

# CORPORATE PARENTING PANEL

## MINUTES

### 14 JANUARY 2020

<b>Chair:</b>	* Councillor Angella Murphy-Strachan	
<b>Councillors:</b>	* Sue Anderson	* Christine Robson
	* Simon Brown (1)	* Lynda Seymour
	* Janet Mote	
<b>Non-Voting Advisory Member:</b>	* Valerie Griffin	Foster Carer
<b>In attendance: (Officers)</b>	Paul Hewitt	Corporate Director, People
	Jacinta Kane	Head of Service –
		Corporate Parenting
	Sarah Moriarty	Assistant Headteacher
		Harrow Virtual School
	Christine Nichols	Named Nurse for Children
		Looked After in Harrow
	Dipika Patel	
	Kathryn Robinson	Post-16 Advisory Teacher
		Harrow Virtual School
	Zoe Sargent	Associate Director of
		Children, CNWL
	Peter Tolley	Divisional Director,
		Children and Young
		People
	Mellina Williamson-Taylor	Headteacher, Harrow
		Virtual School
	Deborah Price Williams	

- \* Denotes Member present  
(1) Denotes category of Reserve Member

**69. Attendance by Reserve Members**

**RESOLVED:** To note the attendance at this meeting of the following duly appointed Reserve Member:

Ordinary Member

Reserve Member

Councillor Chloe Smith

Councillor Simon Brown

**70. Declarations of Interest**

**RESOLVED:** To note that there were no declarations of interest made by Members.

**71. Minutes**

**RESOLVED:** That the minutes of the meeting held on 2 October 2019 be taken as read, and signed as a correct record.

**72. Public Questions**

**RESOLVED:** To note that no public questions were received.

**73. Petitions**

**RESOLVED:** To note that no petitions were received.

**74. Deputations**

**RESOLVED:** To note that no deputations were received at this meeting under the provisions of Executive Procedure Rule 48 (Part 4D of the Constitution).

**RESOLVED ITEMS**

**75. Children Looked After and Care Leavers - discussion**

The Chair invited Jacinta Kane (Head of Corporate Parenting) to open the discussion. The Panel was joined by six young people and their social workers. They shared their experiences as care leavers from the Council's corporate parenting services. The Panel welcomed the young people's views, particularly noting their aspirations for the future, as they ventured into work or future education.

One of the concerns raised by some of the young people was the long duration for the Home Office to decide on their asylum applications. Quicker resolutions of their cases would expedite their permanent stay in the UK, and as enable them seek work. It was advised that the Council would follow up on such cases. However, the decision remained under the remit of the Home Office. It was further advised that the young people could use the intervening

period to acquire additional qualifications and apprenticeships within the Council.

Other young people who had their National Insurance Numbers processed would be proceeding to apply for work. They were looking forward to gaining relevant work experience.

The Panel noted that there had been stability in having long-term social workers – an improvement from the recent past. Furthermore, the young people were indebted to their foster carers, who had encouraged them to study as well as to remain sentient to their cultural or religious values.

The Panel thanked the young people and social workers for sharing their experiences and wished them well in their future endeavours.

**RESOLVED:** That the discussion be noted.

**76. INFORMATION REPORT: Being a Corporate Parent - LGA Corporate Parenting Resource Pack**

Peter Tolley (Divisional Director, Children and Young People Service) introduced the report, which aimed to assist local authorities in fulfilling their role of corporate parents as effectively as possible. The Panel was updated on its responsibility to ensure that Harrow Council was meeting its corporate parenting duties towards children in care and care leavers.

Following questions and the discussion that ensued, it was advised that:

- in November 2019, the Local Government Association (LGA) published the Corporate Parenting Resource Pack that outlined key lines of inquiry for all councillors;
- every councillor was, required to have training on their corporate parenting role when first elected as well as to consider how new plans and policies could affect children in care;
- the Children and Social Work Act 2017 defined, for the first time in law, the role of corporate parents, in addition to expanding and extending support to care leavers, as well as making personal advisers available to young people up to the age of 25;
- with the growth of child criminal exploitation and county lines, it was important for the Council to ensure that children under their care were not coerced into criminal activity. There were weekly meetings with the Police with discussions on effective prevention of criminalisation of the care leavers. Officers advised that Harrow's statistical experience was below the national (and neighbouring) averages; and
- the Corporate Parenting Strategy 2019/21 would be presented to full Council on 16 January 2020. It was envisaged that strategies (and

ideas) of more effective involvement by councillors would be presented.

**RESOLVED:** That

- (1) the report be noted; and
- (2) officers consider adding a report on the link between youth justice and care leavers to the Council's Forward Plan.

**77. INFORMATION REPORT: Harrow Children Looked After Health (CLA) Report**

Christine Nichols (Named Nurse – Children Looked After Harrow, CNWL) and Zoe Sargent (Associate Director of Children's Services and Operations, CNWL) introduced the report, which set out the delivery of health services to Harrow's Children Looked After (CLA) for the period September - November 2019. The report also reviewed performance indicators and clinical work undertaken by the Children Looked After Health Team.

Following questions and the discussion that ensued, it was advised that:

- there was a 100% attainment to contractual conditions for initial health assessments and review health assessments. However, that excluded request and consents not made available within 3 days of the initial health assessment and within 3 months for review health assessments;
- there was requirement for consent for a health assessment, which were at times not forthcoming from some CLA;
- a lot of work had been undertaken including discussions with social workers and health actions taken, attendance at CLA Children's Awards, regular monitoring meeting, quarterly CAMHS meetings, a contingency plan to ensure RHS were completed within timescale, and peer review of Hillingdon 0-19 School Nursing Service undertaken by the Specialist Nurse for CLA; and
- a shared child record system would be launched to highlight priorities to ensure that feedback from assessments was approached in a holistic manner among all concerned parties.

**RESOLVED:** That

- (1) the report be noted; and
- (2) a report on CAMHS performance in relation to care leavers be added to the agenda for the next Panel meeting.

## **78. INFORMATION REPORT: Activity and Performance**

Dipika Patel (Business Intelligence Partner) introduced the report, which set out activity for CLA and care leavers as well as provisional performance position at the second quarter (Q2) of 2019-20. National and comparator data was also included where appropriate for context. The Panel was being informed about activity performance in their role as Corporate Parents.

Following questions and the discussion that ensued, it was advised that:

- the performance indicators showed that Long Term Placement Stability remained below target but progress had been made compared to 2018-19, with the Q2 performance was just below statistical neighbours;
- the Health & Dental checks were “red and amber” - possibly due to a time lag in receiving data. Year-end comparator data showed Harrow above or in line with statistical neighbours and England averages;
- the increase in CLA placed 20 miles or more from Harrow, was mainly due to the increase in numbers of children looked after, as well as having a cohort of young people with complex needs and where there are safeguarding concerns requiring placements outside Harrow;
- work around adolescent safeguarding ensured all children who had missing instances are monitored closely. The “other reasons” option was a Department for Education category added to cater for factors not provided for elsewhere;
- Harrow was working with other local authorities, through the London Councils Forum, to identify a city-wide strategy and approach to ensure consistency and fairness for the vulnerable cohort of young people;
- numbers of CLA who had a “missing or absent” instance was high in London. Additional training for managers had improved the accuracy of recording of missing episodes on Mosaic. Harrow had a small, but significant, cohort of young people with complex issues. Missing children were a priority for Harrow. There were robust safeguards and scrutiny in place for all missing children, including strategy meetings; return home interviews; weekly review at the Missing Children Panel with the Police and senior managers; and
- extended multiagency child exploitation panel arrangements were in place to review children at risk of criminal activity as well as sexual exploitation. There was a focus on developing relationships with missing children, through the independent return home interviews, sharing intelligence; peer mapping and disruption measures such as Child Abduction Warning Notices (CAWNs) to better understand and address risk.

**RESOLVED:** That the report be noted.

## **79. INFORMATION REPORT: Virtual School Headteacher's End of Academic Year Report 2018 - 2019**

Mellina Williamson-Taylor (Headteacher, Harrow Virtual School for CLA, PLAC and Care Leavers), Sarah Moriarty (Assistant Headteacher, Harrow Virtual School for CLA, PLAC and Care Leavers) and Kat Robinson (Post-16 Advisory Teacher, Harrow Virtual School for CLA, PLAC and Care Leavers) introduced the report which provided the Panel with an overview of the Performance and Standards of Children Looked After (CLA) at the end of Key Stages 1, 2 and 4, with an analysis of attendance data, the work of the School and development priorities for the Virtual School for 2019-20. The Panel was also informed about the outcomes for CLA.

Following questions and the discussion that ensued, it was advised that:

- there was improved performance across Key Stage 4 in Attainment 8 and Progress 8;
- there was a 2% reduction in the number of pupils with a Fixed-Term Exclusion, with timely interventions by the VS Educational and Clinical Psychologist to support the educational, social, emotional and mental health needs of students;
- there was improved Personal Education Plan (PEP) returns from 92% to 100%, as well as increased support for pupils in Key Stage 5;
- 91% of CLA, regardless of where they lived, attended schools which were either 'good' or 'outstanding'. Nearly a half (46%) of CLA were educated outside of the Harrow Local Authority area;
- It was gratifying to witness the progress that students had made, with a specific example of one child, who had no education from the age of 10, obtaining five "strong" GCSEs in 2019;
- there was continuing work with various partners and stakeholders to encourage CLA to stay in education, through the support given to care leavers;
- areas for development were highlighted as being supported through enhancing creativity in training foster carers in phonics and maths to better support CLA. Furthermore, attainment would be improved by accessing services of CAMHS, Horizons, or the Harrow Clinical Psychologist for CLA with mental health issues; and
- there would be a need to draw on the experiences of other neighbouring teams to build on the performance of the School, whose work was commended.

The Panel acknowledged the positive aspects of the report.

**RESOLVED:** To note the performance of, and standards achieved by, Harrow's CLA, in particular the improvements of CLA at the end of Key Stage 4, and School attendance.

**80. Any Other Urgent Business**

Paul Hewitt (Corporate Director, People) gave a verbal update on the Annual OFSTED meeting on 2 January 2020, which was described as "positive". The inspection was expected by April 2020. Currently, Harrow was rated "good". That would be tested during the inspection, which would also bring the role of the Corporate Parenting Panel into focus.

Consequent to Harrow's lead role on the regional adoption agency, the Corporate Director, People, with Peter Tolley (Divisional Director, Children and Young People) were scheduled to meet the Minister of State for Children, Young People and Families on 16 January 2020. They would update the Panel at the next meeting on the outcome of the meeting.

(Note: The meeting, having commenced at 6.00 pm, closed at 7.42 pm).

(Signed) COUNCILLOR ANGELLA MURPHY-STRACHAN  
Chair