

Corporate Parenting Committee

MINUTES of the OPEN section of the Corporate Parenting Committee held on Monday 6 November 2017 at 2.00 pm at the Council Offices, 160 Tooley Street, London SE1 2QH

PRESENT: Councillor Victoria Mills (Chair)
Councillor Jasmine Ali
Councillor Renata Hamvas
Councillor Kath Whittam
Councillor Kieron Williams (Vice-chair)

OFFICER SUPPORT: Alasdair Smith, Director of Children and Families
Helen Woolgar, Children's and Adults Services
Dr Stacy John-Legere, Designated Dr for Looked After Children
Sophie Gray, Senior Joint Commissioning Officer, CCG
Jackie Cook, Head of Social Work Improvement and Quality
UJ, Speakerbox spokesperson
Dechaun Malcolm, Children's Rights and Participation Officer
Paula Thornton, Constitutional Team

1. APOLOGIES

Apologies for absence were received from David Quirke-Thornton and Councillor Catherine Rose.

Apologies for lateness were received from Councillors Renata Hamvas and Kieron Williams.

2. CONFIRMATION OF VOTING MEMBERS

The members listed as present were confirmed as the voting members of the meeting.

3. ELECTION OF VICE-CHAIR

RESOLVED:

That Councillor Kieron Williams be elected as vice-chair of the corporate parenting committee for the 2017-18 municipal year.

4. NOTIFICATION OF ANY ITEMS OF BUSINESS WHICH THE CHAIR DEEMS URGENT

The chair gave notice of the following late items:

Item 11: Sufficiency strategy for looked after children

Item 12: Adoption service annual report 2016-17

Item 13: Fostering service annual report 2016-17

Reasons for urgency and lateness will be specified in the relevant minute.

5. DISCLOSURE OF INTERESTS AND DISPENSATIONS

No disclosures or dispensations were made.

6. MINUTES

RESOLVED:

That the minutes of the meeting held on 10 July 2017 be approved as a correct record and signed by the chair.

7. SOUTHWARK LOOKED AFTER CHILDREN HEALTH ANNUAL REPORT 2016-2017

Dr Stacy John-Legere, Designated Dr for Looked After Children presented her report to the committee.

Some key areas of progress were identified and it was confirmed that an action plan was in place to address areas that require improvement or development.

Some issues discussed at the committee related to:

- Out of borough assessments and measures in place to ensure assessments and follow up actioned
- Recruitment process for looked after children consultant
- Challenges surrounding children late into care and engagement
- Mental health issues for looked after children.

RESOLVED:

1. That the report be noted.
2. That the committee receive an update at its next meeting on the recruitment of the looked after children consultant.

8. OFSTED INSPECTION OF 'SERVICES FOR CHILDREN IN NEED OF HELP AND PROTECTION, CHILDREN LOOKED AFTER AND CARE LEAVERS' - POST INSPECTION ACTION PLAN

RESOLVED:

1. That the Southwark post inspection action plan as endorsed by cabinet on 19 September 2017 at Appendix 1 of the report, and the early progress made to date, be noted.
2. That a further progress report be received on 28 February 2018, with specific reference to care leavers and Catch 22.
3. That this remain as standing item for the committee, with all future items referencing which actions they relate to on the Ofsted action plan.

9. SPEAKERBOX UPDATE (VERBAL)

Speakerbox made a presentation to the committee identifying a number of key issues including:

- Documented increased engagement (more than doubled). Various initiatives have helped including Whatsapp to engage young people
- Recruitment. Step up social work programme, Life Long links and Catch 22 participation worker
- Work being undertaken to assist with making a complaint
- Provided a video campaign update
- Bridging the gap - Speakerbox video campaign about relationship with their social workers
- Video campaign launch.

A representative from Speakerbox talked about his personal experience and the support and guidance received from Speakerbox which has assisted in bringing him back to London to continue his studies at college. He felt that Speakerbox went beyond what was required, providing a supportive environment for young people.

Issues arising from presentation:

- Following on from the success for the Whatsapp whether work could be undertaken to make the processing for submitting complaints more 'digital'
- Look at voice of families/carers and how visible in training and work with students

- Confirmed Speakerbox website work done (officer to send link to Councillor Kath Whittam)
- The chair confirmed that the committee were always happy to meet with Speakerbox and hear their feedback.

10. CORPORATE PARENTING COMMITTEE - WORK PLAN 2017-18

RESOLVED:

1. That the work plan for 2017-18 as set out in paragraph 4 be noted.
2. That the agenda for the next meeting on 28 February be confirmed as follows:
 - Virtual headteachers annual report
 - Presentation from Children and Young Peoples Health Partnership (CYPHP)
 - Ofsted report update (including care leavers and Catch 22)
 - Independent Reviewing Officer (IRO) annual report 2016-17
 - Fostering update including feedback from Sir Martin Narey fostering report, due to be published in December 2017
 - Verbal update on the recruitment of the looked after children consultant.

(The agenda may be subject to change at the discretion of the chair)

11. SUFFICIENCY STRATEGY FOR LOOKED AFTER CHILDREN 2018- 2022

This report had not been circulated five clear days in advance of the meeting. The chair agreed to accept this item as urgent as the committee were not due to meet until February 2018. In order to progress this strategy and ensure that further input was received from the committee, the report needed to be considered at this meeting. The strategy addressed the adequate supply of high quality accommodation and support; meeting the needs of, and improving the outcomes for looked after children, young people, and children on the edge of care and as such needed to be progressed without delay.

RESOLVED:

1. That the action plan be noted.
2. That the proposed governance arrangements in paragraph 8 of the report be noted.
3. That the intention to bring back an action plan to the committee on an annual basis be noted and that the first report back to the committee be received in 6 months. This six monthly report back to include:
 - How working across the council
 - Governance arrangements
 - Scoping out on location
 - How to shift ambition
 - How to reflect better in the action plan the 'I' statements
 - Request to add red, amber or green (RAG) rating to action plan when updated.

12. ADOPTION SERVICE ANNUAL REPORT 2016-17

The report had not been circulated five clear days in advance of the meeting. The chair agreed to accept the report as urgent as the committee were not due to meet until February 2018 and it was necessary for the committee to consider the report at this meeting so that they were given a chance to provide feedback and consider any of the relevant issues arising, at the earliest opportunity.

RESOLVED:

That the annual report of Southwark Adoption Service 2016-17 be accepted.

13. FOSTERING SERVICE ANNUAL REPORT 2016-17

The report had not been circulated five clear days in advance of the meeting. The chair agreed to accept the report as urgent as the committee were not due to meet until February 2018 and it was necessary for the committee to consider the report at this meeting so that they were given a chance to provide feedback and consider any of the relevant issues arising, at the earliest opportunity.

RESOLVED:

1. That the annual report of Southwark Fostering Service 2016-17 be noted.
2. That an update report is received to the committee 28 February 2018, including feedback from the Sir Martin Narey fostering report due to be published in December 2017.

The meeting ended at 4.10pm.

CHAIR:

DATED: