

**MINUTES OF CORPORATE PARENTING ADVISORY COMMITTEE
TUESDAY 4 APRIL 2016**

Councillors Cllr Waters [Chair], Cllr Gunes, Cllr Weston & Cllr Stennett.

Apologies Margaret Gallagher & Dominic Porter-Moore.

Also attending Jon Abbey (Interim Director of Children's Services), Neelam Bhardwaja (Assistant Director – Safeguarding and Social Care), Annie Walker (Service Manager Children in Care), Lesley Kettles (Service Manager for Adoption and Fostering), Fiona Smith (Virtual School Head), Philip Slawther (Clerk), Lyn Carrington (Nurse - Whittington Health NHS)

CPAC337. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE (IF ANY)

Apologies for absence were received from Cllr Berryman, Cllr Morris & Cllr Hare.

Cllr Stennett gave apologies for lateness.

CPAC338. ACTIONS ARISING FROM THE MEETING WITH ASPIRE

NOTED: The actions listed in the notes of the meeting with Aspire.

CPAC339. URGENT BUSINESS

NONE

CPAC340. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

NONE

CPAC341. MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting held on 5 January 2016 were AGREED.

In relation to the previous action around circulating examples of PEP's, Care Plans & Pathway Plans, the Committee commented that they had not received the example plans to date. The Chair requested that this action be rolled forward.

Action: Dominic Porter-Moore/Fiona Smith

CPAC342. MATTERS ARISING

The Committee NOTED the Corporate Parenting Agenda Plan 2015/16

CPAC343. PERFORMANCE

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RECEIVED the report on Performance for the Year to the end of February. Report included in the agenda pack (pages 13 to 28).

NOTED in response to discussion:

- An overall improving trajectory in relation to the majority of performance indicators.
- There were 414 Children in Care at the end of February, which was 70 per 10,000 population including 32 unaccompanied asylum seeker children. The reduction in Haringey's LAC put the authority within the inter-quartile range of statistical neighbours (431 children or a rate of 69 per 10,000 population). Haringey's rate of LAC remained significantly above the London (52) and National average (60).
- A performance review system put in place by the Head of Service for Children in Care in October 2015 yielded some excellent performance improvements. The meetings with team managers were continuing and would focus on new challenges such as the recording of pathway plans and visits to children in care. At the end of February 2016, 92% of looked after children had an up to date Care Plan, a significant improvement from a low level of 49% at the end of May 2015 and now exceeding the 90% target.
- 87% of school aged children had completed and up to date Personal Education Plans (PEP) at the end of February. This was a step change in performance and only 3% short of the expected target. The results from the weekly meeting review on 17 March showed that the 90% target had been achieved. Completion of PEPs would continue to be a priority.
- At the end of February, 85% of looked after children aged 16-17 had up to date Pathway Plans. Performance in this area is at an all time high having increased significantly compared to the low level (20%) reported in June.
- 93% of LAC had an up to date review at the end of February above the 90% target.
- 85% of Children in Care visits were recorded as completed in the relevant timescales in the period. Performance in this area had improved in recent months and was now just 5% below the 90% target.
- At the end of February, 91% (362 out of 399) of children in care for over a month had an up to date health assessment, a dip from the 97% achieved at the end of January but still above target. The dip in February performance was due to a backlog and a lack of resources as two nurses were off sick during February. Some of these children have now been seen. The service expected to bring levels back on track and health assessments performance should better the 2014/15 outturn of 94%.

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- Quarter 3 data reveals that the care proceedings trend towards cases of shorter duration has been maintained with an average duration of 28 weeks and, a considerable achievement of 78% cases concluded in less than the 26 weeks statutory timescale, improved from 35% in Quarters 1 & 2. AD Safeguarding identified that far more work was being done pre-proceedings in order to improve performance in this area.
- 85 children or 21% were placed 20 miles or more from Haringey at the end of February 2016, an additional 11 children since the position at end of January 2016. Performance was worse than the 16% target and the March 2015 end of year performance figure (18%) when 77 children were placed more than 20 miles from Haringey. Although higher than national levels this proportion was only slightly above the average for London and our Statistical Neighbours (18%).
- In the year to February 2016 there were 35 legal permanency orders, 19 adoptions and 16 special guardianship orders (SGO). This equated to permanency being secured for 17% of children that ceased to be looked after but was 18 fewer legal orders achieved compared with the same period last year and behind track by 14 orders against our combined (adoption and SGO) target of 54 for 2015-16. However with three known adoption orders in March, the service would meet the end of year adoption target. 24 adoption orders are expected by the end of the financial year and 22 special guardianship orders putting the service 11 permanency orders, behind the levels achieved in 2014/15. The length of adoption proceedings had increased as a result of a higher number of leave to oppose decisions being made by the courts. The referrals for special guardianship assessments were far less than in past years and less than expected.
- In the year to February, children waited an average of 483 days from becoming looked after to being placed for adoption. This was higher than the national threshold (426 day average for 2013-16) but remained an improvement on the 589 days in 2014/15. However the three children adopted in March were placed for adoption two years after they became looked after and were not included in the 483 days, when these days are added in it will increase the average days reported for our year end 2015/16 figure.
- The Committee noted that the Parliamentary Undersecretary of State for Children and Families, Edward Timpson MP, had written a letter to all local authorities who had an average performance figure above a certain level in relation to the average number days from becoming looked after to being placed for adoption. Haringey's performance for the rolling average for 2012-15 was 691 which was 204 days over the target figure. The Committee noted that a plan was being developed which would be communicated back to the Minister.
- The plan involved undertaking work to improve permanency planning and to relaunch a more robust policy and set of procedures which would impact on planning. Coram had undertaken an adoption process mapping exercise with

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the adoption and court team service from which recommendations for reducing delay in the system would be made and implemented. Haringey were also part of a trial of the Coram permanence tracking tool that will further assist in reducing the number of days from LAC to being placed for adoption. In addition, Haringey had taken the lead with First4Adoption in a recruitment of adopters for children with complex needs which would lead to a greater number of adopters for children who are more challenging to place and whose placements reflected the largest number of days.

- 91% of LAC children had an up to date dental visit as at 31 March 2015, performance for this measure was on an upward trajectory.
- Children missing numbers were relatively stable in 2015/16 with a recent spike in January 2016. In February, 13 children were recorded as either missing from care at any point during the month. 3 children were away from placement without authorisation and 15 children were recorded as missing from home, a reduction in the number reported missing from home compared to the end of January (31).
- A more systematic way to capture data on missing children in real time was being progressed with work underway to get the recording incorporated into workflow steps on the Mosaic social care system. In addition, a Haringey Runaway and Missing from Home and Care Protocol has been completed by all agencies and is the basis for dealing with children who run away or go missing in the area. Work to capture outcomes from return to care interviews needed to be expedited.

AGREED to note the report.

CPAC344. PAN-LONDON ADOPTION BID

NOTED the verbal update given by the AD Safeguarding on the Pan-London Adoption bid. The latest update on the Pan-London Adoption bid was circulated to the Board earlier that day. The Committee noted that the bid had been narrowed down from five or six options to two. The next step was to undertake detailed investigations on the two options to assess their relative viability. The two options were noted as a local authority trading company delivery model with a strategic VAA partnership operating in a hub and spoke or a local authority/voluntary adoption agency joint venture operating in a hub and spoke.

Clerks note – Cllr Stennett arrived at the meeting at this point

In response to a question, the AD Safeguarding advised that the likely implementation date was 2018.

CPAC345. UPDATE ON NRS CONTRACT

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NOTED the verbal update given by the AD Safeguarding on the NRS Contract. AD Safeguarding advised that the contract with NRS finished some time ago but that NRS were still recruiting foster carers for the Council. NRS were currently being paid an agreed fee for each completed assessment that went through to the panel. The Committee noted that there was a programme of work being undertaken through surveys and also through Commissioning to look at the different models and costings to see whether the Council should go out to the market again or potentially bring the recruitment back in house. In response to a question on the likely timescales, the Service Manager for Adoption and Fostering advised that there was a meeting with NRS on 19th April. However, the service had to continue using NRS in the interim in order to ensure that there was capacity to undertake assessments which would continue for at least six months.

The Head of Service, Children in Care and Placements to bring a report to the next CPAC meeting to update the committee on foster carer recruitment and future models of provision.

Action: Dominic Porter-Moore

CPAC 348. MISSING CHILDREN

RECEIVED a report updating the Committee on the key factors involved and the multiple risks associated with, Children Who Are Missing. The report was included in the agenda pack (pages 19 to 23).

NOTED that

- The reasons that children go missing from home and missing from care were largely the same and the reasons for absconding from care often related to: Being unhappy; feeling that the placement was not meeting their needs; bullying in the placement; not feeling listened to; or they had been encouraged or groomed to leave the placement by those who exploit vulnerable children and young people. Similarly, the reasons children go missing from home included there being interpersonal relationship difficulties with their carers or other family members.
- Often cases needed to be seen in the broader context of recurrent instances of going missing and some of the more frequent cases often involved; CSE, gang affiliation and cannabis use.
- One of the key risks identified was the increasing use of missing children to transport drugs along a several established routes for example: London – Wrexham, Hull, Southampton, and Norwich. Integral to this is that they were also vulnerable to gang and criminal activity which was associated with a chaotic lifestyle and had implications for their sexual, physical and emotional health.

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- In terms of actions taken to identify and reduce risk, there was an established protocol when children go missing from care; which included a referral to the Police MISPA Team, and a strategy meeting at which information was shared and action planned. There was also weekly tracking meeting of children who are, or have been missing from care, between the DCS and Lead Member. On their return to care, a de-briefing interview was undertaken by the police MISPA Team in order to ascertain the reason behind the missing episode. A Return to Care Interview was undertaken by the CYPS Targeted Support Team. Performance had been poor in this area and a contract with an external provider had been negotiated.
- The Multi-agency Sexual Exploitation meeting (MASE) convened on a monthly basis and its key purpose was to produce and develop a detailed strategic overview of the CSE profile for the borough of Haringey. The CSE profile would enable the MASE meeting to coordinate tactical responses to direct diversionary and disruption measures in identified problem areas. Partner agencies, such as the police, share intelligence and information relating to CSE activity to inform mapping, analysing the profile of CSE in the borough, generating intelligence for investigations and identifying any trends or problem locations to ensure they were dealt with. The Service Manager Children in Care clarified that the MASE included all the relevant partner agencies including the schools.
- More recently the Missing Children and Child Exploitation Operational Panel had begun meeting every three weeks. This is a multi-agency forum which had the purpose of agreeing multi-agency safety plans for children who were missing/ engaging in risk-taking behaviour which was escalating their vulnerability and risk from all forms of exploitation. Their remit included:
 - Identify and share details of children and young people who were missing/frequent Missing Persons (MISPERs).
 - Identify potential risks and risk level, including those at risk of youth offending
 - Prioritise intervention
 - Agree agency or multi agency response required to support an agreed safety plan based on levels of risk identified by panel.
 - Identify and share details of children and young people who were at risk of child sexual exploitation/gang affiliation/ radicalisation and extremist ideology and were known to professionals as missing / frequent MISPERs
 - Agree agency or multi agency responses where required.
 - Identify missing / Frequent MISPERs approaching 18 years old who were considered to be at ongoing risk from exploitation/safeguarding issues as they enter adulthood. Concerns to be passed to adult safeguarding services.
 - The format and purpose of the meeting was to be reviewed every 12 weeks.

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- In response to a question from the Chair, the Service Manager Children in Care clarified that foster carers still had a responsibility to report missing Children i.e. those over the age of 18, but that the level of involvement from different agencies was much less and the missing from care protocol would not be applicable, for instance. The Council still had a responsibility for children missing from care until they were 24.

CPAC 348. CARE LEAVERS

RECEIVED a report updating the Committee on what the Council does to support care leavers. The report was included in the agenda pack (pages 23 to 28).

NOTED that

- The Council aims to support young people to remain in their current education and college courses. Each young person in care had a Personal Education Plan (PEP) that accompanied them during their journey through care. As an additional monitoring system there were plans to review the PEPs ongoing at the transition panel where a representative of the Virtual School was present and could provide additional advice and guidance to the current and future plans in place and ensure that all efforts were being made to sustain current educational/training provision.
- The Council continued to have marked success with higher than average numbers of care leavers attending university, with 61 current care leavers at university. To support care leavers the Council introduced a dedicated email address to keep in touch with its care leavers at university so that it could send them regular updates on funding opportunities and other important opportunities.
- In 2015 in partnership with the Chartered Accountants for England and Wales, the Council targeted its care leavers who were university students and provided them with a day focusing on them gaining quality advice, and information regarding accessing the workplace, career options and future career planning. The Council also offered each third year student a one to one appointment with Drive Forward to develop their CV and prepare them to access the job market. This offer was made in July last year and would be repeated this year.
- The Council was working to reduce the Numbers of Not In Education (NEET) and Employment and support young people to engage in education and find employment. As part of the strategic plan to reduce the numbers of NEET the service had developed a working protocol with Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) and Drive Forward to ensure the welfare benefits process was simplified and care leavers supported more robustly into sustainable employment. Current performance data which monitored care leavers at the 19th, 20th and 21st birthday in ETE, was below target. The Committee noted

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that there had been some accuracy issues on reporting, which the service was now aware of and were working to resolve.

- The E8ghteen project had been running since 2011. The project currently supported care leavers aged 16-20 being mentored by coaches from the Tottenham Hotspur Foundation. The project supported young people to remain in education and also for those out of education to engage and achieve some success. It offered opportunities to engage some the most hard to reach older children in care and care leavers to engender their interest in further education and employment.
- Housing and accommodation was another aspect of the advice and support offered. For those under the age of 18 the most likely type of accommodation they would be placed in would be with a foster carer and live as part of their family. From the age of 18 years old care leavers had a range of housing options they could consider as part of independent living.
- The options were; remaining with their foster carers under staying put arrangements, moving to semi-independent provision with key work support, moving to one of the transitional training houses managed by the YAS with volunteers on site or possibly to their permanent accommodation. Occasionally care leavers entered the private sector but this was as a last resort and based on the care leaver being unwilling to return to Haringey to take up their permanent housing offer. Housing currently offered YAS a housing quota of 60 one bed and 6 two bed quota (for care leavers who were parents). Each care leaver received a setting up home establishment grant of £2000.

Cllr Weston commented that the offer to each third year student of a one-to-one appointment with Drive Forward to develop their CV should be offered at an earlier stage in their university placement. AD Safeguarding agreed to review this arrangement and look into getting that support in place sooner, either at the end of first or second year.

Action: Neelam Bhardwaja

Cllr Gunes raised concerns that the Committee had not been able to scrutinise information in relation to unaccompanied minors seeking asylum and requested a report be produced outlining key information such as numbers, length of time in care and what the Council's responsibilities to those children were. Cllr Gunes also requested clarification on the legal status of child's immigration status and whether this was included into the care plan. AD Safeguarding advised that the child's status once they entered the LAC would be the same as any other child but that their immigration status would be set by the Home Office. The Head of Service, Children in Care and Placements to produce a report on immigration status and LAC/care leavers and the council's role around unaccompanied minors seeking asylum for the next meeting.

Action: Dominic Porter Moore/Neelam Bhardwaja

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Cllr Weston requested that the above report include reference to whether there was a policy position on whether the Council would support a challenge to an immigration status determination and on what grounds, for example if the care leaver was attending university.

Action: Dominic Porter Moore/Neelam Bhardwaja

Clerk to speak with Stephen from Legal to get their input on the immigration paper for the next meeting.

Action: Clerk

CPAC348. NEW ITEMS OF URGENT BUSINESS

None.

CPAC348. EXCLUSION OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC

None.

CPAC 349. NEW ITEMS OF URGENT EXEMPT BUSINESS

None.

CPAC350. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

Executive summary of the Virtual Schools annual report to be included on the agenda for the next meeting.

Action: Fiona Smith/Clerk

Future meetings

NOTED the following dates:

4th July 2016

3rd October 2016

12th January 2017

3rd April 2017

Meetings are scheduled to start at 6.30pm.

**Cllr Ann Waters
Chair**

The meeting ended at 20:30 hours.