

**MINUTES OF THE CORPORATE PARENTING ADVISORY COMMITTEE
TUESDAY, 19 FEBRUARY 2013**

Councillors Allison, Brabazon, Dogus, Reece, Solomon, Stennett and Waters
(Chair)

Apologies None

Also Present: Libby Blake, Marion Wheeler, Wendy Tomlinson, Lesley Kettles, Chris Chalmers, Tracy Hutchinson, Linda James,

MINUTE NO.	SUBJECT/DECISION	ACTON BY
CPAC210	<p>APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE (IF ANY)</p> <p>There were no apologies for absence received.</p>	
CPAC211	<p>URGENT BUSINESS</p> <p>There were no items of urgent business received.</p>	
CPAC212	<p>DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST</p> <p>There were no declarations of interest put forward.</p>	
CPAC213	<p>TO AGREE THE ACTIONS ARISING FROM THE MEETING WITH ASPIRE</p> <p>The Committee agreed that the notes and actions arising from the informal meeting with Aspire between 6.30-7.30pm be compiled and distributed to Members of the Committee and Aspire. It was agreed that the actions be added to the formal minutes to allow the Committee to monitor and progress the agreed actions.</p>	Clerk
CPAC214	<p>MINUTES</p> <p>The Committee agreed the following amendments to the minutes.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • That the references to the Leaving Care Team are replaced with the new name, Young Adult’s Service. • The Permanency Policy is referenced as going to March Cabinet instead of June. • That young people leaving care can be nominated to the Housing service for permanent placements once they reach the age of 17 and half. 	Clerk
CPAC215	<p>MATTERS ARISING</p>	

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Discussion on Housing Benefit Cap

- The Director of the Children's Service agreed to bring forward a briefing paper to the next meeting on the impact of the Housing Benefit cap on foster carers and special guardianships.
- The Committee were informed that the Fostering service was writing out to all carers to find out if they were affected by the Housing Benefit cap which was being implemented 6 months earlier in Haringey. Following responses being received, the service would be in a better position to ascertain if there was a problem. However the council could make discretionary payments to foster carers receiving a shortfall in housing benefit. There was also a discussion about whether the benefit cap could act as a disincentive for members of families taking up special guardianships. This was also difficult to tell at the moment, but the Committee were assured that family members showing an interest in becoming a special guardian were continually supported to take up this role.

**LB/
WT**

Foster Care Consortium Update

- There was current work to recruit specialist foster carers that could be used to care for young people who have the potential to go into detention. (These are young people who have been charged with an offence). These carers would be paid slightly more than foster carers and would be trained to cope with the specific demands of the young person as they will be responsible for trying to keep them out of the custodial system.
- It was noted that under the new legal requirements a young person in detention was entitled to foster care. This would be explored further by the Committee in agenda item 9.
- It was noted that the Director of the Children's Service had volunteered to take up the chair of the NLSA (North London Strategic Alliance) sub group which was looking at the cost of fostering and LAC placements. This group was made up of five other north London boroughs, Barnet, Camden, Enfield, Islington, Hackney and Waltham Forest, and this group would bring about collective negotiations on prices for agency foster carers and residential care placements, taking up this position will enable the borough to better position to access quality care, placements and properties for young people leaving care.
- The Committee agreed that there be a report back, to the next meeting in April, on the review of the Fostering service. This review would be externally procured through a tender process. It was noted that the previous internal review of the Fostering service, last year had focussed on the work flow processes

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	<p>whereas this new review would look at the service as a whole, examining cost against performance. Members asked that the report back to Committee, include the cost of the review, provide an idea of the average cost per day of running the service, and take account of the variables pertinent to this borough. It was hoped that a tenderer with previous experience of conducting similar reviews in other boroughs would come forward.</p>	<p>LB</p>
<p>CPAC216</p>	<p>PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT : CHILDREN AND FAMILIES</p> <p>The Committee considered performance information and trends for measures relating to looked after children.</p> <p>Against the ongoing downward trend, the number of looked after children went up by three last month. This was associated with the new requirement to provide placements for young people classed as being in youth detention. The Committee asked that these additional numbers of young people coming into care, under this new requirement, are signalled separately in the report under a new category. This is to enable the Committee to monitor the number of young people entering care through this new route.</p> <p>A map was included at appendix 3 of the report which illustrated that 27% of looked after children are placed in the borough and 73% placed outside the borough. The map provided Committee members with an indication of the proximity of the placements to the borough. In terms of the locations that were more than 20 miles outside the borough, the Chair asked that the Service verify how many were foster placements and how many were in Residential Care.</p> <p>Cllr Reece would email her questions about the performance report after the meeting.</p> <p>The Committee continued to query the costs to recruit foster carers. It was noted that the consortium had completed work on what boroughs are prepared to spend on foster carers and how much they cost to recruit. The Committee agreed that Wendy Tomlinson report back on this.</p> <p>An example of the effort made by a neighbouring borough to recruit local foster carers was shared. It was noted that the council will visit a prospective foster carer within 2 weeks of showing interest and invite them to an event to learn more about becoming a foster carer.</p> <p>Care leavers in suitable accommodation - An explanatory note would be provided in future on this figure because the number of care leavers, which accommodation was not assigned, was three and this was due to extenuating circumstances. Although this was a small figure, it showed</p>	<p>MW/ MG</p> <p>WT</p> <p>WT</p> <p>MW</p>

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	<p>as a greater percentage when assessing if the target had been met.</p> <p>OP419 - Number of children missing/absconded from care at any point in the month. It was noted that the Director for Children and Cabinet Member for Children continued to receive weekly briefings on this matter.</p>	<p>All to note</p>
<p>CPAC217</p>	<p>ADOPTION PERFORMANCE REPORT.</p> <p>The Director for Children’s Service began her introduction to this item by praising the Adoption and Permanence team for their significant efforts to improve the efficiency, of each stage of the Adoption decision making process, which had culminated in the reduction of over 100 days from the day that the child is taken into care and the date in which they are placed for adoption. Furthermore, there was a significant increase in the number of children in the process /planning stage from 69 awaiting approval at December in 2011 to 93 in December 2012 awaiting approval.</p> <p>Following the publication of the Adoption scorecard and the Adoption Diagnostic in July 2012 there were a number of recommendations made for improvement across all social work professionals involved in the adoption process. There was also additional support commissioned to undertake a review to assess and identify improvements to be made to the adoption service and adoption process. The recommendations from this review included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A review of the roles and structures in the service • A plan to reorganise social workers into specific roles, such as family finding, assessment of prospective adopters and front end workers to process all enquiries • The development of workflow processes to speed up placement for adoption strengthened performance management • Strengthened scrutiny profile of adoption at a senior level. <p>It had been anticipated that performance would decline before there was improvements but this had not been the case and the service were congratulated on how they took forward the recommendations of the review which had seen an increase in the number of foster parents who became adopters, and a two-fold increase in the number of special guardianships being taken forward.</p> <p>The Committee were pleased to note the progress made and spoke about the need to provide more support for friends/family members who were willing to take on the special guardianship role as they were less well off, in this respect, than foster carers or adopters. For example, they would likely need support for day to day challenges when they begin to care for a child or young person that has been in care. In response it was noted that, there was a choice available to do more for special guardians that lived in the borough. For example the council could help with getting access: to children’s centre, youth workers, leisure passes. The Director for Children’s services agreed that there</p>	

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	<p>was a challenge to the service to look at programme of support for special guardians and make this role more attractive to encourage more takes up. It was also worth exploring providing the same type of therapeutic support to special guardians as provided to adopters. The Committee agreed that a report come forward on the how the service can update support for special guardianship role.</p>	<p>WT/ LK</p>
<p>CPAC218</p>	<p>CHILDREN IN CARE AND CUSTODY</p> <p>The Committee noted that following changes in the Legal Aid, Sentencing and Punishment of Offenders Act, any young person under the age of 18 that is remanded into custody now becomes a child in care. Currently the Youth Offending Service manages support and youth detention accommodation and this is funded by the Youth Justice Board. When the young people come into care they will require a social worker, accommodation, and education arrangements</p> <p>Discussions have been taking place between Children’s service and the Youth Offending Team to begin to manage this change and ensure processes are streamlined in order to reduce any duplication of work within limited resources. The cost and responsibility for placements will be fully transferred to local authorities in April 2013 (currently councils contribute to 1/3 of the costs). The funding formula which will be used to allocate finances to individual authorities, removes two third’s of the contribution from the Youth Justice Board and includes the expectation that the need for YDA (youth Detention accommodation) reduces by 15 . There has been an analysis of young people in YDA (Youth Detention Accommodation) in Haringey and this reduction in numbers is unlikely due to the need to protect the public from serious harm. Therefore there is likely to be a shortfall in funding to meet the required number of placements.</p> <p>Fuller guidance from the Dfe was still awaited; meanwhile the service are identifying young people on short term detention plans and looking to secure places at colleges, recruiting specialist foster carers who will be further trained to look after young people on remand, and training social workers who will be able to provide support to this particular cohort of young people in care.</p> <p>The Committee sought understanding about the nature of offences that will lead young people to enter remand. They were advised that high risk cases are subject to a separate process and will involve a multi agency risk panel considering the best options for the young person going forward.</p> <p>The Committee sought further understanding on the new judicial process as a consequence of the new Legal Aid, Sentencing and Punishment of Offenders Act and where the local authority becomes responsible for the care of the young person. It was suggested a time or flow chart could be provided to display this information and aid understanding. [This is appended to the minutes]</p>	

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CPAC219	EXCLUSION OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC The press and public were excluded from the meeting for consideration of items 11 &12 as they contained exempt information as defined in section 100a of the local government Act 1985:para 1 and 2 namely information relating to any individual and information relating to financial or business affairs of any particular person(including the authority holding that information).	
CPAC220	ADOPTION PERFORMANCE REPORT Exempt information pertaining to item 8 was noted.	
CPAC221	MINUTES The exempt minutes of the 4 th December 2012 were agreed as an accurate record of the meeting.	
CPAC222	ANY OTHER BUSINESS There were no items of urgent business.	

Cllr Ann Waters
Chair