MINUTES OF THE Corporate Parenting Advisory Committee HELD ON Monday, 21st September, 2026 – IN-QUORATE

PRESENT:

Councillors: Georgia Twigg, Seema Chandwani(On Teams), Imad Ahmed and Sarah Williams(On Teams then in person)

20. FILMING AT MEETINGS

The Democratic Services Officer advised that, due to the Chair's apologies for absence, they would chair the meeting until Agenda Item 3, at which point a Chair would be elected. It was also noted that, as the meeting was inquorate and therefore informal, it was not being filmed.

21. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE (IF ANY)

It was advised that there have been apologies from the Chair, Councillor Mark Blake, and as this is a Cabinet Sub Committee, please can there be a formal proposer and seconder for Councillor Twigg to Chair the meeting.

Councillor Twigg proposed herself to Chair the meeting and Councillor Imad Ahmed seconded the proposal.

The Democratic Service officer stated it was agreed that Councillor Twigg will now chair the meeting.

22. URGENT BUSINESS

There were no new items of urgent business.

23. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

24. MINUTES

The minutes held on the Tuesday 4th November were infromally approved as a correct record but will be brought forward to the next scheduled meeting.

25. MATTERS ARISING

There were none.

26. CHILDREN IN CARE WITHIN THE YOUTH JUSTICE IMPACT REPORT (CIC ACTION PLAN)

The Committee received the report from Matthew Knights, Head of Service – Youth Justice to present this report.

The Head of Service for Youth Justice and Youth at Risk Strategy presented the annual update on outcomes for Children in Care (CiC) supported by the Youth Justice Service (YJS). Members noted that 45 of the 251 children who received a YJS disposal outcome during 2025/26 were Children in Care, representing 18% of the caseload. Of these, 23 were looked after by Haringey, 11 had been remanded to Youth Detention Accommodation and 19 had lived outside the borough during the year.

The Committee noted that Children in Care were disproportionately represented in the youth justice cohort, particularly in relation to violent, robbery and drug-related offences. Black children, males and 16-year-olds were overrepresented within the CiC group. Members also noted that a significant number of children had experienced out-of-borough placements and that many required additional support through Education, Health and Care Plans (EHCPs).

Members were advised of the range of interventions available through the YJS, including mentoring, CAMHS support, speech and language therapy, substance misuse services, education support and health services. The report highlighted several challenges affecting outcomes, including placement instability, differing agency responsibilities for out-of-borough placements, reliance on host authorities for assessments and difficulties maintaining consistent multi-agency engagement.

The Committee noted findings from a survey of young people aged 16 and over who were not in education, employment or training (NEET), which showed that most wished to enter employment but faced barriers relating to support, access and employability skills. Members also noted the continuing partnership between the YJS and Virtual School through the Skills Network platform and the proposed next steps, which included strengthening information sharing, reviewing key protocols, improving support for children placed outside the borough, implementing new mental health provision and developing initiatives to improve education, employment and training outcomes for Children in Care.
Members queried the impact of out-of-borough placements on outcomes for children. It was explained that placements outside Haringey can disrupt access to education, health services and established support networks. Frequent placement moves may also make it more difficult for young people to build and maintain trusted relationships with professionals. The Youth Justice Service therefore works closely with host authorities and is reviewing arrangements to strengthen support for children placed outside the borough.

In response to questions regarding support for Children in Care who are not in education, employment or training (NEET), Members were advised that the Youth Justice Service works in partnership with the Virtual School and other agencies to support young people into suitable opportunities. Survey findings indicated that many young people were motivated to work, with employment identified as the main aspiration, but often required practical support with CV writing, job applications and accessing opportunities.

Members sought assurance regarding the effectiveness of current interventions in improving outcomes for Children in Care. Officers advised that a range of targeted support is in place and continues to be reviewed. While the report demonstrated ongoing engagement with this cohort, it also highlighted areas requiring further improvement. New improvement targets have therefore been incorporated into the Youth Justice Plan 2024-27, with progress to be monitored and reported through future updates.

RESOLVED:

The Committee noted the contents of the report.

27. IRO ANNUAL 2025-2026

The Committee received the IRO Service Annual Report for 2025/26 from Nazim Hussain - Service Manager and noted that the service had maintained strong statutory performance. Members heard that the number of children looked after had reduced from 320 to 296 during the year and that 96% of children had an up-to-date review, with 88% of children aged over four participating in the review process.

The Committee noted the positive findings from Ofsted, which recognised the value of IROs in supporting children's participation and ensuring care plans remained child centred. Members heard that the service continued to provide effective oversight and challenge of care planning, safeguarding and permanence arrangements, supported by a stable team of five experienced IROs.

The Committee noted progress in securing permanence for children through adoption, Special Guardianship Orders and long-term fostering arrangements, as well as a reduction in formal dispute resolution activity, indicating that more concerns were being resolved through early professional dialogue.

Members also noted areas for further development, including strengthening participation, permanence planning, cultural competence, adolescent safeguarding and evidencing the impact of IRO challenge. The priorities for 2026/27 were noted, including enhancing oversight of safeguarding, health and education outcomes, improving participation for children with complex needs, and strengthening quality assurance and impact monitoring.

RESOLVED:

The Committee noted the contents of the report.

28. PERFORMANCE UPDATE

The Committee received the Children Looked After (CLA) Performance Report for Quarters 1 and 2 of 2026/27, including outcomes for 2025/26 and the latest position as at August 2026.

Members noted that the number of children looked after remained stable at 299 as of August 2026, compared with 325 in March 2025, representing one of the lowest rates

recorded by the borough. Foster care continued to be the most common placement type, with 73% of children placed with foster carers, and placement stability remained strong, with the majority of children experiencing one or no placement moves during the previous 12 months.

The Committee heard that educational outcomes for children in care remained strong, with attainment levels above the national average, while performance for children with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) continued to be among the strongest nationally. Members also noted improvements in the timeliness of Education, Health and Care Plans (EHCPs).

It was reported that 96% of children in care had an up-to-date health assessment and that dental check performance remained high. Members noted that 14% of children in care had been reported missing during the previous 12 months, remaining below the statistical neighbour average, with robust safeguarding arrangements in place to respond to missing episodes.

The Committee noted that there had been 11 adoptions during 2025/26, an increase on the previous year, alongside a number of Special Guardianship Orders. Efforts to increase adoption opportunities and reduce disparities for children from global majority backgrounds were also highlighted.

Members further noted that the number of care leavers receiving support had reduced slightly since March 2026 and that performance remained strong in maintaining contact with care leavers, supporting them into suitable accommodation, education, employment and training, with outcomes exceeding both statistical neighbour and national averages.

The Committee noted the overall positive performance across Children Looked After services whilst recognising the ongoing challenges posed by levels of deprivation, sufficiency of local placements and the complexity of need within families.

Members sought clarification on the reduction in the number of children looked after and were advised that these reflected fewer children entering care, successful work to support children safely within their wider family networks, appropriate reunification arrangements, and young people reaching adulthood and leaving care. In response to questions regarding the high proportion of children placed outside the borough, officers explained that the availability of suitable local placements remained a national and regional challenge. However, Members noted that only 15% of children were placed more than 20 miles from home, which compared favourably with statistical neighbour and national averages, and that work continued with local providers, regional partners and the Council's own residential provision to increase local placement capacity. Members also sought assurance on the key challenges facing the service and were advised that these included poverty and deprivation, the increasing complexity of children's needs, and the availability and cost of suitable placements. Officers highlighted the ongoing work being undertaken to address these challenges through early intervention, permanence planning, partnership working and the development of local placement sufficiency.

RESOLVED:

The Committee noted the contents of the report.

29. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

There were none.

CHAIR:

Signed by Chair ……

Date ……

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