

SAFEGUARDING SUB (COMMUNITY & CHILDREN'S SERVICES) COMMITTEE

Thursday, 12 May 2022

Minutes of the meeting held at Guildhall at 2.00 pm

Present

Members:

Ruby Sayed (Chairman)
Helen Fentimen (Deputy Chairman)
Anne Corbett
Mary Durcan
Ceri Wilkins

Officers:

Chris Pelham	- Assistant Director, People, Community and Children's Services
Julie Mayer	- Town Clerks
Sharon Cushnie	- Community and Children's Services
Pat Dixon	- Community and Children's Services
Rachel Talmage	- Community and Children's Services
Andrew Russell	- Community and Children's Services
Teresa Shortland	- Community and Children's Services
Ellie Ward	- Community and Children's Services
Barbara Hamilton	- Community and Children's Services
Glory Nyero	- Community and Children's Services
Robert Wood	- Community and Children's Services
Sharon Long	- Community and Children's Services
Greg Knight	- Community and Children's Services

1. APOLOGIES

Apologies were received from Joanna Abeyie and Alderman Gregory Jones.

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

Anne Corbett declared a non-pecuniary interest by virtue of her employment with the London Borough of Islington, which provides a service to the City of London Corporation.

3. MINUTES

RESOLVED, that – the minutes of the meeting held on 7th February 2022 be approved.

Matters arising – provision for young people.

- 1. The Community and Children's Services Committee would receive a report on recommissioning leisure services at their meeting on 20 July.**

2. Officers had been working with Fusion Lifestyle and visited Mansell and Middlesex Streets, with a view to developing activities for gentle exercise and the provision of football. Two multi-use games areas had been identified on the estates, a coach was in place and Members would receive more detail in the next report.
3. A meeting with the new Lead Member for Young People had been arranged for the following week.
4. The outcome from the engagement with children and young people would be embedded in the sports development service, which is due to be recommissioned.
5. Given that the City has a large number of resident children participating in the London Youth Games, Members asked if this could be captured in the report referred to at (1) above.
6. Members also asked if the report could cover provisions for women and girls in the East of the City; particularly single sex swimming sessions.

4. **CITY AND HACKNEY SAFEGUARDING CHILDREN PARTNERSHIP (CHSCP) CHILD Q PRACTICE REVIEW**

The Sub Committee received a joint report of the Director of Community and Children's Services and the City of London Police in respect of a practice review following the strip-search, by Metropolitan Police Officers, of 'Child Q' in a Hackney School in 2020. The findings from the review were published in March 2022. The report on the agenda updated Members on the review process, setting out the initial response, plans to address the recommendations, activity to date and plans for future learning.

During the presentation of this report, the following points were noted:

1. It had taken 14 months and not 2 years to respond to the findings in the review.
2. The report had concluded that Child Q should never have been strip-searched and found an absence of a 'safeguarding-first' approach to the practice of many of the professionals involved that day.
3. The report also concluded that racism was *'likely to have been an influencing factor'* in the strip-search, and a high level of probability that practitioners were influenced by 'adultification' bias. The review made eight findings and 14 recommendations for practice.
4. The City of London Police and City of London Schools have undertaken a range of activities to understand and share learning with colleagues from the review.

5. In April 2022, the Independent Child Safeguarding Commissioner wrote to all partners of the CHSCP inviting them to map their safeguarding arrangements in respect of the findings and recommendations.

The Chair thanked officers in the City of London Police and the Department of Community and Children's Services for their work in responding to the review and the co-production of this report.

RESOLVED, that – the report be noted.

5. THE PROVISION OF ALTERNATIVE ACCOMMODATION TO FAMILIES WHERE CHILDREN HAVE DIED

The Sub Committee received a report of the Director of Community and Children's Services in respect of a protocol following the accidental deaths of two children in their homes in Hackney. Members noted that the City and Hackney Safeguarding Children Partnership (CHSCP) had asked for the relevant housing protocols be reviewed, to ensure that sufficient regard is given to a household's circumstances when a traumatic child death occurs, specifically the mental health impact on the family in remaining in the home where the death took place.

Members noted that the City Corporation's Housing Allocations Scheme already gives officers a wide discretion to assist families in traumatic circumstances; via the 'Management Transfer' route. However, the scheme has now been amended to explicitly state that families suffering a child bereavement will automatically be eligible for Management Transfer; the highest category of priority on the housing register.

RESOLVED, that – the report be noted.

6. EDUCATION WELFARE SERVICES AND SCHOOL ATTENDANCE AND PERSISTENT ABSENCE

The Sub Committee received a report of the Director of Community and Children's Services, noting the challenges families may have experienced in transitioning back to school following the lockdowns during the COVID-19 pandemic. Members noted the Department's commitment to providing an excellent service to all families requiring support.

RESOLVED, that – the report be noted.

7. VIRTUAL SCHOOL INTERIM UPDATE REPORT

The Sub Committee received a report of the Director of Community and Children's Services, which presented an overview of the activities and impact of the City of London Virtual School for the Academic Year September 2021 to March 2022.

Members noted that the work of the Virtual School expanded considerably in September, and now includes all children with a social worker. There was also an unplanned expansion; i.e. – the provision of education for 250 Afghan children who arrived in the City in September 2021. The Chair and Members

thanked the Director of Community and Children's Services, the Virtual Headteacher and his team for an outstanding achievement, noting that all children had been placed in schools, in a very short period of time, and despite a lack of infrastructure and resources.

RESOLVED, that – the report be noted.

8. **THE EARLY YEARS' SERVICE - SAFEGUARDING CHILDREN UPDATE**

The Sub Committee received a report of the Director of Community and Children's Services, which updated Members on the work of the Early Years' Service in the context of safeguarding children. Members noted that the Education and Early Years team work closely with the CHSCP, and all City of London Early Years settings, to ensure that children learn and develop in a safe and welcoming learning environment. A broader training programme is delivered annually and adapted to the needs of local practitioners.

RESOLVED, that – the report be noted.

9. **SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS AND DISABILITY (SEND) - UPDATE REPORT**

The Sub Committee received a report of the Director of Community and Children's Services, which sought to update Members on the current work of the City of London Corporation's Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND) Service and on plans to respond to the Government's Green Paper: '*SEND Review: Right Support, Right Place, Right Time*'. Members noted that the SEND self-evaluation form and action plan, which are in place to plan and track progress, will be amended in due course to reflect changes required. Officers will continue to monitor these through the SEND Programme Board, and report progress to the Safeguarding Sub-Committee.

As there were some technical difficulties in showing an accompanying film during the Sub Committee meeting, Members noted that it would be circulated after the meeting and available to the public on the 'local offer' page.

RESOLVED, that – the report be noted.

10. **CHILDREN AND FAMILIES SERVICE PERFORMANCE - MONTH 11 2021/22 (FEBRUARY 2022)**

The Sub Committee received a report of the Director of Community and Children's Services, which updated Members on performance across the Children and Families Service. It demonstrated where performance meets statutory obligations and identified where action was taken for improvement in specific areas.

In response to a question about young people not in education or training (NEETS), the officers advised that some have mental health issues but they are well known to the team and reviewed regularly. Home environments are well-scrutinised, to ensure there are no barriers to gaining employment, training or

volunteering placements, but some might be prevented from doing so due to their immigration status.

Members noted that the majority of children in care and care leavers are young men and boys; mainly unaccompanied asylum seekers, but this demographic tends to change frequently. There was less transport to the UK during the lockdown, and therefore less unaccompanied asylum seeking children for a while, but this has since picked up.

Officers advised that, during Lockdown, more early help/very early help was offered, in order to prevent low level needs turning into to a risk.

RESOLVED, that – the report be noted.

11. **CHILDREN'S SOCIAL CARE AND EARLY HELP SERVICE DEVELOPMENT 2022-23**

The Sub Committee received a report of the Director of Community and Children's Services, which set out the overarching programme of work for the Children's Social Care and Early Help Service. Members noted that the work which had a good impact in 2021-22; ie - the Family Therapy Clinic jointly run with Kings College London and Action Learning Sets for both staff and managers, would continue. The officer advised that this would be a 'live' document, regularly updated in response to family and staff feedback, national research and audit.

RESOLVED, that – the report be noted.

12. **PARTICIPATION SERVICE - CHILDREN IN CARE COUNCIL**

The Sub Committee received a report of the Director of Community and Children's Services, setting out this year's key priorities for the Participation Service; ie – moving from virtual meetings of the City of London Children in Care Council (CiCC) to face-to-face meetings. Members noted that, in May 2022, the young people would be reviewing progress made and updating priorities for 2022–2023. Members also noted the summer activities, which would include a film project, supported by a film company with experience in working with young people, and several trips, to ensure that all the young people have an opportunity to go on a summer outing.

RESOLVED, that – the report be noted.

13. **MULTI AGENCY CHILD EXPLOITATION (MACE) FORUM UPDATE**

The Sub Committee received a report of the Director of Community and Children's Services, setting out the issues around child exploitation in the City of London. Members noted that the City of London Corporation holds a Multi-Agency Child Exploitation and Vulnerable Adolescent Forum on a bimonthly basis, and the report outlined the work of the Forum and the action plan for 2022-23.

Members also noted the covert work undertaken by plain clothes officers in visiting front line hotel staff; offering training if required. The Chair commended this approach, which had been in place for a number of years and proved highly effective.

RESOLVED, that – the report be noted.

14. MODERN DAY SLAVERY

The Sub Committee received a report of the Director of Community and Children's Services and noted that, due to the hidden nature of Modern Day Slavery (MDS), it is difficult to have an accurate measure of the prevalence of this exploitation, as there is no definitive source of data or suitable method available to accurately quantify the number of victims involved.

Members noted that the report identified the five main types of exploitation associated with MDS; looking at the national and London statistics on modern slavery in the UK. Furthermore, the City of London Corporation has an MDS group which consists of representatives from the Department of Community and Children's Services, Police, Licensing, and external partners. The City and Hackney Safeguarding Adults Board has identified MDS as a priority for 2022. The number of MDS cases in the City of London remain low but, given the hidden nature of this crime, it is likely that this does not reflect its true prevalence in the City of London, but officers are fully aware of where there are potential risks.

RESOLVED, that – the report be noted.

15. CHILD PERFORMANCE LICENCES

The Sub Committee received a report of the Director of Community and Children's Services which updated Members on the revised local policy and processes for performance licences for Children in the City of London. Members noted that National Child Employment Guidance, which oversees the administration of child work permits, the issue of performance licences, Body of Persons Approvals (BOPAs) and chaperone licences, is available to all local authorities through the National Network for Children in Employment and Entertainment (NNCEE). In October 2019, the Safeguarding Sub-Committee was advised that, due to the increased number of applications received, the Education and Early Years' Service would be reviewing its suite of policies and processes.

Members noted that the City is now fully compliant, being one of the only local authorities in the country with its own suite of local policies and procedures.

RESOLVED, that – the report be noted.

16. ADULT SAFEGUARDING PERFORMANCE REPORT, Q3 YTD 2021/22

The Sub Committee received a report of the Director of Community and Children's Services which advised Members of the level and nature of adult safeguarding concerns received by the City of London Corporation during quarter three (Q3) of 2021/22 as well as the year to date (YTD) figures for the Q3 2021/22 reporting period. Members noted that, during this period, the Adult Social Care

(ASC) team received 22 new safeguarding concerns, 18 of which were within the authority. Four of the Q3 concerns progressed to an enquiry stage, but two Q3 concerns concluded during this period, and the remaining two Q3 concerns are yet to conclude following a S42 enquiry.

RESOLVED, that – the report be noted.

17. PAN LONDON - CHILDREN IN CARE COUNCIL (CICC)

The Sub Committee received a report of the Director of Community and Children’s Service which contained an update on the work of the Pan London CiCC and proposals for the future. Members noted that this programme ensures young people are at the core of regional planning and decision-making; focussing on developing cross-sector partnerships that collaborate to ensure care-experienced young people have access to jobs, financial support and emotional health and wellbeing services to support them in achieving their ambitions.

Members noted that three young people are currently based in Guildhall and it was suggested that they attend the next meeting to talk about the work they have been doing. The Chair welcomed this suggestion and advised that, although this programme is Pan-London, the City of London has been integral to its success.

RESOLVED, that – the report be noted.

18. QUESTIONS OF MATTERS RELATING TO THE WORK OF THE SUB-COMMITTEE

There were no questions.

19. ANY OTHER BUSINESS THE CHAIRMAN CONSIDERS URGENT

There were no items.

20. 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 I of the Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act.

Item	Paragraph
21 -22	1 & 2

21. CHILDREN AND FAMILIES SERVICE PERFORMANCE - MONTH 11 2021/22 (FEBRUARY 2022) - NON PUBLIC APPENDICES

The Sub Committee received an appendix in respect of agenda item 10.

22. ADULT SAFEGUARDING PERFORMANCE REPORT, Q3 YTD 2021/22 - NON PUBLIC APPENDIX

The Sub Committee received an appendix in respect of agenda item 16.

23. NON-PUBLIC QUESTIONS ON MATTERS RELATING TO THE WORK OF THE SUB-COMMITTEE

There were no questions.

24. ANY OTHER BUSINESS THAT THE CHAIRMAN CONSIDERS URGENT AND WHICH THE SUB-COMMITTEE AGREE SHOULD BE CONSIDERED WHILST THE PUBLIC ARE EXCLUDED

There were no items.

The meeting ended at 3.20 pm

Chairman

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