



CORPORATE PARENTING COMMITTEE

MINUTES of the OPEN section of the meeting of the CORPORATE PARENTING COMMITTEE held on WEDNESDAY MARCH 26 2008 at 4.00pm in the Town Hall, Peckham Road, London SE5 8UB

PRESENT: Councillor Caroline Pidgeon (chair).
Councillors Ade Lasaki, Eliza Mann, Althea Smith and Veronica Ward (vice-chair)
Lesley Humber (co-opted member: Southwark Primary Care Trust).

ALSO PRESENT: Chris Saunders (head of children looked after service), Rory Patterson (assistant director of specialist and safeguarding), Adrian Ward (planning and quality manager) Sarah Feasey (legal officer), Anne Shapiro (virtual headteacher) and Richard Blakeley (clerk).

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies were received from Councillors Lewis Robinson and John Friary and Natalia Salli (co-opted member: Young Southwark).

2. CONFIRMATION OF VOTING MEMBERS

Those members listed as being present were confirmed as the voting members.

3. NOTIFICATION OF ANY OTHER ITEMS WHICH THE CHAIR DEEMS AS URGENT

The chair accepted reports on "Evolving Role of Virtual Headteacher" and "Speakerbox Update" to be received as late and urgent items for the reasons set out in the report minute.

4. DISCLOSURE OF INTERESTS AND DISPENSATIONS

There were no disclosures of interest and dispensation.

RECORDING OF MEMBERS' VOTES

Committees and community councils procedure rule 1.9 (4) allows a member to record her/his vote in respect of any motions and amendments. Such requests are detailed in the following minutes. Should a member's vote be recorded in respect to an amendment, a copy of the amendment may be found in the minute file and is available for public inspection.

The committee considered the items set out on the agenda, a copy of which has been incorporated in the minute file. Each of the following paragraphs relates to the item bearing the same number on the agenda.

5. MINUTES (see pages 1-3)

RESOLVED: That the open minutes of the meetings held on January 31 2008 be agreed as the correct record.

6. UPDATE ON WHITE PAPER 'CARE MATTERS: TIME FOR CHANGE' (see pages 4-8)

The assistant director of specialist children's services and safeguarding introduced the report. Members asked questions.

RESOLVED: That the progress in implementing the white paper, 'Care Matters: Time for Change' and the impact on children looked after be noted.

7. CHILDREN LOOKED AFTER: PERFORMANCE REPORT (see pages 9-15)

The planning and quality manager introduced the report. Members asked questions.

RESOLVED:

1. That the issues outlined in the report be noted.
2. That congratulations should be passed to the adoption team for their successes highlighted in the report.
3. That the next performance report should provide a breakdown of statistics for unaccompanied minors and local children where feasible.
4. That there should be a future report on drug misuse and pregnancy amongst looked after children.

8. POLICY TO FACILITATE CHILDREN-IN-CARE BEING ABLE TO ATTEND UNIVERSITY AND HIGHER EDUCATION (see pages 16-19)

The head of children looked after service introduced the report. Members asked questions.

RESOLVED:

1. That the legal officer's advice that the document should be referred to as a strategy rather than a policy be noted.
2. That the strategy to support young people in care attending university subject to removing reference to the leaflet as being part of the package for children in care attending university (appendix 1) be approved.
3. That Southwark's commitment to promote care leavers attending university and to provide advice and support (emotional and financial) during the period of their studies be noted.

9. FEEDBACK ON FOSTERING INSPECTION (see page 20-26)

The assistant director of specialist children's services and safeguarding introduced the report. Members asked questions.

- RESOLVED:**
1. That the strong performance of Southwark's fostering service following the recent inspection – overall rating as "Good" be noted.
 2. That it be noted that the fostering service has been subject to annual inspections for the last 3 years and having shown consistent improvement is now described as a very strong service driving for excellence.
 3. That the action plan and progress made in response to fostering inspection recommendations be noted.

10. THE CHILD TRUST FUND (see pages 27 to 29)

The assistant director of specialist children's services and safeguarding introduced the report. Members asked questions.

- RESOLVED:** That officers investigate and produce a further report on the potential for child trust funds for looked after children.

11. CORPORATE PARENTING COMMITTEE – WORKPLAN 2008/2009 (see page 30)

The committee considered the work plan.

- RESOLVED:** That the following items be added to the workplan:

1. Drug misuse amongst looked after children
2. Pregnancy amongst looked after children
3. Child trust fund update
4. Speakerbox update

12. EVOLVING ROLE OF VIRTUAL HEADTEACHER (supplied at the meeting, also on website)

The item had not been circulated 5 clear working days in advance of the meeting. The chair agreed to accept the item as urgent in order for the virtual headteacher to be transparent reporting to the committee.

The virtual headteacher introduced the report. Members asked questions.

- RESOLVED:** That the progress of the virtual headteacher as set out in the report be noted.

13. SPEAKERBOX UPDATE (supplied at the meeting, also on website)

The item had not been circulated 5 clear working days in advance of the meeting. The chair agreed to accept the item as urgent because it was important that it was considered in advance of a joint meeting between the corporate parenting committee and speakerbox to be held on April 10 2008.

The head of children looked after service introduced the report. Members asked questions.

- RESOLVED:**
1. That the progress of the Speakerbox action plan and 'Tell it like it was' exit interview proposal as set out in the report be noted.
 2. That officers liaise with Speakerbox to establish how many councillors should attend the joint meeting on April 10 2008.

The meeting closed at 6.10pm.

CHAIR:

DATED: