

SAFEGUARDING SUB (COMMUNITY & CHILDREN'S SERVICES) COMMITTEE

Monday, 12 October 2020

Minutes of the meeting of the Safeguarding Sub (Community & Children's Services)
Committee held virtually on Monday, 12 October 2020 at 11.00 am

Present

Members:

Randall Anderson (Deputy Chairman)
Mary Durcan
Helen Fentimen
John Fletcher
Marianne Fredericks
Alderman David Graves
Susan Pearson

In Attendance:

Officers:

Chloe Rew	- Town Clerk's Department
Julie Mayer	- Town Clerk's Department
Aqib Hussain	- Chamberlain's Department
Zak Darwood	- Community & Children's Services
Pat Dixon	- Community & Children's Services
Ayesha Fordham	- Community & Children's Services
Rachel Green	- Community & Children's Services
Kirstie Hilton	- Community & Children's Services
Ria Lane	- Community & Children's Services
Sharon Long	- Community & Children's Services
Arthur Mun	- Community & Children's Services
Chris Pelham	- Community & Children's Services
Ian Tweedie	- Community & Children's Services
Ellie Ward	- Community & Children's Services
Robert Wood	- Community & Children's Services

Also in attendance:

Adi Cooper	- City and Hackney Safeguarding Adults Board
Raynor Griffiths	- City and Hackney Safeguarding Adults Board
Dr Liz Jacks	- Designated Doctor, City and Hackney CCG
Anna Jones	- Designated Nurse, City and Hackney CCG

1. **APOLOGIES**

It was proposed by Marianne Fredericks and seconded by John Fletcher that Alderman David Graves take the chair.

Apologies were received from Ruby Sayed.

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

There were none.

3. **TERMS OF REFERENCE**

RESOLVED – that the terms of reference be received.

4. **ELECTION OF A CHAIRMAN**

Members elected a Chairman in accordance with Standing Order 29.

RESOLVED, that – being the only Member willing to serve, Ruby Sayed be elected Chairman for the ensuing year.

5. **ELECTION OF A DEPUTY CHAIRMAN**

Members elected a Deputy Chairman in accordance with Standing Order 30.

RESOLVED, that – being the only Member willing to serve, Randall Anderson be elected as Deputy Chairman for the ensuing year.

6. **MINUTES**

RESOLVED, that – the public minutes and non-public summary of the previous meeting held on 24 June 2020 be agreed as a correct record.

7. **OUTSTANDING ACTIONS**

Members received the list of outstanding actions and the following points were noted:

- Action 1 – domestic violence: this item was addressed in the agenda in the Violence Against Women and Girls Strategy at item 9 and could be stricken from the list;
- Action 2 – licensing review update: briefing provided to Members and the action could be stricken from the list. For public awareness, the following points were noted:
 - The Safeguarding Quality Assurance Manager receives licencing review emails directly from the licensing team. Last year, 75 licence requests were received (40 new applications for a license and 35 related to a variation to an existing license).
- Action 4 – City and Hackney Safeguarding Adults Board: this issue was addressed in the report at item 10 and the action could be stricken from the list; and,
- Action 6 – Children in Care Council holidays: this issue was addressed in the report at item 12 and could be stricken from the list.
- Action 8 – Forced child marriages: briefing provided to Members and the action could be stricken from the list.

RESOLVED, that – the list of outstanding actions be received and its contents noted.

8. **GLOSSARY**

The glossary was read in conjunction with the reports.

9. **VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN AND GIRL'S (VAWG) STRATEGY 2019-2023 AND ACTION PLAN 2019-2021**

Members received a report of the Director of Community & Children's Services relative to the Violence Against Women and Girls (VAWG) Strategy 2019-2023 and Action Plan 2019-2021. It was noted that the action plan was developed prior to the pandemic, but had been adjusted to account for the impact of COVID-19.

With respect to concerns about victims of domestic abuse receiving the support they need given the COVID-19 context, and communication and publication campaigns for these services, it was reported that during the lockdown period, the City of London Police carried out checks on known vulnerable residents. Victims' services were promoted on social media and the City Corporation website; Crime Stoppers ran a campaign regarding protecting neighbours; and 'spot the signs' training toolkits were employers were updated to reflect working from home conditions.

Members expressed concern that not all City Corporation employees had access to a laptop to access training toolkits, and some Members had issues accessing information on the Corporation's website regarding domestic abuse support. Officers would address these issues following the meeting.

Members expressed concern that the strategy focused on women and girls, which risked excluding men and boys who are also vulnerable to abuse. Officers responded that the strategy was applicable to all genders, but focused on women and girls to reflect that they were disproportionately victimised. The Chairman noted that the terminology needed to be in line with the Domestic Abuse Bill.

Members further noted that strategy should address heightened vulnerability to abuse for people who are homeless, and licensed premises should be equipped to ensure people are safe from abuse in their premises.

RESOLVED, that – the report be received and its contents noted.

10. **CITY AND HACKNEY SAFEGUARDING ADULTS BOARD STRATEGY 2020/25 AND ANNUAL REPORT 2019/20**

Members received a report of the Independent Chair of the City and Hackney Safeguarding Adults Board.

The Chair noted that during her time as chair since 2015, safeguarding has had greater attention, however adult safeguarding has a shorter history than children's safeguarding. The Board would work to establish a greater understanding of the impact of COVID-19 on adult safeguarding concerns, such

as mental health and self-neglect. The Board had experienced increased engagement with service users and carers. New mechanisms were put in place to better engage with service users without inflicting trauma when discussing troubling experiences.

With respect to Member engagement, the Chair noted that since meetings moved to virtual meetings, there had been increased attendance at Board meetings.

RESOLVED, that – the report be received and its contents noted.

11. LOOKED AFTER CHILDREN'S HEALTH (CITY OF LONDON CORPORATION) ANNUAL REPORT 2019 - 2020

Members receive a report of the Designated Doctor and Nurse for the City & Hackney Clinical Commissioning Group, which was read in conjunction with the non-public appendix at Agenda Item 20.

The Designated Doctor and Designated Nurse provided a summary of health services provided to Looked After Children (LAC). Members expressed concern that only 69% of initial health assessments had taken place within 20 working days. It was reported that health assessments were impacted by COVID-19 and many were conducted virtually; of those not undertaken, some of these children were placed outside of the borough, and some were a result of carers forgetting appointments. A plan was in place to recommence face-to-face consultations; recent guidance from the NHS had been released regarding assessments for children placed outside of the borough; and reminder calls were in place to prevent missed appointments.

RESOLVED, that – the report be received and its contents noted.

12. CHILDREN IN CARE COUNCIL (CICC) AND PARTICIPATION SERVICE UPDATE

Members received a report of the Director of Community & Children's Services with respect to the Children in Care Council (CICC) and Participation Service Update was noted that the annual summer holiday had been postponed due to COVID-19 and the CICC was moving into the autumn programme.

As the summer activity programme had been delivered virtually, Members expressed concern that some young people did not want to participate in the virtual programme, and perhaps the young people were not engaged with the content. It was reported that the young people were involved in developing the programme, as noted in the vision piece appended to the report, however some young people had difficulty with technology. A trial session for in-person programming was underway, following COVID-safe guidelines. The trial would be evaluated in order to consider the approach for the future. Some sessions would remain virtual when this was more suited to the programme (for example, cooking sessions were more successful virtually as the young people could participate from their kitchen.) The October session was scheduled to take place outside, and venues were being considered for future sessions, including in the Guildhall.

RESOLVED, that – the report be received and its contents noted.

13. PAN-LONDON CHILDREN IN CARE COUNCIL

Members received a report of the Strategic Director of Partnership for Young London with respect to the Pan-London Children in Care Council (CICC). It was reported that engagements were taking place virtually to allow young people to present views, which were used to develop an action plan.

Regarding the success of moving to virtual engagements, it was reported that this transition had worked well. Larger CICC meetings were divided into smaller sessions. Virtual meetings allowed the young people to meet with individuals that would have been more difficult to arrange had meetings been in-person, including the Deputy Mayor for Transport. The programme had a positive impact on the young people, demonstrating to them that where they could have an impact for change.

Members sought assurance that City Members were engaged with the programme, and it was reported that these Members were involved at varying stages of the virtual programme.

RESOLVED, that – the report be received and its contents noted.

14. EDUCATION AND EARLY YEARS SERVICE SAFEGUARDING UPDATE

Members received a report of the Director of Community & Children's Services relative to the Education and Early Years Service Safeguarding Update.

Members asked if there had been an increase in safeguarding concerns or vulnerabilities coming from schools or early years since the start of term. It was reported that the local authorities were working hard to encourage students to return to school, and were providing added support for families with concerns about returning. There had been an increase in students who were electively home-educated, and many cases were due to concerns over shielding family members. Additional intensive support was being provided for early help and for children in families with disabilities. With respect to schools reporting concerns, a 3-step process was in place for schools to report concerns.

RESOLVED, that – the report be received and its contents noted.

15. INDEPENDENT REVIEWING OFFICER (IRO), ANNUAL REPORT FOR 2019-2020

Members received a report of the Director of Community & Children's Services relative to the Independent Reviewing Officer (IRO) Annual report for 2019-2020, which covered a period from March 2019 to April 2020.

With respect to the Members' questions regarding the distinction between Independent Visitors Service and the IRO Service, it was reported that the Independent Visitors Service is informal and social, and provided an opportunity for young people to increase their social network and make friends.

The IRO is a formal service, although conducted somewhat informally to allow people to feel more at ease.

With respect to the Care Leaver Service, this was not a statutory role. A large portion of children come into statutory care at ages 16 or 17, which allows a short period of time to assist them in the transition to care before they become a care leaver. The IRO role supports this process.

It was noted of the LAC, 45 were male and 3 were female. Members asked why this was a largely male group. Members were informed that as most of these people were Unaccompanied Asylum-Seeking Children (UASC), it was more often men who undertook this journey alone. Women were more likely to travel with families.

RESOLVED, that – the report be received and its contents noted.

16. CHILDREN AND FAMILIES SERVICE PERFORMANCE - MONTH 5 2020/21 (AUGUST 2020)

Members received a report of the Director of Community & Children's Services relative to the Children and Families Service Performance – Month 5 2020/2021 (August 2020).

With respect to ensuring good performance in the area of assessment and pathway plan timeliness is maintained, it was reported that there was currently a 100% timeliness rate. IRO support was very helpful in maintaining timeliness, and assessments were reviewed at every managers meeting. Since the OFSTED inspection, the early help referral and assessment system was working effectively, and a tracker was in place to monitor progress.

RESOLVED, that – the report be received and its contents noted.

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

There were none.

18. ANY OTHER BUSINESS THE CHAIRMAN CONSIDERS URGENT

There was no other business.

19. 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.

20. NON-PUBLIC MINUTES

RESOLVED, that – the non-public minutes of the previous meeting held on 24 June 2020 be agreed as a correct record.

21. LOOKED AFTER CHILDREN'S HEALTH (CITY OF LONDON CORPORATION) ANNUAL REPORT 2019 - 2020

Members received the Looked After Children's Health (City of London Corporation) Annual Report 2019-2020 in conjunction with the public report at agenda item 11.

RESOLVED, that – the report be received and its contents noted.

22. **ADULT SAFEGUARDING PERFORMANCE REPORT, Q1 2020/21**

Members received a report of the Director of Community & Children's Services relative to the Adult Safeguarding Performance Report for Q1, 2020/21.

RESOLVED, that – the report be received and its contents noted.

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

There were none.

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

There was no other business.

The meeting ended at 1.05 pm

Chairman

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