

MINUTES OF THE CHILDREN'S SERVICE ADVISORY COMMITTEE
17 OCTOBER 2005

AGENDA ITEM 4

Councillors *Meehan (Chair), *Adamou, Adje, Bax, *Jean Brown, *Engert, *Harris, Hoban, *Santry and Stanton.

* Members present

MINUTE NO.	SUBJECT/DECISION	ACTION BY
CSAC18.	APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE None Received	HMS
CSAC19.	MINUTES (Agenda Item) RESOLVED: That the minutes of the meeting held on 5 September 2005 be confirmed and signed.	HMS
CSAC20.	JULY/AUGUST PERFORMANCE DATA FOR CHILDREN'S SERVICES (Agenda Item 6): We received the performance report for July and August, which contained key performance data relating to children looked after, child protection, referrals and assessments, family support and staffing for members of the committee to consider. The data was compared to key performance indicators, which the Council was obliged to meet and contained the statutory requirements and local time scales for meeting these targets. We were informed that there had been 255 referrals received in the month of July and 233 in August. The performance for completion of initial assessments stood at 31.7% against a target of 56%. The committee conveyed its concern at the speed of which assessments were being completed. They were informed by officers that this issue was a priority and that they would be implementing measures to improve performance in this area. Officers further explained that social workers were diligently ensuring that the quality of initial assessments were of a high standard. We were advised that Haringey completed a greater number of initial assessments than other London boroughs. Officers advised that they would complete research to find out why this was the case and would report their findings in the performance report at a future meeting. In July 50% of core assessments were completed within timescales and 19% in August. Committee members were assured by officers that core assessments were being completed and there was not a backlog of cases. We were further informed that a new management information database was being implemented which would allow social workers to keep an electronic social care record. All local authorities were required to implement an electronic system for recording cases. Staff were being trained on the new e- care system and this had led to a delay in the speed of recording cases. This had now been rectified and all outstanding case	

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closures had been recorded on the system.		
Committee members reinforced the need to improve performance on initial and core assessments. Officers responded and gave account of an action plan devised for improving the performance of initial assessments. There were 494 looked after children in July, of this figure there were 109 unaccompanied minors. In August this figure had increased to 499 out of which 104 were unaccompanied minors. Committee members enquired about the number of unaccompanied minors and if the number were increasing. Officers informed the committee that the number of unaccompanied children remained steady. There were children who were reaching the age of which they were leaving care. We noted that there was still a shortfall in funding for unaccompanied minors and representations were continually being made to government on this issue. We received information on the number of family support cases without an allocated social worker. We were advised that all the family support cases received a range of services and assistance. We asked that in future the report include information on the services provided to each family support case to make clear they were being assisted. We were pleased to note good performance in placing children looked after in foster care and adoption placements. We noted that performance for placing children under 10 for adoption or foster care was 93.4% in July and 97.2% in August. We noted that since data had been gathered for this report all looked after children had an allocated social worker. Children on the child protection register were continuing to be reviewed within timescales and 91.5% of children on the register had been visited in August. We further noted that there were no children from the child protection register were reported missing from home at the end of August. We noted the staffing positions at both Hornsey and Tottenham District offices. We were further informed that interviews for filling vacant team manager posts had been successfully completed and all positions filled. RESOLVED: 1. That we note the report. 2. That the proceeding month's performance report include a breakdown of services being provided to family support cases. 3. That we receive a report explaining the training provided to staff on the new e-care system. 4. That we receive an update report on the new electronic process for reviewing the performance of initial and core assessments and analyse the outcomes of the new process.		CH/DH DH/CH CH/DH

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	5. That a report be provided to the committee in January detailing out comes of the implemented new strategy. 6. That the report back on staffing include details of the long term employment of agency staff.	CH/DH CH/DH
CSAC21.	RECOMMENDATIONS FOR SCHOOLS ON EXCLUSIONS & ALTERNATIVE PROVISION (Agenda Item 7): The report gave account of proposals for the development of provision to young people who had been excluded from school and/or were hard to place and sought the views of the committee. The documented proposals formed an important part of the Haringey Secondary Strategy and Building Schools for the Future Programme. We noted that the main part of proposals were based on devolving resources to schools and commissioning schools to make provisions enabling, the majority of children and young people to be retained in a school setting. To help achieve this, it was proposed that Children Services retained the resources that would ensure that children and young people were able to access specific support for their needs. RESOLVED: That we note the report.	
CSAC22.	ADOPTION SERVICE UPDATE REPORT: APRIL – SEPTEMBER 2005 (Agenda Item 8): The purpose of the report was to update the committee on the progress of permanency planning in the adoption service. The report focussed on the progress being made on granting of adoption orders and contained end of year projections. We noted the information provided on all children currently in the adoption process, this included reasons for understanding the delays i.e. with placing children with suitable families and received an update on each adoption order currently in progress. We were also related the factors which were considered when making a decisions on adoption. We noted that 4 new adopters had been approved between April 2005 and September 2005 and that there would the recruitment strategy for this financial year would include trying to recruit more adopters from, African Caribbean, Central African and Turkish communities which there was a need for. RESOLVED: That we note the report.	
CSAC23.	EDUCATIONAL ACHIEVEMENT OF LOOKED AFTER CHILDREN (Agenda Item 9):	

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The purpose of the report was to update the Committee on the educational achievement of looked after children in the borough and inform members of the continuing work to enable looked after children to achieve their educational potential which would in turn improve their life chances. It was recognised that there were a number of reasons for looked after children not attaining the same educational achievements as their peers at key stages and in their GCSE's. It was also recognised that although the educational achievement of LAC in Haringey is at or above the national average, there was still a great need to target reducing the gap between looked after children and their peers. The main areas which had been previously identified by members as affecting attainment included:

- Lack of stability
- Missed schooling
- Lack of support with their education when faced with difficulties
- Lack of help for carers of LAC to support a learning environment
- The need to improve help for children in care with their emotional , mental and physical health

These issues were being addressed by the Children's service and its partners and we were presented with information on the strategies and resources which would be undertaken to improve support to looked after children and young people.

There were in total 297 Looked after children in school and 61 in alternative provision. We were provided with information on the number of initiatives taken to support their educational attainment and these included:

- The Director of Children's services communicating with Schools which had looked after children as pupils to communicate the importance of raising attainment of looked after children
- Additional tuition for 43 looked after children
- Additional teaching assistant support
- Funding to support preparation of KS2 SATs
- LAC children in years 7, 8, 9 had 10 had been visited by a teacher
- Homework club established for looked after children in Yrs 10 and 11
- Social Inclusion Panel ensures that any looked after children without educational provision is given priority for a school place
- 142 computers allocated to individual looked after children
- Training sessions for carers for supporting children through the primary and secondary school process

We noted the significant improvements that had taken place and agreed the importance of continuing to support the educational achievements of looked after children. We asked to receive a further report once the 2005 comparative data was received and that information on educational

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	attainment include A-level and degree achievements of looked after children. RESOLVED: 1. That we note the report. 2. That we receive a further report with 2005 comparatives and information on A-level and degree attainments among looked after children.	JD
CSAC24.	PROVISIONAL ATTAINMENT DATA FOR KEY STAGES 1-4, GCE A LEVEL AND ATTENDANCE INCLUDING CHILDREN LOOKED AFTER BY THE COUNCIL (Agenda Item 10) We were presented with the provisional results for key stages 1, 2, 3, GCSE's and A-levels. These results were provisional and were provided to the committee to provide an understanding of steady improvements made in these areas over the last 5 years. A more detailed report was due to be presented to the Executive in November. RESOLVED: That we note the report.	
CSAC25	MISSING FROM CARE, MISSING FROM HOME, - JOINT PROTOCOL& PRACTICE (Agenda item 11) Members of the committee were issued with the joint protocol and practice guidance for dealing with children missing from care or home. The guidance and protocols had been created to ensure that there was an effective response across agencies when a child or young person goes missing or returns. The guidance had been agreed by the Haringey Area Child Protection Committee and been compiled in consultation with: • Haringey Social Services • Haringey Police Missing Persons unit • Haringey Education service • Haringey Teaching Primary care trust • Haringey Children's right service The booklet provided committee members with an understanding of what would practically be done when a child is missing and detailed the responsibilities of the Police, agencies, officers and senior managers. RESOLVED: That we note that the guidance has been received by members of the committee.	
CSAC26.	ORAL UPDATE ON CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE PLAN	

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	The Deputy Director advised the committee that the Children's service was currently information gathering to start developing the Children and young people's plan. The committee was asked to put forward their views on what the priorities should be included in the plan and were asked to forward these to the deputy director, David Holmes within the next 2 weeks. RESOLVED: 1. That officers note the need to address health issues of young people as part of the plan. 2. That members of the committee contact the Deputy Director, within the next 2 weeks with their suggestions of priorities for the Children and Young People's plan.	DH
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GEORGE MEEHAN
Chair