

# **MINUTES OF MEETING CORPORATE PARENTING ADVISORY COMMITTEE HELD ON TUESDAY, 15TH OCTOBER, 2019, 6.35 – 8.45PM**

## **PRESENT:**

**Councillors:** Zena Brabazon (Chair), Julie Davis, Peray Ahmet, Sakina Chenot, Tammy Palmer and Mark Blake

## **69. 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.

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

Apologies for lateness were received from Cllr Chenot.

Apologies for absence were received from Cllr Erdal Dogan and Dr Fayrus Abusrewil.

## **71. URGENT BUSINESS**

There were no items of urgent business

## **72. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

No declarations of interest were made.

## **73. MINUTES**

### **RESOLVED**

The minutes of the 2<sup>nd</sup> July 2019 were agreed as a correct record.

## **74. MATTERS ARISING**

The following points were noted in discussion regarding the minutes of 2nd July 2019 of the Corporate Parenting Advisory Committee:

- Regarding page 2 of the minutes which referenced that there were 8 new unaccompanied asylum seeker children (UASC) at the end of the month, the Chair enquired as to whether that increased number of new UASC was still the trend. In response the Deputy Head of Safeguarding and Social Care advised that the numbers varied month to month, but noted that the performance report showed that there was a slight percentage increase from last year.
- Regarding the average length of time for children to move to adoption at page 3 of the minutes, the Chair enquired as to whether an updated report could be

presented at the next CPAC meeting following the recent TUPE transfer of Haringey staff to the North London Regional Adoption Agency. In response the Director of Children's Services advised that it was too soon to provide an updated report as the transfer had only recently occurred on 1st October. The Head of Children in Care & Placements informed the Committee that data was received on a monthly basis. The Chair requested that an update around adoption be placed on the CPAC work programme **(Action: Clerk)**.

- Cllr Ahmet queried as to whether FGM was uncommon as referenced at page 3 of the previous minutes. The Assistant Director for Safeguarding and Social Care clarified that it was not common to receive referrals of FGM, and accordingly it was suggested that the previous minutes be amended to reflect that the data for FGM was based on referrals received **(Action: Clerk)**. *Post meeting note: the previous minutes have been amended to reflect the recommended changes.*

***The meeting adjourned at 6:45pm for the Aspire meeting and re-commenced at 7:30pm***

## **75. RESPONSE TO CPAC QUESTIONS ON LOOKED AFTER CHILDREN AND YOUTH JUSTICE SYSTEM**

Beverley Hendricks, the Assistant Director for Safeguarding and Social Care, introduced this report as set out in pages 5-9 of the agenda pack, which provided a response to the CPAC questions on Looked After Children and the Youth Justice System.

The following was noted in response to the discussion of the report:

- Regarding the disparity between custodial sentences received for looked after children and non-looked after children, the Assistant Director for Safeguarding and Social Care explained that the disparity was based on the sentencing tariff awarded to looked after children in comparison to the general population. For instance, a looked after child was likely to get a higher sentencing tariff from the Youth Justice court for theft than another child from the general population. The disparity was a result of several factors, such as the presence of biological parents and representation offered on behalf of the child. The Cabinet Member for Communities and Equalities further added that another major factor was how a child's behaviour at home was treated, for example the police were more likely to get involved in a scenario where a child in an institutional setting had broken a window at home in comparison to a non-looked after child in a similar scenario. Cllr Blake mentioned an event he attended at City Hall a few weeks ago, which was based around the criminalisation of care leavers. He informed the Committee that some of the testimonials he heard revealed a negative picture of police interventions for children in care settings. He also found that the children experienced a lot of trauma and they would not talk about their experience. Cllr Blake explained that young people had a perception that counselling was not for them, and he felt that a different approach would be needed to address that issue.

- In relation to concerns about trauma experienced by young people and their mistrust of police, the Assistant Director for Safeguarding and Social Care informed the Committee that to help reduce the traumatic experience the Haringey Borough Commander had agreed that the police would not wear their uniform on occasions where there would be a planned police intervention involving a child.
- Regarding the summarised recommendations for questions 1-3 as set out in pages 7-9 of the agenda pack, the Assistant Director for Safeguarding and Social Care explained that the recommendations would be put into an action plan and then fed back to the Committee to demonstrate what had been delivered. The Chair agreed for the recommendations to be put into a planned schedule in order for it to be then presented to the Committee **(Action: Beverley Hendricks)**.

## 76. OFSTED ACTION PLAN PROGRESS UPDATE

Ann Graham, Director of Children's Services, introduced the report as set out at pages 11-26 of the agenda pack. She was pleased to inform the Committee that the updated report and action plan had been completed, and thanked the service for the positive outcome of the Ofsted inspection. She emphasised that it was important not to be complacent in order to continue the good work and ensure positive progress.

The following was noted in response to the discussion of the report:

- Regarding the joint quarterly report referenced at page 24 point 7.2, the Chair asked whether the report could be presented to the Committee. The Director of Children's Services informed the Committee that a report could be presented to the Committee for a future CPAC meeting, but since the Committee's focus was on Looked after Children, the report could be adapted to concentrate on Looked After Children with a link to the full report **(Action: Ann Graham)**.
- In reference to training delivered for social workers at the Haringey Academy as set out on page 26 of the agenda, the Chair requested that this matter be placed on the CPAC work programme **(Action: Clerk)**.

## 77. UNACCOMPANIED ASYLUM-SEEKING CHILDREN - UASC

Beverley Hendricks, the Assistant Director for Safeguarding and Social Care, introduced this report as set out in pages 27-41 of the agenda pack. Beverley Hendricks took the Committee through the report and highlighted the following:

- In reference to the graph on page 32 of the agenda pack, it was noted that the number of Unaccompanied Asylum-Seeking Children (UASC) presenting in Haringey was showing a rising trend. During 2018-19, 10 cases had been transferred to other areas as Haringey had met its quota level. It was further noted that there was an issue with Haringey's quota level as the quota level across the country was 0.07%; however, for the last year Haringey's quota averaged at 0.09%. The service had raised queries around the National

Transfer Scheme as it was not working effectively, and furthermore, there had been an announcement from the Department for Education around changes to the Scheme; however, Haringey had not seen the benefit of those changes. Additionally, it was predicted that Haringey was likely to have more UASC as looked after children, and in consideration of that forecast, Haringey needed to plan a service response to effectively manage the particular needs of those UASC for future years.

- In reference to the graph page 33 of the agenda pack, it was noted that the total number of UASC care leavers was predicted to be 28% of the care leaver's cohort by 2021-22, and 39 looked after children would convert in the same year. Therefore, Haringey would have more UASC that the services would be responding to, and it was anticipated that those UASC would have a longer relationship with the services, which would have an impact on the service when they would become care leavers. In consideration of this growing trend, the point was reinforced that that services needed to be re-configured to meet the needs of the UASC and to manage the current growing trend.

The following was noted in response to the discussion of the report:

- In response to a question, the Assistant Director for Safeguarding and Social Care confirmed that the current numbers of UASC were included within the total number of looked after children. There was currently 414 looked after children. The Assistant Director for Safeguarding and Social Care noted that it was important to distinguish between care leavers and children regarded as in care because some of the Council's corporate parent responsibility for care leavers continued up to the age of 25, if they qualified.
- Regarding funding for UASC to local authorities, the Assistant Director for Safeguarding and Social Care explained that the grant given to local authorities for UASC had been insufficient to the growing needs, which include the living expenses that local authorities cover. Although the government announced a funding increase to local authorities for UASC, the service was conducting an analysis to ascertain sufficiency of the uplift as there was uncertainty as to whether the uplift would cover the costs of the demands on the service.

## **78. PERFORMANCE FOR THE YEAR TO SEPTEMBER 2019**

The Committee considered this report which provided an analysis of performance data and trends for an agreed set of measures relating to looked after children on behalf of the Corporate Parenting Advisory Committee.

Beverley Hendricks, the Assistant Director for Safeguarding and Social Care, took the Committee through the report as set out in pages 35-41 of the agenda pack. In addition, the following was highlighted:

- It was noted that at the end of September 2019, 418 children were looked after; 69 per 10,000 population. It was stressed that this number was what was

- expected based on Haringey's demographics, and was in line with the looked after population at other local authorities.
- Regarding section 2.3, it was explained that 97 children ceased to be looked after in the first six months of 2019/20 for a range of reasons, such as returning home, being adopted and some turning 18.
  - In relation to Personal Education Plans (PEPs), the Committee were informed that electronic Personal Education Plans (e.PEPs) were introduced approximately a year ago. It was noted that 60% of e.PEPs had been completed. An email would be sent to schools by the Assistant Director of Schools and Learning to remind schools of their statutory duty in getting the PEPs completed. Furthermore, someone would be commissioned to start on Friday 18<sup>th</sup> November to work two days a week to focus on PEPs to ensure the level of high standards were maintained. Additionally, by April next year there would be an overhaul in the administration of pupil premium to schools for looked after children. This entailed an automatic amount that would be administered to schools at first and then the schools would have to request the remainder from the Virtual School by outlining how they would spend the pupil premium. It was highlighted that there would have to be a high-quality e.PEPs in place for schools to obtain the pupil premium. It was noted that these plans would make a difference in getting the PEPs completed to a high quality. In response to the Director of Children's Service query as to whether a PEP that would be picked in a future term if it had been missed in the previous term, in response the Assistant Director for Safeguarding and Social Care explained that there had been a concentrated audit in this area, and it was concluded that the quality of the PEPs had improved and there was evidence that the recommendations were being followed. It was further explained that the issue at hand was that the e.PEPs were not being signed off by schools, and the plans mentioned earlier would incentivise schools to give these PEPs priority. Additionally, it was noted that there was a mosaic working group looking into improve the system to evidence the work going on. In response to the Chair's suggestion of liaising with safeguarding governors to ensure they had an eye on this area, the Assistant Director for Safeguarding and Social Care informed the Committee that Independent Reviewing Officers (IROs) had requested to escalate issues based on this area to the Board of Governors of schools. Therefore, the mechanism would be that the IROs would go through the DMT (Children's Services Senior Leaders), and the DMT would make a decision around escalation to the Board of Governors based on any patterns identified around a cluster of schools. In response to a question around whether the dip in completion of PEPs was due to a system issue, it was explained the reason for the dip was that overall the PEPs were not completed to the standard required, for example not documenting how pupil premiums were spent. The Committee were assured that there would not be a stark drop at the beginning of every term once the PEPs were all caught up and approved.
  - Regarding the pathway plans, the Committee were informed that there was a dip in the pathway plans. The Deputy Head of Safeguarding and Social Care explained that in terms of the Young Adults Service, two weeks ago there were

9 cases in the service that did not have up to date pathway plans; however, currently 8 cases out of the 9 had been updated and the 9<sup>th</sup> case was due to be updated within the week. The Committee were assured that pathway plans were reviewed every week, and detailed tracking of this area was undertaken on a fortnightly basis at performance meetings to ensure good quality pathways plans.

The following was noted in response to the discussion of the report:

- In response to a query on placement moves referenced at 2.11 of the report, the Assistant Director for Safeguarding and Social Care noted that there were challenges around children between the ages of 13-15, some of whom were in residential placement. It was highlighted that the Council needed to work on building up relationships with private sector providers to ensure there were no placement disruption for children in those age ranges due to incidents, such as police being called for minor property damage. The Assistant Director for Safeguarding and Social Care suggested a piece of work was needed through the DMT process to find solutions, and further added that a Commission Officer had been brought to the service to address the issues. The Assistant Director for Safeguarding and Social Care suggested that a report could be presented to the Committee at a future date around the impact of the work to address the issues.
- The Director of Children's Services informed the Committee that the service was currently working on an invest to save proposal for Cabinet. The proposal would be for an investment of £100,000 to give the service capacity to undertake managing the market activity, with a view to procuring resources differently.

## **79. ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

Date of the next meeting  
16th January 2020

CHAIR:

Signed by Chair .....

Date .....