency staff were not permitted to add information to the system. Members commented that where agency staff have been working at the home for long period of time or are regularly called upon to assist in the home, they should have access to the system to add case notes. Agreed that the Head of Safeguarding, Quality Assurance & Practice Development seek a resolution to this recommendation and report back the outcome in the matters arising report to be considered by the Committee at their January meeting.</p> <p>A visit to a home, in October, reported on a shortness of a visit due to disruptive behaviour. The Committee asked that further details be provided on the nature of the disruption to provide understanding on reasons for the visit being brief.</p>	<p>AC</p> <p>RO</p> <p>WT</p>
<p>CPAC 135</p>	<p>ANY OTHER BUSINESS</p> <p>Date of the next meeting 31 January 2012</p>	

Cllr Lorna Reith

Chair