

Corporate Parenting Panel

Meeting of Corporate Parenting Panel held on Wednesday 23 November 2022 at 5.03pm.
This meeting was held in Room F10, Town Hall, Katherine Street, Croydon, CR0 1NX

MINUTES

Present: Councillor Maria Gatland (Chair);

Councillors Sue Bennett, Mike Bonello, Maddie Henson, Tamar Nwafor, Helen Redfern and Catherine Wilson,

Co-optee Members

Angela Christmas (Foster Carer Representative)

Shelley Davies (Director of Education)

Jo Jack (Interim Head of Virtual School & Head of Service for Access to Education)

Dr Julia Simpson (CLA Designated Health Professional)

Charity Kanotangudza (Nurse, CLA Designated Health Professional)

Also

Present: Roisin Madden (Director for Children's Social Care)

Adam Fearon-Stanley (Service Manager IRO & Children's Participation)

Jane Scott (Subject Matter Expert)

Apologies: Councillors Tamar Nwafor and Catherine Wilson for lateness

Councillor Samir Dwesar

Co-optee Members: Manny Kwamin (Foster Carer Representative), Porsha Robinson (EMPIRE)

Shaun Hanks (Head of Children in Care and Care Experienced Young People)

PART A

32/22 Minutes of the previous meeting

The minutes of the meeting held on Thursday 22 September 2022 were agreed as an accurate record.

33/22 Disclosures of interest

There were none.

34/22 Urgent Business (if any)

There was none.

35/22 Update on actions agreed at previous meeting(s)

There were none.

38/22 Update from E.M.P.I.R.E.

Adam Fearon-Stanley (Service Manager IRO & Children's Participation) shared an update of the Children in Care Council group EMPIRE in the last quarter.

The Panel heard that EMPIRE:

- Had been attending workshops in managing money and understanding the importance of saving with further support given.
- During the Black History Month, EMPIRE used films and conversations to talk about their identity, reflecting on their experience in parenting and care by foster carers, and also using the "About Me" to reflect on their wishes and identity.
- Organised various trips, which included Legoland and Thorpe Park.
- Group activities using their experience to have conversations with other children about their own experience in care to build on strengths.
- Involved in organising the Foster Carers celebration night, where some children and young people would speak.
- Many had invigorating interviewing experience in being part of the panel for new Participation team staff and supporting training.

The Panel welcomed the update and the work of the Participation team over the quarter.

Review of the Corporate Parenting Approach

The Corporate Parenting Panel considered the report of the Review of the Corporate Parenting Approach. The Subject Matter Expert, Jane Scott, shared a presentation addressing the different options available for young people, which was contained within the report.

In summary, officers held consultation meetings with the EMPIRE group and other children looked after, foster carers, social workers and personal assistants, partner agencies and Members all on separate occasions and received substantial feedback from them which was addressed within the report. The consultations with each group had concluded with the following key themes including:

- Development of co-chair with young people taking on that role
- Development of sub-groups or shadowing (to work alongside co-produce and share agreed core activities and feedback to Corporate Parenting Panel)
- Programme visits and meetings in care experienced young people's chosen environment
- Development of guides and information for different audiences on role, function and focus of the Corporate Parenting Panel
- Development of a Corporate Parenting Strategy for the Council as a whole

The Chair thanked officers for the intensive work on the strategy.

The Panel reviewed:

- The approach on making sessions and meetings more accommodating for young people in aid to have their voices heard and feeling empowered.
- The six-monthly workshops would be a key milestone of achievement addressing the positives, strengths, motivational work and learning. This was another way to be with the young children and understand their experience, and further review the approach consistently.
- Other departments and partners understanding of corporate parenting was a general understanding, and more was required to develop a corporate parenting strategy for the whole Council and partner agencies.
- The positive approach to include children with disabilities (CWD) in the consultation.
- Other groups within the community had contributed.
- Best practice in the engagement with young people and their health assessments was considered.
- The timeframe for the completion of the strategy was end March 2023.
- The project management team within CYPE had been involved providing different models and options of Corporate Parenting Panels.
- The corporate parenting panel approach would be reviewed in the six-monthly workshops and the model would be refreshed to see that it was achievable and keeping children as the centre.

The Chair was positive of the approach following the consultations that took place and looked at the gaps that need to be explored further such as the

SEND, CWD, voluntary sector and making contact with businesses. The key themes outlined were welcomed by all Members of the Panel and agreed that the strategy was a work in progress.

In conclusion, the Panel discussed and noted that more work was required to ensure the experiences of children and young people are connected to the delivery of services to children, that lead to their success in life, which is what the young people deserved.

The Panel **RESOLVED**: To consider the Corporate Parenting Strategy to be developed going forward:

1. A Corporate Parenting Strategy to be developed going forward.
2. A new approach to the Corporate Parenting Panel that incorporates the development of a co-chair with the CYPE lead member.
3. A pilot subgroup, which creates a safer space for children and young peoples lived experience to be heard and applied to a specific focussed priority.
4. The visibility and function of the new Corporate Parenting Approach is supported by information and guides alongside a programme of visits to meet with children, young people and care providers, which informs the understanding of how the new approach will make a difference and have an improved impact on children's outcomes.

41/22 Children in Care Performance Scorecard

The Corporate Parenting Panel considered the Children in Care Performance Scorecard which provided an overview of the October month.

In response to queries raised by the Panel, the Director for Children's Social Care, Roisin Madden, clarified the following:

- There were currently 539 children of under 18s who were in care with a proportion of 0.1 percent that were unaccompanied asylum-seeking children.
- There was progress in care plans which was shown at 87%, though there was more work that could be done. There was a number of out-of-time held in other services and also improvement of care plans within that service.
- The Chair addressed concerns on the low performance on the scorecard and queried on whether the service was able to recruit enough staff to do better for the young people. The Panel heard that

staff had been recruited and gradually joining the organisation. Further, with 736 care leavers, which were a lot to manage, there was hope for better progression of improvement with the new structure which had just been launched for consultation.

- In relation to CLA 17 & 18, as the percentages of the Initial Health Assessments had dipped in the last twelve months, the CLA Designated Health Professionals Dr Julia Simpson and Nurse, Charity Kanotangudza addressed that the problems were within the lateness of referrals sent and the system challenges where children were identified as “becoming” looked after, though the health team would always conduct an assessment from late referrals; and other problems were that children do not attend their assessment, leading to timescales being breached.

A narrative was now provided to every meeting for a non-completion of an initial health assessment in the twenty days. Majority of children would be seen within thirty days.

Further, the performance scorecard data was not a representation of the number of referrals received within sixteen days, as a lot more children were seen. Daily and evening clinics were other options to be reviewed.

- In relation to CLA 19, 52% was a result of staff turnover and the re-structure of the service, though permanent staff was over 80%. Recruitment and Retention of social workers is a challenge to Croydon, regionally and nationally.
- In relation to CLA 16, though this was in the amber, the referrals were coming in on time which had significantly helped.
- In relation to CLA 5, the Panel heard that there was a process for when a new child came into care including referral for an initial health assessment. Completing the latter within three days was achievable and this was not always happening, the process is under review to raise performance.

42/22 How has the Panel helped Children in Care today?

The Panel discussed what corporate directors would do for young people and a pledge for this would be useful.

43/22 Exclusion of the Press and Public

This was not required.

The meeting ended at 7.05 pm

Signed:

Date:

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