

# **MINUTES OF MEETING CORPORATE PARENTING ADVISORY COMMITTEE HELD ON THURSDAY, 14<sup>TH</sup> JANUARY 2021, 7.15 – 21.00**

## **PRESENT:**

**Councillors:** Kaushika Amin (Chair), Sakina Chenot, Eldridge Culverwell, Mahir Demir, Erdal Dogan, Peter Mitchell and Tammy Palmer

**ALSO ATTENDING:** Ann Graham (Director of Children's Services), Dr Christine Cocker (Beverley Hendricks (Assistant Director for Safeguarding and Social Care), Richard Hutton (Senior Performance Officer), Lynn Carrington (Designated Nurse), Dr Fayrus Abusrewil, Emma Cummern (Head of Young Adult Service), Anneke Phillip (Consultation & Participation Officer) and Emma Perry (Principal Committee Co-ordinator)

## **1. 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.

## **2. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE (IF ANY)**

There were no apologies for absence.

## **3. URGENT BUSINESS**

None

## **4. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

There were no declarations of interest.

## **5. MINUTES**

The minutes of the meeting held on 20 October 2020 were agreed as an accurate record.

## **6. MATTERS ARISING**

It was confirmed that the actions detailed in the minutes of the previous meeting had now been completed.

## **7. PERFORMANCE FOR THE YEAR TO NOVEMBER 2020**

Dr Christine Cocker gave a presentation at the meeting on the Haringey Children's Academy. Dr Cocker was an Independent Chair and had been carrying out this role since March 2020. It was noted that the Haringey Children's Academy had been in operation for a year. Each academy was slightly different and Dr Cocker stated that she and colleagues had worked really hard in ensuring that the building blocks that were necessary for the initiative to succeed were put in place. The Academy structure had five faculties, as follows:

- Education and Learning Pathway Faculty – Head: Eveleen Riordan
- Career Pathways and Professional Development Faculty – Head: Beverley Hendricks
- Management and Leadership Faculty – Head: Joe Derilo
- Organisational Resilience, Health and Wellbeing Faculty – Head: Susan Otit
- Early Interventions and Prevention Faculty – Head: Anne Marie Dodds

Dr Cocker stated that there would be an annual audit of training needs in Children's Services, which would be fed into the work of the faculties. The following areas were also addressed as part of the presentation:

- Set out the progress since launch in 2020 – Foundations
- Provided an example of the launch of the microsite, not live just yet.
- Work priorities for 2021, including launching the learning management system in Children's Services and involving young people and families in the work of the academy.

In response to a question from Councillor Dogan regarding the learning management systems and the platforms they were looking to adopt for their provision, Dr Cocker stated that it was important to develop a system that staff could use and would find useful. It was noted that it was already a requirement for social workers to record their learning and this data would also be used in developing a new management system.

In response to a question from Councillor Palmer about shared learning and any commerce opportunities and best practice that could be taken from other local authorities, Dr Cocker stated that there had been a number of Local Authorities that had paved their way before and that colleagues in Essex had developed a very fine academy. She added that there was an opportunity to do something unique here for all staff working in Children's Services. Dr Cocker stated that she was more than happy to come back and provide an update to the Committee when more progress had been made.

The Chair then moved to the report. Richard Hutton (Performance and Business Intelligence Officer) introduced the report, as set out in the agenda.

Officers responded to questions from the Committee:

- Councillor Palmer recognised that there had been delays in the adoption process and wished to know the main challenges faced by the service as a result of Covid and how the service was trying to overcome these. In response, it was explained that there had been some delay in family finding, as the usual

mechanisms did not exist during the pandemic. There were delays in the Court system, which had resulted in a delay in getting the adoption ratified by the court. There were currently 9 children with carers that they were unable to process their placement orders, as a result of the delays. There were also the pressures of the workforce to take into consideration.

- In response to a question regarding the figures and whether it was expected that these would change dramatically after lockdown easing, Mr Hutton indicated that some change was expected, however the figures had been pretty stable during the lockdown and he believed that as we were nearing the end of the municipal year the figures would broadly stay pretty similar.
- Councillor Demir was encouraged to see that 98% of looked after children had an up to date health assessment and questioned how these had been carried out and the impact Covid had had on children and the difficulties being faced. In response, it was stated that face to face visits were being carried out when they were able to and there was also the option to come into the Bounds Green centre or for staff to travel to where they lived. The majority of health assessments were being done virtually during the lockdown, which many young people welcomed and preferred. The service was seeing lots of problems relating to the mental and emotional health of children during this time. A number of children were feeling uncertain and anxious, especially those with learning disabilities, and there had been an increase in the number of children being referred for additional support.
- Dr Abusrewil added that they had continued to see children from August to the current lockdown, with the majority of meetings being face to face. They were trying to see those children that they had not seen in the previous 6 months face to face this time round, which was determined on a case by case basis. This had proved difficult with a current staffing restrictions, however they were ensuring those children that needed to have a face to face meeting were receiving these, as well as providing physical examinations, where necessary. There was a lot to be done on mental health issues and the local CAMS services were providing an on call service for those children, as well as the Kooth online counselling service.
- In response to a question from Councillor Mitchell regarding the figures surrounding unaccompanied asylum seekers, it was explained that there had been a high number of young people that had turned 18 which put them into a different category. This meant that they would still be with the young adult service, however there had been lower numbers of referrals in 2020, along with it also being much harder to travel during the pandemic, which had all had an impact on the figures.
- In response to a question from Councillor Culverwell regarding mobile phones, it was stated that it was a different generation and that mobile phones were essential for many young people. They were seen as an effective form of communication and were usually funded out of the foster carers allowance. It was confirmed that this was not a generic offer.
- In response to a question from Councillor Chenot regarding remote learning during the pandemic, it was explained that a large number of laptops had been secured last year and the service had worked with schools to ensure that those looked after children that had to work remotely had the necessary equipment to do so. Priority was given to vulnerable children, with daily reporting of those

children to ensure that their education remained intact. The virtual school was doing a lot of work on remote learning and the service was satisfied that they had adequately met the needs of most looked after children.

## 8. HARINGEY EXPLOITATION SERVICE: VIOLENCE, VULNERABILITY AND EXPLOITATION

Beverley Hendricks (Assistant Director for Safeguarding & Social Care) introduced the report, as set out in the agenda.

Officers responded to questions from the Committee:

- Councillor Dogan referred to the graph on page 26 of the agenda and the big rise in the number of child referrals received by child exploitation services in ages 14-16 year olds and questioned whether there were any early interventions that took place. In response, it was explained that this was a very active services with specialist workers, linked to a number of services. There had been developments in the service, with a discreet team of specialist workers concentrating on the spike identified in the report. It was found that from the age of 14 parenting often started to collapse, with influences in the community becoming greater. The team worked with the Police, as well as the Enfield exploitation service, alongside a wider range of interventions. Ms Hendricks added that this was complex and detailed work and hoped to come back with the impacts of this work at a future date.
- Councillor Mitchell raised a number of questions relating to pages 18, 25 and 38 of the agenda. It was agreed that Ms Hendricks would go back to Councillor Mitchell directly with answers to each of his questions. **ACTION: Beverley Hendricks.**
- The Chair also recognised that there was a lot of detailed information contained in the report and asked officers to look at the style of report and think about the best way that it could be displayed and presented to ensure that it was easily accessible.
- In response to a question from Councillor Chenot and possible links with Barnet, as well as Enfield in sharing gang related activity, it was stated that the priority was the partnership with Enfield, as Haringey shared the same borough command police unit. This therefore enabled efficiencies of resources and a focus on the 406 corridor.
- Councillor Palmer referred to the all Councillor briefing which had previously taken place and felt that it would be beneficial to provide an update to all Members on the Haringey Exploitation Service. Ms Hendricks stated that this was an important area and would be happy to facilitate this. Ann Graham (Director of Children's Services) stated that the service had previously offered a series of training and briefing sessions on this subject, which had been interrupted by Covid and would organise this with Beverley. **ACTION: Ann Graham and Beverley Hendricks to organise.**
- In response to a question regarding how policing was constructed in Haringey with regards to the Haringey Exploitation Services, it was stated that there was a Police Borough Command unit, which was a shared resource with Enfield. There was also the North Area Crime Violence Reduction Unit, as well as a multi-agency safeguarding group, which had powers to address particular

issues. Ms Hendricks provided assurances that this arrangement worked effectively in the borough and that the majority of secondary schools within Haringey were linked to a Police schools liaison officer.

## **9. LOCAL OFFER FOR CARE LEAVERS**

Emma Cummergen (Head of Young Adult Service) introduced the report, as set out in the agenda.

Jim Pomery (Policy Team Manager) outlined the 'Our Offer to Haringey's Care Leavers' PDF document, which was a slightly amended version from the one that was included in the agenda pack. It was confirmed that this reflected minor design details and that the content itself had not changed.

Ms Cummergen added that she was very aware that the document would need to be constantly updated, following publication

Officers responded to questions from the Committee:

- In response to a question regarding the benchmarking with other Local Authorities, it was stated that the Ofsted rating was only a small part of the judgement. It was explained that some authorities were doing different things to others and vice versa, which often made it difficult to compare. Following the research with other boroughs, it was found that Haringey had a strong baseline, with some other boroughs being better resourced and therefore being able to offer more.
- It was recognised that it would be useful to reflect the transgender population in the document and to show commitment in this area. An easy read version was good feedback and the team would look at how best to provide this. Ms Cummergen added that they were continuing to consult with young people to get their feedback and any further ideas on how to improve the document going forward.
- In response to a question regarding the independent advocate, it was confirmed that this was provided by Barnados, which was a commissioned contract who the Council had worked with for many years. With regard to travel, it was stated that the young person's personal advisors and case workers would advocate appropriately the best mode of transport for them to attend their apprenticeships and also teach them independence for when they needed to arrange this for themselves.
- Page 50 – In response to concern that there was no mention of outdoor activity in the mental and physical wellbeing section, it was stated that the rationale was to outline services that they had on offer and that all of the borough's parks and sports facilities were detailed on the My Haringey map.
- Page 51 – Drugs and Alcohol – Insight Haringey – it should state professional and confidential and not professional and confident.
- Page 53 – 4<sup>th</sup> bullet point should state the Department of Work and Pensions.
- Page 54 – in response to a question regarding the £20 clothing allowance, it was confirmed that this was a monthly allowance and would be made clearer in the document, if required.

- In response to a question regarding the complaints procedure, it was explained that there were various routes which the young people would be informed of by their personal advisors and social workers, and would come direct to the Council.

Officers confirmed that the administration errors referred to would be corrected in the published document.

## **RESOLVED:**

That the Local Offer for Care Leavers be noted and endorsed.

## **10. ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

- In response to a question from Councillor Culverwell regarding outdoor events with schools, it was stated that this could be looked into at a later date once the details of the easing of the Government Covid restrictions were known.
- Councillor Demir referred to the Government's white paper on mental health reform which was published yesterday, with the consultation period ending on 21 April. Councillor Demir questioned whether there would be any submission from the Council. In response, Ann Graham (Director of Children's Services) stated that she would discuss this with Adult Services colleagues, as well as Health colleagues, as it was felt they would want to provide a council response to the paper. Councillor Demir provided a copy of the paper to the committee, for information.
- Councillor Dogan suggested that he would like to see an interactive version of the Local Offer for Care Leavers and not just a PDF version. Officers stated that they would explore this suggestion with the young people to determine what they would like to see themselves.

CHAIR: Councillor Kaushika Amin

Signed by Chair .....

Date .....