

**MINUTES OF THE CORPORATE PARENTING ADVISORY COMMITTEE  
THURSDAY, 17 MARCH 2011**

Councillors Allison, Engert, Peacock, Reith (Chair), Stennett and Watson

Apologies Councillor Alexander

Also Present: Councillor Solomon, Debbie Haith, Chris Chalmers, Attracta Craig, Wendy Tomlinson.

MINUTE NO.	SUBJECT/DECISION	ACTION BY
CPAC60	<p><b>APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE (IF ANY)</b></p> <p>Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Alexander. Councillor Solomon attended the meeting in her place.</p>	
CPAC61	<p><b>URGENT BUSINESS</b></p> <p>There were no items of urgent business submitted.</p>	
CPAC62	<p><b>DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST</b></p> <p>There were no declarations of interests submitted.</p>	
CPAC63	<p><b>MINUTES</b></p> <p>The minutes of the meeting held on the 24<sup>th</sup> January 2011 were agreed as a correct record of the meeting.</p>	
CPAC64	<p><b>MATTERS ARISING</b></p> <p>Members of the Committee considered the matters arising report and noted the following:</p> <p><b>The Corporate Parenting Strategy</b> This was due to be considered by the Scrutiny Panel, for Corporate Parenting, and would return to this Committee for final consideration on the 19<sup>th</sup> April 2011.</p> <p><b>Update on the Director of Children’s and Young People’s Service planned meeting with the Judiciary to discuss delays in court care proceedings.</b> A briefing note from the Director of Children and Young people’s service on his meeting with Judge Altman was attached for information.</p> <p><b>A report on the development work on dealing with issues of isolation faced by young people leaving care.</b> This report would follow to Committee in April 19<sup>th</sup> 2011.</p>	<p>Debbie Haith</p> <p>Chris Chalmers</p>

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**Regular Update on North London Adoption and Fostering Consortium**

The Committee noted that the North London Adoption and Fostering Consortium had met last week and they had agreed to look at their development plans for the next financial year. This would include: exploring how the boroughs can share foster carers, share training opportunities for foster carers, examine the differences in allowances for Foster care. The Committee noted that there was a dedicated post working for the North London Adoption and Fostering Consortium. This post holder would, among other work duties, be examining the spend of each member borough on Foster care providers and how a joint procurement process could be delivered. A work programme for the Consortium would be ready for consideration by this Committee after May 2011.

Clerk

It was noted that the North London Adoption and Fostering consortium website routed visitors to the Council's webpage for fostering and that this was still showing out of date information. It was agreed that the Head of Children's Commissioning and Placements consider the statistical information held and update as required.

Wendy Tomlinson

The Committee enquired about the Council's response to the Government's new initiative on Adoption which indicated allowing children to be based with families not from their same ethnic background. The Committee were advised that the initiative still advocated the best interest of the child as a priority which was what the Council followed in decision making on adoption. Placing a child with the same ethnic family was part of considering the best interests of the child and it could sometimes be the case that there were not exact racial matches made when choosing parents for adopted children.

**CPAC attending a Young and in Care Council** - It was noted that a joint meeting between the Corporate Parenting Committee and the Young and in Care Council would be progressed.

**Totals Respect Training** -The Committee noted that the weekend dates for the Total Respect training were not going ahead. The previously arranged training dates of the 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> April with a follow up session on the 02 August were available for members of the Committee to participate in.

All to note

**Registration certificate for manager at Coppetts Road** .The Committee were informed that there was frequent contact with OFSTED to ensure that they had received and were considering the necessary information required to issue the registration certificate for the Manager at Coppetts Road Children's Home. The interview process for the manager would be initiated once authorisation had been given by OFSTED.

All to note

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	<p><b>Items for the next meeting</b> The Committee agreed that the senior designated Children in Care Nurse be invited to this meeting and the Independent Review Officer would report on work completed on stability of placements. The Committee would also consider the standing items on Performance, Regulation 33 visits, and Coppetts Road Children’s Home.</p>	Clerk
CPAC65	<p><b>SAFEGUARDING LOOKED AFTER CHILDREN, YOUNG PEOPLE, AND CARE LEAVERS WHEN SUPPORTING AND ENABLING THEM TO ACCESS INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY</b></p> <p>The Committee received a report on the key issues being considered in the development of a strategy for safeguarding looked after children , young people and care leavers when supporting and enabling them to access IT and communication technology. It was explained to the Committee that, when considering the access to information networks, this was not solely about controlling access within the home but that it was more about creating external knowledge and awareness among carers and parents about these systems and encouraging personal safety of the users. The Deputy Director for Children and Families set out the initial principles of the strategy which were:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Children and young people have the opportunity to use ICT to enhance their learning opportunities , develop ICT skills and communicate in the virtual environment</li> <li>• Carers provided opportunities to develop their own knowledge and skills in ICT so that they are better able to monitor use of ICT by young people and support their use of it.</li> <li>• There was the expectation from the Council that Service providers will need to demonstrate that they can support appropriate access to ICT and have a clear e – safety policy which was more advanced than the standard security programmes and understandable to carers and children.</li> <li>• Haringey managed services would need to have local e- safety policies which were communicated effectively to foster carers and other support services that were contracted and work with children and young people in care. These policies would need to be reviewed on an annual basis to ensure that they responded to changes in technology and are able to safeguard users.</li> </ul> <p>Members commented on the initial work completed on the strategy, and sought clarity on the position of schools in this. The Committee advised that it would be worthwhile reminding staff and teachers, of looked after children, of the additional risks attached to vulnerable children and young people accessing social networking sites. It was agreed that this safeguarding element, of access to information technology, be incorporated in the Virtual School policy.</p>	Attracta Craig

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	<p>Members remarked on the disparity between section 3 and 4 of the report. Section 3 which communicated that looked after children living in residential settings were not permitted access to technology in their private rooms but in section 4, which provided guidance for Foster carers there was no mention of IT access for children being open or private. It was felt to be a need for the strategy to also keep in mind the mobile access to technology which children and young people in care may have. In response to these points, the Committee were advised that the strategy was only concerned with information technology which is owned or managed by the Council and the Committee agreed that the strategy should make this more explicit. There were however broader issues of how looked after children and young people are made aware of the dangers of internet social networking sites and a need to develop their understanding of what were safe and unsafe situations, particularly with the increased use of mobile technology where there was not a fixed control over.</p> <p>In relation to monitoring the use of mobile information technology as communicated in section 4.1.5, there was a need to also apply this rule to the residential working practices. This was because there were occasions when staff at residential settings would be taking care of the belongings of children and young people living there.</p> <p>The Committee advised that, when computer equipment was provided to foster carers for use by the children and young people in their care, clarification should be sought on their skills and knowledge of IT and the internet to ascertain any relevant training needs.</p> <p>The Committee also commented that the implementation of the strategy would be as important as the strategy itself. They recommended that the training provided to staff should be kept fully up to date with the changes in technology continually factored and the training adapted. Foster carers and staff at residential settings should be made to feel that they are confident and understanding of the uses of information technology and what Children and young people can and cannot access. Also they should feel they are able to provide advice to children and young people on what are and are not safe situations to be when online.</p> <p>The Committee agreed that the forthcoming updated report should clearly distinguish the rules and principles that will be relevant to access to fixed computer technology and mobile technology. It was noted that there would be further consultation with foster carers, residential staff and young care leavers and a final version of the report to return to Committee at a forthcoming meeting.</p>	<p>Debbie Haith</p> <p>Debbie Haith</p> <p>Debbie Haith</p> <p>Debbie Haith</p> <p>Debbie Haith</p>
<p>CPAC66</p>	<p><b>ASSESSMENT OF HARINGEY'S PROGRESS WITH THE LONDON PLEDGE</b></p> <p>The Committee noted that the London Pledge was drawn up in 2008, and adopted by the Children's Trust, to ensure that children and young</p>	

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people in care across London had equal access to the same range of key services and support where they live, go to school, or access employment or training opportunities in London. The report set out the pledge principles and detailed how the Council were meeting these promises. The achievements in the overarching areas were: promises that were made to young people were clear, specialist looked after children nurse team established, and a complaints procedure for looked after children and young people.

When considering the health principles of the pledge, the Committee were informed that a multi agency forum had been established to address health, education and placements needs of LAC. Individual health assessments were undertaken by Doctors and follow up reviews completed by a designated Children in Care Nurse, Judy Mace, who was also due to attend the next Committee meeting of the Committee on the 19<sup>th</sup> April .The joint work of the Council with Tailstock Centre was pointed to as well as the signposting of children and young people to sexual health services as part of this pledge. An enquiry was made on the attendance of young people at their healthcare meetings and it was reported that, as these meetings were not compulsory, it was usual for young people in care to sometimes not attend these meetings. In relation to health visits to LAC outside of the borough, it was noted that the designated CiC nurse from the borough would travel to outside borough locations to visit CiC with weekend visits also completed when needed. The Committee agreed that the complaints procedure for children in care should be made available and published online as previously requested.

Chris  
Chalmers

In the stay safe section of promises to young people, the Committee noted that young people will be consulted on their pathway plans. There would be contact and liaison, where needed, with the Youth Offending Service in the young persons new placement area.

The provisions of the Virtual School were highlighted in the section dealing with enjoy and achieve. In particular their work on intervention at critical learning stages to ensure that children go onto achieve between the ages of 16-19. The 18 projects, which assist young people leaving care, also helped young people access University. The Committee noted that there were 44 care leavers attending University. The Committee enquired about the support services to them and advised that there were potentially more bursaries available in future for access to with the Frank Butler trust referred to as a potential funding source. The Committee were advised that the Council would issue looked after children with a £2000 bursary that are attending University. There was a team which actively worked on accessing all potential funding sources to offer to care leavers and to improve the attraction of going to University.

In regards to encouraging a positive contribution in the community, activities relating to this pledge were well established with a range of activities for involving young people who included working with Tottenham Hotspur. The Council were promoting the independence of

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	<p>care leavers with provision of 50 housing units each year .Children and young people in care would also have a savings account opened for them by the Council. In relation to utilising access to leisure services, it was noted that within the foster carer’s allowance, there was allocation for leisure activities which allowed for the young person to pick the activities they were most interested in.</p> <p>The Committee considered the views of the Young and in Care Council on how they saw the progression with the promises made in the pledge. Following the tone and content of their response, the key message was that the Council needed to work harder on explaining how they were considering their views and what changes in services and working practices had occurred as a result of their views. The directorate gave great emphasis to listening and relating to children and young people. It was clear that there would need to be a wider representation of youth at various meetings, events and consultations. There was a need to communicate more effectively to children and young people in care the pledge and its promises regarding them so that they were more aware of them. The Committee recommended that the communication with children and young people in care should be not be in a single format but completed in an array of ways to ensure that they were fully aware of the importance placed by the Council on obtaining their views. This would also aid furthering their understanding on what services were working for them. The Committee also suggested that a further version of the Corporate Parenting Strategy could be completed which was more accessible to children and young people in care.</p>	<p>Chris Chalmers</p> <p>Debbie Haith</p>
<p>CPAC67</p>	<p><b>PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT : CHILDREN AND FAMILIES</b></p> <p>The Committee noted the performance report and were asked to raise any concerns by email to the Deputy Director of Children’s and Families.</p>	<p>All to note</p>
<p>CPAC68</p>	<p><b>ANY OTHER BUSINESS</b></p> <p>The next meeting was on Tuesday April 19<sup>th</sup> 2011 at 6.30pm. Councillor Peacock’s apologies were noted for this meeting.</p>	

Cllr Lorna Reith

Chair