

**MINUTES OF THE CORPORATE PARENTING ADVISORY COMMITTEE
TUESDAY, 31 JANUARY 2012**

Councillors Brabazon, Hare, Peacock, Reece, Reith (Chair), Solomon and Stennett

Also Present: Libby Blake, Chris Chalmers, Debbie Haith, Lesley Kettle, Wendy Tomlinson, Cllr Weber (part)

MINUTE NO.	SUBJECT/DECISION	ACTION BY
CPAC136	<p>APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE</p> <p>Apologies for absence were received from Cllrs Allison and Watson. Cllrs Hare, Peacock and Weber (part) were in attendance.</p>	
CPAC137	<p>MINUTES</p> <p>The minutes of the meeting held on 6 December 2011 were agreed as an accurate record and signed by the Chair.</p>	
CPAC138	<p>MATTERS ARISING</p> <p>The Committee considered the matters arising report and received updates as appropriate:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • North London Fostering Consortium update: joint working continued between the five boroughs of the consortium including assessing the impact and costs benefits of the new approach of sharing foster carers. Other profile raising initiatives were underway including hosting coffee morning information sessions and targeted work with the Lesbian Gay Bisexual Transgender (LGBT) community. • Outcomes analysis of fostering week activities: clarification would be sought from Cllr Allison on her outstanding query relating to the information provided. • NLSA procurement specialist: the recruited candidate would shortly be starting in post. A report on the category management costs element of this work would be scheduled for Committee consideration in due course. • Framework-i: the Committee noted the update provided on arrangements for staff at the two children’s homes in the borough to have read only access to pertinent information on the system. • Disruption to Regulation 33 visit: further details were provided and noted by the Committee on the situation that had occurred during a Regulation 33 visit to one of the children’s homes in October and had resulted in the visit being cut short. 	WT
CPAC139	<p>PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT : CHILDREN AND FAMILIES</p> <p>The Committee received a streamlined, high level summary report</p>	

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	<p>setting out performance information relating to Looked After Children (LAC). Key headlines included an increase in the percentage of social worker posts becoming permanently filled and the continued downwards trajectory in the number of LACs. The cost of service per LAC however remained high and above target. The new category manager post would play a key role in trying to manage these costs down and also to benchmark data with comparator authorities.</p> <p>Assurance was provided that the number of LAC who ceased to be looked having been looked after for less than a month remained under frequent review by senior managers. It was agreed that a report be provided to the next meeting providing further details on this cohort of young people including information such as age, reasons for becoming looked after etc.</p> <p>The Committee also requested a report back on the stability of LAC placements based on length of placement.</p> <p>RESOLVED</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • That the report be noted. 	<p>DH</p> <p>DH</p>
<p>CPAC140</p>	<p>ADOPTION SERVICE IMPROVEMENT PLAN.</p> <p>The Committee considered the adoption service improvement plan developed following an Ofsted inspection in July which had rated the service as satisfactory. As well as encompassing the actions identified by the inspectors, the plan was aspirational in setting out the improvements required for the service to transition to excellent classification. The improvement plans for both the fostering and the adoption services would become part of the wider strategic improvement plan being developed for the whole of the Children’s Services directorate to reflect the shift to a whole service approach for LACs. It was agreed that the LAC element of the service improvement plan would be submitted to a future Committee meeting for consideration. Confirmation was provided that the performance of the adoption service and implementation of the action plan would continue to be reported to the Committee on a regular basis.</p> <p>The impact of national policy drivers in relation to adoption were discussed and it was requested that a summary be produced to provide a context to the planned future consideration of the Permanency Strategy by the Committee.</p> <p>The Committee queried the reference in the inspection report of the need to ensure staff recruitment procedures were more robust to ensure suitability to work with children and service users. It was explained that this had arisen from a one off incident where a minor step in the recruitment process for a staff member had unfortunately not been fully recorded.</p>	<p>DH</p> <p>DH</p>

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	<p>RESOLVED</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • That the report be noted. 	
<p>CPAC141</p>	<p>FOSTERING INSPECTION IMPROVEMENT PLAN</p> <p>The Committee considered the fostering service improvement plan developed following an Ofsted inspection in August which had rated the service as satisfactory. The improvement plan aimed to transition the service to at least a good rating and would become part of the Children’s Service strategic improvement plan.</p> <p>Clarification was provided that the action identified to prepare and implement a written procedure to be followed in the event of any allegation of abuse or neglect and for written records to be kept had already been completed and therefore that no additional action was required.</p> <p>RESOLVED</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • That the report be noted. 	
<p>CPAC142</p>	<p>OPTIONS FOR THE FUTURE OF DIRECTLY PROVIDED CHILDREN'S HOMES</p> <p>The Committee considered a report setting out options for the future of the borough’s two main children’s homes following a review of internal provision in light of ongoing concerns on value for money and the level of outcomes achieved for young people. A regular pattern of under-occupation had prevailed, despite expanding the remit of one of the homes, and had resulted in costs in excess of those seen in comparable units. A number of options had been considered for the future of the homes but the report to be submitted for Cabinet in February would seek in principle approval for the closure of both homes pending the results of an Equalities Impact Assessment and consultation with relevant persons.</p> <p>Both staff groups had been advised of the recommendation to close the homes and meetings had been scheduled with both groups of young people later in the week to discuss the options being considered, to provide reassurance on how any changes would be managed and the impact on individual future care plans. Barnados would be running an additional session with the young people to address any other issues arising. Meetings would also be scheduled with respective parents, schools, social workers and social work managers.</p> <p>Assurances were provided that should the homes be closed, sufficient alternative placement provision was available and which additionally provided more flexibility in ensuring the best placements were obtained according to individual need. The Committee received a tabled paper setting out the position of the individual children currently living at the two homes and the provisional future plans in place for them. Confirmation was provided that in line with their care plans and irrespective of whether the homes closed or not, by July none of the</p>	

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	<p>current occupants were expected to still be in the homes. Assurances were also provided that any private children home placements used in the borough in the future would be required to have a good or outstanding rating.</p> <p>In response to a query, it was confirmed that the legal status of both sites had been checked and neither had restrictive covenants attached. It was requested that should the recommendation to close the homes be approved, that consideration be given to alternative uses for the sites as well as disposal, for example potential suitability for a mother and baby unit.</p> <p>The Committee asked for a future report on semi-supported housing options including pilots being run with Homes for Haringey and Community Housing.</p> <p>Following discussions, it was agreed that where possible the same Regulation 33 inspectors continue to undertake scheduled visits to the homes to provide assurances on continuity of care over any transition period.</p> <p>The Committee asked that their thanks be placed on record for the work of staff to progress this difficult piece of work.</p> <p>RESOLVED</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • That the report be noted. 	<p>Chair to note</p> <p>WT</p> <p>WT to note</p> <p>DH to note</p>
<p>CPAC143</p>	<p>EXCLUSION OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC</p>	
	<p>The press and public were excluded from the meeting for consideration of items 11-14 as they contained exempt information as defined in Section 100a of the Local Government Act 1972 (as amended by Section 12A of the Local Government Act 1985): paras 1 & 2: namely information relating to any individual, and information likely to reveal the identity of an individual.</p>	
<p>CPAC144</p>	<p>OPTIONS FOR THE FUTURE OF DIRECTLY PROVIDED CHILDREN'S HOMES</p> <p>RESOLVED</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • That the names of the two children's homes referred to in item 9 be noted. 	
<p>CPAC145</p>	<p>FOSTERING INSPECTION IMPROVEMENT PLAN</p> <p>The Committee considered details of the <i>Change a life</i> foster campaign, part of the fostering service improvement plan, including the objectives, marketing activity plan and action taken to date to increase the number of registered and approved foster carers. It was confirmed that the impact of the campaign would be evaluated at the end of the year.</p>	

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	<p>RESOLVED</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • That the report be noted. 	
CPAC146	<p>REGULATION 33 VISITOR REPORTS</p> <p>The Committee considered a summary report on the Regulation 33 visits undertaken at the two children’s homes in the borough in November and December and subsequent recommendations arising. It was advised that changes were being made to the staff undertaking the visits, thereby requiring the running of a training session on 16 February. The Committee questioned the need for this training in light of the uncertainty around the future of the homes.</p> <p>Confirmation was provided that plans to install a new kitchen in one of the homes had been placed on hold pending a decision on their future.</p> <p>RESOLVED</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • That the report be noted. 	WT
CPAC147	<p>ANY OTHER BUSINESS</p> <p>The Chair advised she was unable to attend the proposed joint meeting with the Children’s Safeguarding Policy and Practice Committee on 5 March and that consideration be given to rescheduling the date.</p> <p>A report would be taken to a future meeting on proposals from the Children in Care Council on future interaction with the Committee.</p>	<p>Clerk</p> <p>DH</p>

Cllr Lorna Reith

Chair