

SAFEGUARDING SUB (COMMUNITY & CHILDREN'S SERVICES) COMMITTEE

Friday, 8 February 2019

Minutes of the meeting of the Safeguarding Sub (Community & Children's Services) Committee held at Committee Rooms, 2nd Floor, West Wing, Guildhall on Friday, 8 February 2019 at 1.45 pm

Present

Members:

Randall Anderson (Chairman)
Ruby Sayed (Deputy Chairman)
Mary Durcan
Marianne Fredericks
Susan Pearson

In Attendance

Officers:

Julie Mayer	- Town Clerk's Department
Chloe Rew	- Town Clerk's Department
Sharon Cushnie	- Community and Children's Services
Pat Dixon	- Community and Children's Services
Rachel Green	- Community and Children's Services
Ria Lane	- Community and Children's Services
Elizabeth Malton	- Community and Children's Services
Glory Nyero	- Community and Children's Services
Chris Pelham	- Community and Children's Services
Andrew Russell	- Community and Children's Services
Teresa Shortland	- Community and Children's Services
Michelle Williams	- London Borough of Hackney
Anna Jones	- Looked After Children's Health Team

1. APOLOGIES

Apologies were received from Dhruv Patel.

2. MEMBERS' DECLARATIONS UNDER THE CODE OF CONDUCT IN RESPECT OF ITEMS ON THE AGENDA

There were no declarations.

3. MINUTES

RESOLVED – That, the public minutes and summary of the previous meeting held 19 September 2018 were approved, subject to amendments to the officers in attendance, which was updated on the intranet prior to the meeting.

4. **CITY & HACKNEY SAFEGUARDING CHILDREN REPORT (CHSCB) ANNUAL REPORT**

Members received a report of the Independent Chair of The City & Hackney Safeguarding Children Board (CHSCB) relative to Board's annual report for 2017/18/ The Board's report had not yet been published and was therefore unavailable for review at the time of the meeting, however the report would provide a transparent assessment on the effectiveness of safeguarding and the promotion of child welfare across the City of London and the London Borough of Hackney.

Members expressed concern that the 2017/18 report would not be seen until early 2019. The Assistant Director of Community and Children's Services advised that the report would be circulated to Members when it is published in the coming weeks.

*Could you explain a bit more about Hackney's approach to contextual safeguarding and whether this is an area that we need to be focussing on more in the City? (*Subsequent to the meeting, the following response was provided):*

In April 2017, Hackney Council was awarded nearly £2m from the Department for Education's Children's Social Care Innovation Fund. In partnership with the University of Bedfordshire, Hackney is using this funding to develop a new approach to safeguarding, which shifts the focus of social work from the family home, to consider much wider influences. The Council has stated it wants to find effective ways to protect children from risks outside the family home, recognising that young people are increasingly being influenced by their peer groups and surroundings, which are outside the control of their families and cannot necessarily be addressed by traditional social work interventions, which focus on individual children and families.

This traditional approach is argued by some to limit the extent to which social workers and multi-agency partners can safeguard young people who experience abuse or exploitation outside of the family environment. The approach to contextual safeguarding involves considering how, for example, peer groups, social media, neighbourhoods and schools, impact on young people's vulnerability. It also seeks to establish new partnerships with organisations like transport providers, local businesses, fast food restaurants and other places where young people gather. An aim of the project is to reduce the need to move children away from unsafe social environments and instead, create safety in the places and communities in which they spend their time.

In the context of the City of London, there is evidence of much good work across the partnership, including with agencies that might not 'typically' be seen as safeguarding partners. Examples brought to the attention of the CHSCB include the local response to 'urbex' (urban exploring) and the initiative implemented as part of the City's suicide action plan. Awareness raising activities are also widespread.

Focussing on the wider risks that young people might face is not a new phenomenon. Indeed, the CHSCB has been promoting the idea of context since early 2014 and there has been clear reference to this in previous iterations of statutory guidance (the assessment framework is also explicit in defining that external issues need to be considered).

Critical to safeguarding in the City, it is important to establish what difference this project is making in terms of outcomes for young people. In this sense, whilst the City maintains a watching brief, it is too soon to conclude the impact of this initiative is positive. Its principles are sound, but the practical changes in how the frontline address risk will be the determinant factor.

*The CHSCB has always delivered an excellent service, as reflected in the Ofsted Judgement of outstanding in 2016. Will the new safeguarding arrangements require the publication of an Annual Report? (*Subsequent to the meeting, the following response was provided):*

Safeguarding partners (local authorities, the police and CCG) will be responsible for producing an annual report. The report must set out what they have done as a result of the arrangements, including on child safeguarding practice reviews (formerly Serious Case Reviews), and how effective these arrangements have been in practice. The report should also cover:

- evidence of the impact of the work of the safeguarding partners and relevant agencies, including training, on outcomes for children and families from early help to looked-after children and care leavers;
- an analysis of any areas where there has been little or no evidence of progress on agreed priorities;
- a record of decisions and actions taken by the partners in the report's period (or planned to be taken) to implement the recommendations of any local and national child safeguarding practice reviews, including any resulting improvements;
- ways in which the partners have sought and utilised feedback from children and families to inform their work and influence service provision.

Statutory guidance sets out that this report should be subject to independent scrutiny.

RESOLVED – That the report be noted.

5. **LOCAL AUTHORITY DESIGNATED OFFICER (LADO) ANNUAL REPORT 2017 TO 2018**

Members received a report of the Director of Community and Children's Services relative to the Local Authorities Designated Officer (LADO) Annual Report, 2017 to 2018. The report detailed that the activity between April 2017 and March 2018 was low. There were four referrals, with three of the four meeting the threshold for the LADO.

Given the report sets out that the strategy in 2018/19 was to continue to raise awareness and increase engagement of agencies in training, has there been an increase in contacts and referrals to the LADO in the last 12 months?

Yes, there has been an increase in contacts and referrals. There have been six referrals since April 2018, compared to four referrals in 2017 and 2018.

RESOLVED – That the report be noted.

6. PRIVATE FOSTERING ANNUAL REPORT 2017 TO 2018

Members received a report of the Director of Community and Children's Services relative to the Private Fostering Annual Report, 2017 to 2018. The report stated that there have been no private fostering arrangements identified in the City of London for 2017 to 2018. The report informed Members of how the City had met the National Minimum Standards for Private Fostering by raising awareness of private fostering arrangements with professionals and residents in the City.

Are all our commissioned providers and other staff, such as housing staff, aware of their duties in respect of private fostering?

The Director of Community and Children's Services advised that the City was continuing to raise awareness in the community around duties in respect of private fostering, with awareness efforts directed to both City residents and workers.

The Deputy Chairman drew attention to the importance of understanding various cultural approaches to raising awareness around private fostering in reaching diverse communities.

*Will there be another private fostering week in 2019, and will we be engaged in this as we have been in the past? (*Subsequent to the meeting, the following response was provided):*

The City will be looking at doing events during Private Fostering Week in July 2019.

RESOLVED – That the report be noted.

7. INDEPENDENT REVIEWING OFFICER (IRO) ANNUAL REPORT

Members received a report of the Director of Community and Children's Services relative to the Independent Reviewing Officer (IRO) Annual Report for 2017 and 2018. The report provided Members with an overview of the independent reviewing service in the city. The report summarised the statutory requirements of the IRO service and how the City performed in this regard.

The Director advised that based on the report, it appears that there are a high number of placement breakdowns, however these breakdowns were due to external circumstances. There was only one placement breakdown where a

young person decided to leave the placement and remove themselves from the placement.

The report notes the high quality of services and support regarding care planning that takes place across the service (para 4.1)? How do you determine this and has this level of quality been compromised with the increase in UASC who have come in to our care in the last year?

The high quality of the services is reflected in the fact that every child over the age of 18 has since transitioned to semi-independent living. Concerns that have emerged with the recent cohort, and the increasing number of children, are related to an issue with the provider. The provider is under review to address the concerns. The Director advised that an update on the review can be brought to the subcommittee.

*The report notes that there have not been any LAC reviews out of timescale since October 2017- is this still the case? (*Subsequent to the meeting, the following response was provided):*

Yes.

The report notes the post 18 offer has not been taken up by our care leavers? Do we know why and how care the Reviewing Service contribute to raising standards even further in respect of our care leavers?

Work is underway to try and engage care leavers more in pathway planning reviews. Care leavers over 18 years of age may not need this offer as they often meet with social workers or support workers, however it is recognised that having care leavers involved in their reviews is likely to further strengthen their outcomes.

RESOLVED – That the report be noted.

8. ANNUAL REPORT VIRTUAL SCHOOL HEADTEACHER ACADEMIC YEAR 2017/18

Members received a report of the Director of Community and Children's Services relative to the achievement of the Virtual School for the 2017-2018 academic year. The Director reported that almost all of the young people (YP) in the programme were Unaccompanied Asylum Seeking Children (UASC) and enrolled in English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) courses. Two YP were in university.

*How can the Virtual School and corporate parents support all our Looked After Children to reach the expected standard of progress? (*Subsequent to the meeting, the following response was provided):*

A consistent and collective application of the Virtual School Headteacher (VSH) standards by all partners, application of Personal Education Plans (PEP) which are carried out to a high standard, effective monitoring arrangements, effective

use of Pupil Premium are some of the ways of ensuring good standards are met.

How is the Virtual School progressing the ambition to have zero young people who are not in education, employment or training?

The Virtual School was building positive relationships with partners such as universities and colleges. Zero children are Not in Education, Employment or Training (NEET). To maintain this, the Virtual School must continue to engage with YP to bring them into/ keep them in education and employment.

The Deputy Chairman requested statistical data regarding how the YP progress and who is progressing.

Members queried how exclusions were dealt with. The Director advised that although the Department of Community and Children's Services should be consulted when exclusion is being considered, this has not always been the case. A child's circumstances need to be understood in disciplinary situations, such as trauma and attachment issues.

RESOLVED – That the report be noted.

9. CORPORATE SAFEGUARDING POLICY

Members received a report of the Director of Community and Children's Services relative to the background and current position of the Corporate Safeguarding policy which had recently been updated. There were minimal changes made to the policy in relation to the lead for Social Adult Care, guidance update and new initiatives in relation to adult safeguarding.

Members asked where the Corporate Safeguarding Policy sits in relation to schools, as there was concern that there would be crossover or differences between policies.

The Director advised that schools have to tailor their safeguarding policy to the Corporate Safeguarding Policy, and that school policies often flow down from the Corporate Policy.

RESOLVED – That the report be noted.

10. LEAVING CARE GUIDANCE FOR PRACTITIONERS

Members received a report of the Director of Community and Children's Services relative to the Leave Care Guidance for Practitioners. The report stated that Section 2 of the Children and Social Work Act 2017 requires each local authority to consult on and publish a local offer for its care leavers. The report included the full local offer.

Is there a timescale for the publication of the 'easy read' version? Will it be translated for all our young people?

The offer set out in the report is for practitioners, and the 'easy read' version will be available in English and other spoken languages of the young people (YP) in the next 3 months.

Members asked if care-leavers can stay in contact after age 25. The Director advised that they can stay in touch if they wish, and it is up to the practitioner's judgement to determine the extent of the contact, although there might be legal constraints in determining the type of support that can be offered.

What plans are in place to further enhance the quality of care leaver service in respect of recording and engagement in the pathway planning process? How do we ensure that all efforts have been made to capture the voice of our care leavers within the planning process and support them to achieve the very best outcomes?

An app has been developed which allows YP to establish their own plan in their own words.

RESOLVED – That the report be noted.

11. **OFSTED FOCUSED VISIT ON CARE LEAVERS**

Members received a report of the Director of Community and Children's Services relative to the October 2018 Ofsted focused visit which looked at the City of London's offer for care leavers.

*What plans are in place to further enhance the quality of care leaver service in respect of recording and engagement in the pathway planning process? How do we ensure that all efforts have been made to capture the voice of our care leavers within the planning process and support them to achieve the very best outcomes? (*Subsequent to the meeting, the following response was provided):*

The service is currently trialling a new review system for pathway plans. This is driven by the need to evidence the voice of young people in their plans.

*How will we know that the recommendations have been implemented and are effective and having an impact on the outcomes for our Care Leavers. (*Subsequent to the meeting, the following response was provided):*

The recommendations are now built into the Service Improvement Plan, which is further detailed at Item 12.

RESOLVED – That the report be noted.

12. **SERVICE IMPROVEMENT PLAN 2018-2019**

Members received a report of the Director of Community and Children's Services relative to the Service Improvement Plan (SIP) which was fully refreshed for April 2018 to March 2019.

How can we be assured that the quality of SMART planning will be improved on a sustained and permanent basis?

The SIP includes recommendations for development. The plan is updated monthly, and reports are published quarterly. The Department reported that it continues to work on SMART planning, aiming to have all plans as SMART plans in the future.

RESOLVED – That the report be noted.

13. **SPECIAL EDUCATION NEEDS AND DISABILITY (SEND) UPDATE**

Members received a report of the Director of Community and Children's Services relative to the progress of the Special Education Needs and Disability (SEND) work in the City.

*Given a key issue is progressing coproduction opportunities with children and young people, can you confirm how this is progressing and what the impact of the work with Council for Disabled Children and KIDS has been? (*Subsequent to the meeting, the following response was provided):*

The work with children and young people is being progressed on three levels – at an individual level, service level and strategic level.

At an individual and service level, children and young people are involved in planning and in making decisions which directly impact on their lives. An example of this is that they are fully involved in developing their Education Health and Care plans - letting us know their aspiration, what works well and not so well so that we can set meaningful outcomes together to enable them to achieve their aspirations. The inspection found that "the views of children and young people are fully collated and considered."

The challenge for us is in engaging children and young people at a strategic level - our numbers are small and not everyone will want to become involved at this level. KIDS have supported partners across education, health, social care, commissioning and the community through a workshop to consider ways of engaging and involving children and young people in developing services which affect them. While it is too early to report on the impact of this work, we are actively encouraging children and young people with SEND to take part in the consultation events around the Draft City Plan 2036 and to join the City Youth Forum. We are also about to engage an external facilitator to support our coproduction work with the parent carer forum and will want to include children and young people in this. We will report on the impact of the work with KIDS to a future Committee.

RESOLVED – That the report be noted.

14. **EDUCATION AND EARLY YEARS SAFEGUARDING UPDATE**

Members received a report of the Director of Community and Children's Services relative to the work which the Education and Early Years Services had undertaken in terms of safeguarding, to improve the safety and welfare of City-

resident children being educated in the City of London and other Boroughs, as well as non-resident children attending schools within the City.

School attendance for at-risk young people (YP) is monitored on a monthly basis, working with a 90% threshold. Both children in school and children educated at home (3) are monitored. There was no correlation noted between the age until which a child is kept at home and the environment at school/home.

Members expressed concern over a child being named in the report, which is public. The Director advised that the case was highly publicised and the child's name had already been made public.

RESOLVED – That the report be noted.

15. **AIDHOUR AUDITS NOVEMBER 2018**

Members received a report of the Director of Community and Children's Services relative to Aidhour audits of 31 cases open to the Children and Families Team. The report identified the process of supervision as an area of improvement.

RESOLVED – That the report be noted.

16. **QUESTIONS OF MATTERS RELATING TO THE WORK OF THE SUB-COMMITTEE**

A Member asked how many children are in care, to which officers responded as follows:

- 17 Children in Care aged 0-17 years
- 15 Unaccompanied Asylum-Seeking Children
- 23 children as care leavers with 1 voluntarily disengaged

17. **ANY OTHER BUSINESS THE CHAIRMAN CONSIDERS URGENT**

There was no other business.

18. **EXCLUSION OF THE PUBLIC**

RESOLVED - That under Section 100(A) of the Local Government Act 1972, the public be excluded from the meeting for the following items on the grounds that they involve the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in Part 1 of the Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act.

Item	Paragraph
19	3
20	1
21	2
22	1
23	1&2

19. **NON-PUBLIC MINUTES**
RESOLVED – That the non-public minutes of the previous meeting held on 19 September 2018 be agreed as an accurate record.
20. **HEALTH OF LOOKED AFTER CHILDREN (LAC) AND CARE LEAVERS ASSESSMENT AND NURSING REDESIGN AND PROCUREMENT**
The Sub-Committee received a report of the Integrated Commissioning Workstream Director - Children, Young People and Maternity, and noted the report.
21. **LOOKED AFTER CHILD (LAC) HEALTH ANNUAL REPORT**
The Sub-Committee received a report of the Looked After Children's Health Team (LACHT) and noted the report.
22. **CHILDREN'S SAFEGUARDING REPORT FOR QUARTER TWO (Q2)**
The Sub-Committee received a report of the Director of Community and Children's Services and noted the report.
23. **ADULT SAFEGUARDING PERFORMANCE REPORT**
The Sub-Committee received a report of the Director of Community and Children's Services and noted the report.
24. **NON-PUBLIC QUESTIONS ON MATTERS RELATING TO THE WORK OF THE SUB-COMMITTEE**
There were two questions.
25. **ANY OTHER BUSINESS THAT THE CHAIRMAN CONSIDERS URGENT AND WHICH THE SUB-COMMITTEE AGREE SHOULD BE CONSIDERED WHILST THE PUBLIC ARE EXCLUDED**
There was no other business.

The meeting ended at 3.25 pm

Chairman

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