

**MINUTES OF THE JOINT MEETING OF CORPORATE PARENTING ADVISORY COMMITTEE & CHILDREN'S SAFEGUARDING POLICY AND PRACTICE COMMITTEE  
THURSDAY, 22 MARCH 2012**

Councillors Allison, Brabazon, Amin, Reith(Chair), Stennett, Hare, Rice, Davies

Apologies Councillor Reece, Watson, Solomon, Stewart

Also Present: Hilary Corrick, Sylvia Chew, Debbie Haith, Marion Wheeler, Iain Lowe, Liz Fajasmin

<b>MINUTE NO.</b>	<b>SUBJECT/DECISION</b>	<b>ACTON BY</b>
<b>JC20</b>	<b>APPOINTMENT OF THE CHAIR</b>  Previously the Joint Committee had agreed that the role of Chair at these meetings is alternated between the Chair of Corporate Parenting Advisory Committee and Chair of Children's Safeguarding Policy and Practice Committee. Cllr Reith, Chair of the Corporate Parenting Advisory Committee chaired this meeting.	
<b>JC21</b>	<b>APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE(IF ANY)</b>  Apologies were received from Cllr Solomon, Reece, Stewart and Watson.  Cllr Amin provided apologies for lateness.	
<b>JC22</b>	<b>URGENT BUSINESS</b>  There were no items of urgent business.	
<b>JC23</b>	<b>DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST</b>  No declarations of interest were put forward.	
<b>JC24</b>	<b>DEPUTATIONS/PETITIONS/QUESTIONS</b>  There no deputations, petitions or public questions for the joint committee to consider.	
<b>JC25</b>	<b>PRESENTATION ABOUT THE MULTI AGENCY SAFEGUARDING HUB(MASH)</b>  The committee received a presentation from the Head of First Response about the newly established MASH (Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub). This team builds on the existing First Response Multi Agency Team (FRMAT) which had been operating since May 2010. It co-located the Metropolitan Police, health and social workers, together with support from education and housing. The MASH enhanced this model by adding	

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police intelligence, and co-locating other agencies such as adults safeguarding, probation and mental health. The MASH team were together in one secure location, working together to best ensure vulnerable children in the borough were identified and properly cared for and protected.

Haringey was one of only two boroughs, in the country, currently operating with the MASH. Confidentiality was paramount and in this co location partners were able discuss the referrals they received instantly in a multi-agency meeting, sharing information about the family and deciding on the course of action for the child/ young person. This information sharing process also allowed the team to analyse information and identify any trends/patterns to referrals. Tim Loughton MP visited the MASH recently and commended the team on how well they worked together. He had also been impressed by how members of the team had followed up the cases they had referred onto services. Indeed extracts from recent Ofsted inspections compared to those in the past, demonstrated how far the service had come in improving the speed and quality of decisions being made to safeguard vulnerable children and young people.

The early information sharing about a family in a multi-agency environment also aided identifying how to support families at an early stage. The multi agency discussion would enable the right package of services to be commissioned for the family or appropriate links made with services, such as a children's centre. Early intervention with families was key to stopping children coming into care

The committee asked about benchmark figures to better understand the performance of the MASH in comparison to other comparator boroughs. Other boroughs, apart from Devon, had yet to fully establish a MASH (Multi Agency safeguarding Hub) but this would change over time as more teams were compiled. The Children's Service would then be able to look at how quickly Initial assessments and referrals were being completed in comparison to other boroughs with the MASH and provide this to members. In terms of a review of the performance of the team, it was noted that the London Safeguarding Board would monitor this. Members of the committee were also welcome to visit the MASH and see first hand their work.

Members sought understanding on how information from different databases of partners was interpreted and shared, in particular mental health service files. It was noted that the MASH were able to access the front page of a mental health service referral which would provide them the necessary information on whether the client had children and enable and the nature of the referral. The partner representative themselves would interpret the data from their own partner agency and share this with the other representatives in the MASH. This mitigated against mis - interpretation of data.

The composition and nature of the MASH team allowed the partner representatives to continue with the necessary daily activities of their

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	<p>role and also flexibly deal with safeguarding enquiries as and when needed.</p> <p>Although the partner representatives were working outside the premises of their original teams, they still reported to their own partner organisations. To allow the MASH team to share concerns and consider potential issues, there were two weekly meetings held which the Head of First Response also attended. She would report back any key concerns to fellow senior colleagues at the relevant partner agency.</p> <p>The work of the team was reported to the Children's Trust which in turn reported to the Health and Wellbeing board and also the LSCB. The team were also accountable to the London Safeguarding Board.</p>	
<p><b>JC26</b></p>	<p><b>PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT DATA - CHILDREN AND FAMILIES - FEBRUARY 2012</b></p> <p><b>Safeguarding performance data</b></p> <p>There were no significant reduction in the number of contacts and referrals to the safeguarding service during the month of February. The committee noted that the service was investigating the rate of referrals but to be aware that there would be genuine reasons for the number contacts becoming referrals.</p> <p>The service was reaching their targets for the completion of initial and core assessments. The independent member of the Safeguarding Policy and Practice Committee had completed recent audits for the committee and had not raised concerns regarding the quality of assessments.</p> <p>The number of child protection cases held by Haringey was higher compared to comparator boroughs but the service were confident, upon investigation of the cases, that this number was correct. This also applied to the number of children on a child in need plan. Regular audits were completed on plans to check progress against their original objectives. The committee learned that when children were passed to the children in need team, it was because there were universal community based services that could help manage the risks and issues identified in the plan.</p> <p>Members sought understanding about the Safeguarding Service's links with the newly restructured children's centres which were working to a cluster model. It was noted that there was an allocated Social Worker to each cluster who would also have links to the MASH. Under four's represented 41% of cases referred to the MASH and there was current discussion with the Head of Early Years about the high referral rate of children from this category and considering whether the assessments of under 4's, at children centres, needed to be different to provide more placements for these children.</p>	

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**LAC Performance data**

The Joint Committee continued to consider performance information relating to LAC in the month of February which had also been considered at the start of the week by the Corporate Parenting Committee.

- **HY34 Number of social work posts permanently filled-** The vacancy level did not warrant concern and the levels of staff turnover were at expected levels.
- **Op200 – Cost of service per looked after child** -The imminent closure of the two children's homes meant that no new young people were being admitted to them. It was clarified that the high weekly cost of placements, per looked after child, was not associated with the proposed closure of the two residential children's homes. Reducing the cost of service per looked after child was a major priority for the children service and part of this involved reducing procurement and commissioning costs. In relation to this the NLSA were funding a commissioning manager who was based in Haringey but working on behalf of the other NLSA boroughs to examine driving down unit costs associated with commissioning services for LAC and also examining increasing the quality of service that they can access.
- In preparation for the closure of the children's homes the service were putting in place semi independent accommodation for young people currently living in the homes and recruiting more specialist foster carers. This course of action would continue and members were assured that, should the use of private residential homes be called upon, only those with a good or outstanding rating would be used.
- **OP 409 Foster carer recruitment-** Corporate Parenting Committee had asked for a breakdown of the background to the newly recruited carer's i.e. Whether they were kinship carers or stranger carers.
- **OP 414 – Percentage of children becoming looked after previously subject to CP Plan** - This was explained to be a proxy indicator which was in place to monitor the circumstances that children were becoming looked after.
- **OP389 A the rate of children in care per 10,000-** The aim was to achieve a balance between those children coming into care and those leaving care. The service were looking at cases where the child was looked after for less than a month to understand if better decisions could have been made at the start of the referral to stop the child becoming looked after for a short period of time.

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>OP417 Care Proceedings initiated</b> - This had reduced from 243 in 2010/11 to 134 cases and currently there were 117 open proceedings. There were timelier decisions being made by the courts in relation to cases which assisted with getting earlier placements for the child/young person in turn improving their outcomes. At the start of the process there were better authoritative practices being taken forward by Social Workers. The service were commencing with community based support to also stem the number of cases reaching the legal proceedings.</li> <li>• <b>OP386 Children in care cases reviewed on time</b> – All cases had been reviewed but as some were not done within the set time limit, the target could not be calculated as being met. The committee were assured that since the summer months these reviews had been completed on time.</li> <li>• <b>NEET – OP148 –Care leavers in education employment or training</b> - Managers in the Children in Care team had been emailed to re consider these figures and provide updated information. The current figures provided were incorrect or did not contain enough background. This would be rectified and updated with information sent to members of the Corporate Parenting Advisory Committee.</li> <li>• <b>OP419 number of children missing/absconded from care at any point in the month</b> - The number of children in care reported missing was contained in performance figures and tracked on a month by month basis. Those which were reported missing in one month could also be included in the following months figures, if they were still missing. The Corporate Parenting Committee had recently received presentations from Barnado's about their externally funded work for the council with children that are at risk of going missing or absconding from care. This work had begun in December 2011 and it was agreed that it would be worthwhile to hear back from Barnardos on their work at a future CPAC meeting.</li> </ul>	Clerk
JC27	<p><b>FAMILY INTERVENTION PROJECT</b></p> <p>The committee received a presentation on the work of the Family Intervention project and noted that the project was part of the Children and Families team. The project was established in Feb 2010 with external grant funding and was unique to other services provided by the Children and Families teams in that it was not solely working with the child but working with the family as a whole. The family perspective was taken forward in the assessment process. The team working with the families came from a multi discipline of backgrounds and used evidence</p>	

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based practice and intervention methods. They worked with highly complex families and had the aim of building on their strengths.

When looking at the issues faced by the family, they would consider how individuals in the family unit had contributed to the issues being faced and assess how to support them. The work involved empowering the families to take control of the solutions that needed to take place to change their circumstances. Often the families had been subject to investigation by statutory agencies and had consequently developed a negative view of them. For the family to achieve their intended outcomes they would need accept this support from the outset and be willing to participate in an intensive programme. The work with the families was likely to last 2 years and changes take place incrementally.

The work with a family started from 7.00am until 8.00pm and meant that support workers were only allocated 4-6 families. It began with 16-25 weeks of persistent outreach work. Support workers usually undertook practical tasks with families, helped them build relationships, make use of a range of interventions, challenge poor behaviour. Their overall aim was help build the capacity of the family to deal with issues and problems independently.

It was a hybrid service and community based but helping families deal with a range of services and partner agencies. Currently the project was undertaking a review and evaluation of their work over the last two years and would be checking if the families had achieved their intended outcomes i.e. a supportive network. Also the Deputy Director for Children and Families would be examining the model of working that has been used to support the families and whether it could be expanded out in the children and young people's service. Following questions to the project co-ordinator, committee members gained the following knowledge:

- Although the focus of the work was with the family, the needs of the child/ children were paramount. Families were advised, at the start, by the support worker that if there was found to be risk of harm to child/children in the family then it would be reported to the Safeguarding Team.
- Again the relationship between the family and the support worker would work was set out at the start. The support worker would explain that there would be no collusion with the family if illegal activities were identified
- To secure any potential future funding for the project there was an intricate cost exercise being undertaken to demonstrate the savings being made by working with the troubled families. This meant trying to estimate how interventions have avoided episodes with the Police and statutory agencies, in turn saving money i.e. On legal proceedings or dealing with the effects of anti social

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	<p>behaviour.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The majority of the support workers were locum staff and had overall remained constant to the project over the last two years. Should the project cease to be funded then they would be subject to redeployment procedures. The workers were from a range of backgrounds including housing, social work, and psychotherapy. The support worker was regarded as a coach working with young and older members of the family to provide them with skills on how to change behaviour, improve parenting and deal with statutory agencies instead of avoiding them .</li> <li>The type of outcomes seen were children coming off protection plans, improvement of housing conditions, access to benefits, access to information about activities in their area , development of a family routine, access to alternative sources of education and improved parenting.</li> </ul> <p>The Chair thanked Liz Fajasmin for the informative presentation and it was agreed to provide this to all members of the committee after the meeting.</p>	Clerk
<b>JC28</b>	<b>NEW ITEMS OF URGENT BUSINESS</b>	
	There were no new items of urgent business to consider.	
<b>JC29</b>	<b>EXCLUSION OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC</b>	
<b>JC30</b>	<b>NEW ITEMS OF EXEMPT URGENT BUSINESS(IF ANY)</b>	
	There were no new items of exempt business to consider.	
<b>JC31</b>	<b>NEXT MEETING</b>	
	October 29 <sup>th</sup> 2012 provisional - to be confirmed at Council AGM.	

Cllr Lorna Reith

Chair