

Protocol for the relationship between Harrow Safeguarding Children Board and Harrow's Corporate Parenting Panel

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Purpose

This protocol outlines the functions and responsibilities of Harrow Safeguarding Children Board and Harrow's Corporate Parenting Panel. It aims to promote co-ordination and development of business planning between these bodies so that they work effectively together in the pursuit of safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people in Harrow.

Context

The Corporate Parenting Panel is the key multi-agency forum for monitoring services and outcomes for Looked After Children. The Panel aims to champion the achievements of Looked After children and pursue innovation and developments to improve outcomes for them.

Harrow Safeguarding Children Board is the key statutory body set up to coordinate and to ensure the effectiveness of what is done by local member agencies to safeguard and promote the welfare of children in the area.

Both bodies have important, but distinct roles in ensuring that Looked After Children receive good quality services, have their welfare promoted, reach their potential and are safeguarded from harm.

Objectives of the Corporate Parenting Panel:

1. To ensure that the Council is fulfilling its duties towards Children Looked After corporately and in partnership with other statutory agencies.
2. To consider matters referred to the Panel within its terms of reference and to make recommendations to Cabinet/Portfolio Holder as appropriate including:
 - a. Approving annually the Statement of Purpose for the Adoption Service;
 - b. Approving annually the Statement of Purpose for the Fostering Service.

Specific functions of the Corporate Parenting Panel:

1. To take an overview of the Council's and partner agencies responsibilities towards looked after children.
2. To examine ways in which the Council as a whole and partner agencies can improve the life chances of looked after children and care leavers.
3. Ensure there are good joint working arrangements between council departments and partner agencies.

4. To provide a forum for Children Looked After (CLA) to participate and influence policy and enable CLA to have opportunity to talk about issues relating to their own direct experiences of services they have received. Hence the Board will ensure that the positive experiences/services are maintained and lessons are learnt and changes made in the areas that require improvements.
5. To comment on and contribute to plans, policies and strategies for looked after children and make appropriate recommendations for action.
6. To have a monitoring role, by receiving regular progress reports on a number of key PIs e.g. educational attainment (including implementation of Personal Education Plans), health assessments and implementation of Local Area Agreements for CLA.
7. Monitor the plans/needs of children in Secure Accommodation.
8. To receive regular reports on the needs of care leavers including employment, further education, training and housing.
9. To receive annual reports on the following services:
 - Adoption
 - Fostering
 - Complaints
10. To meet with CLA and their carers on a regular basis to consult and celebrate achievements, festivals etc.
11. To manage and arrange Member visits to:
 - Children's Homes
 - Foster Placements
 - Frontline Services (as indicated in the Victoria Climbié Audit)

Statutory Objectives of Harrow Safeguarding Children Board (HSCB)

Section 13 of the children Act 2004 requires each local authority to establish a Local Safeguarding Children Board for their area and specifies the organisations and individuals that should be represented on LSCBs.

Section 14 of the children Act 2004 set out the objectives which are:

- a) To coordinate what is done by each person or body represented on the Board for the purposes of safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children in their area; and
- b) To ensure the effectiveness of what is done by each such person or body for those purposes

Specific functions of the HSCB

1(a) developing policies and procedures for safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children in the area of the authority, including policies and procedures in relation to:

- (i) the action to be taken where there are concerns about a child's safety or welfare, including thresholds for intervention;
- (ii) Training of persons who work with children or in services affecting the safety and welfare of children;
- (iii) Recruitment and supervision of person who work with children;
- (iv) Investigation of allegations concerning persons who work with children;
- (v) Safety and welfare of children who are privately fostered;
- (vi) Cooperation with neighbouring children's services authorities and their Board partners

(b) communicating to persons and bodies in the area of the authority the need to safeguard and promote the welfare of children, raising their awareness of how this can best be done and encouraging them to do so;

(c) monitoring and evaluating the effectiveness of what is done by the authority and their Board partners individually and collectively to safeguard and promote the welfare of children and advising them on ways to improve;

(d) participating in the planning of services for children in the area of the authority; and

(e) undertaking reviews of serious cases and advising the authority and their Board partners on lessons to be learned.

Areas of joint interest (but not restricted by)

- **Childs Voice** – Taking account of the Looked After children's wishes and feelings (section 22(4) Children Act 1989), including those who are provided with accommodation under s20 and those taken into police protection (s46(3) of that Act.
- **Assessing Need and Providing Help** – Any needs which have been identified should be addressed before decisions are made about the child's return home or other placement made.
- **Children's Homes** – Monitoring the quality of service provision and outcomes for children who are placed in Children's Homes
- **Out of Area Placements** – Monitor the appropriateness of placements
- **Stability of Placements** – Monitor the stability of placements
- **Children who go absent, missing or run away from Care** – Ensuring that Looked After children receive appropriate support to prevent them from going missing and that they receive appropriate services and support should they do so
- **Unaccompanied Asylum Seeking children** – Ensure that such children receive appropriate assessments and service provision, tailored to their language and cultural needs

- **Child Sexual Exploitation and Trafficking** – Monitoring the particular vulnerabilities of Looked After Children and the effectiveness of service response
- **Care Planning** – Ensure that Looked After Children have good quality and timely Care Plans and Pathway Plans
- **Health and Educational Needs** – Monitor local performance information in relation to Health Assessments and Plans and personal Education Plans – ensuring such information includes appropriateness and continuity of service provision
- **Looked After Children Reviews** – Monitor the timeliness and quality of children’s Looked After Reviews including their participation
- **Comments and Complaints** – Comments and complaints by Looked After children and their parents or carers should be evaluated and lessons learned to improve service delivery

The Relationship between the HSCB and the Corporate Parenting Panel

1. Local and national data and performance reports are reported to both the Corporate Parenting Panel and the HSCB
2. The HSCB produces an Annual Report which is presented to the Health and Wellbeing Board and the Corporate Parenting Panel is represented on this Board
3. The Corporate Parenting Panel produces an Annual Report for Cabinet and this will also be presented to the HSCB
4. Quality Assurance audits undertaken or commissioned by the HSCB in relation to any aspect of Looked After Children will have the findings reported to the Corporate parenting Panel in a timely manner where this cannot be delayed for the purposes of the Annual Report
5. Any reports presented to the Corporate Parenting Panel which cover issues relevant to the HSCB will be reported to the HSCB or its Quality Assurance Sub-committee in a timely manner