

SAFEGUARDING SUB (COMMUNITY & CHILDREN'S SERVICES) COMMITTEE

Monday, 7 November 2022

Minutes of the meeting of the Safeguarding Sub (Community & Children's Services) Committee held at the Guildhall EC2 at 3.30 pm

Present

Members:

Ruby Sayed (Chairman)	Ceri Wilkins
Helen Fentimen (Deputy Chairman)	Joanna Tufuo Abeyie
Mary Durcan	Deputy John Fletcher
Anne Corbett	

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
Chris Pelham	- Community and Children's Services
Teresa Shortland	- Community and Children's Services
Kirsty Hilton	- Community and Children's Services
Ellie Ward	- Community and Children's Services
Ria Lane	- Community and Children's Services
Scott Myers	- Community and Children's Services
Ian Tweedie	- Community and Children's Services
Dr Adi Cooper	- Independent Chair, City and Hackney Safeguarding Adults Board
Kelly Duggan	- Youth Offending Service, London Borough of Tower Hamlets
Sharon Long	- Director, Partnership for Young London
Anna Jones	- Designated Nurse for Looked After Children
Dr Ninethrie Weerasinghe	- Designated Doctor for Looked After Children

1. APOLOGIES

Apologies were received from Ben Murphy.

Members welcomed new Member Deputy John Fletcher, who had replaced Alderman Gregory Jones.

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

There were no declarations.

3. MINUTES

RESOLVED, that – the minutes of the meeting held on 12 May 2022 be approved.

4. CITY AND HACKNEY SAFEGUARDING ADULTS BOARD ANNUAL REPORT 2021/22

The Sub Committee received a report of the Independent Chair of the City and Hackney Safeguarding Board, which outlined the Board's Annual Report for 2021/22. It focused on the key achievements, data for 2020/21 and future priorities for the Board.

During the discussion and questions, the following points were noted:

1. Significant progress in homelessness and rough sleeping, safeguarding and health and wellbeing reviews.
2. Good work despite challenges from the pandemic, which had severely limited engagement with residents. Preparations were now underway for next year's CQC inspection.
3. Historically it had been difficult to engage with people with safeguarding experience. Officers are confident of more success with the new Advocacy Project; an independent voluntary sector agency, which has been commissioned by the London Borough of Hackney.
4. Adult Social Care is covered later on this agenda. Members noted current workforce challenges, together with the cost of living and rising poverty levels, and how Local Authorities need to be prepared for the impact on services.

RESOLVED, that – the report be noted.

5. YOUTH OFFENDING SERVICE (YOS) INSPECTION REPORT AND ACTION PLAN

The Sub Committee received a report of the Executive Director, Community and Children's Services, in respect of the YOS. Members noted that the City of London Corporation commissions the London Borough of Tower Hamlets to provide this, as it is a statutory requirement for local authorities to provide a service to resident children who use offending behaviour. In April 2022, an inspection of the commissioned service was undertaken by Her Majesty's Inspector of Probation (HMIP). This report presented the inspection findings and the subsequent improvement plan.

During the discussion and questions, the following points were noted:

1. Since 2021, the entire management team had been replaced, there were now additional resources in the team, including an improvement officer.
2. There had been extensive consultation with staff and the wider service to ensure that all concerns were being captured.
3. The Governance Board had been split into Executive and Operational, which would enable it to hold the Management Team to account. The

Executive Board is multi-agency, comprising of Youth Justice, the Metropolitan Police, City of London Corporation, Tower Hamlets, Public Health and schools. Board Members are being offered enhanced training and a new handbook, setting out expectations in terms of disproportionality and all aspects of prevention.

4. There had been considerable investment in data, with a new analyst joining the team in January.
5. Out of Court Disposals had been re-designed, using turnaround funding.
6. There had not been any City children in custody over the past 3 years but the improvement plan will ensure the service is prepared.
7. There are 3 KPI's measuring:
 - Re-offending - one of lowest rates in London.
 - Numbers in custody – one of the lowest rates in London.
 - The number of first time entrants – this is relatively high and the team are using a triage resolution, from turnaround funding, to divert children away from the criminal justice system.
8. In 2021-22 there were 72 children in the system and at the same point this year it had reduced to 25.

RESOLVED, that – the report be noted.

6. **PAN LONDON CHILDREN IN CARE COUNCIL**

The Sub Committee received a report of the Partnership for Young London, which provided an update on the Pan London Children in Care Council, which is sponsored by the City of London Corporation, in conjunction with the Association of London Directors of Children's Services (ALDCS). The report covered progress on deliverables, outcomes and partnerships developed.

During the discussion, the following points were noted:

- a) Members asked if there are any areas of good practice in the private sector, noting that care leavers are three times more likely to be unemployed. The Officer advised of a covenant whereby organisations can pledge their commitment; i.e. - two high profile organisations have offered laptops and training to care leavers. The Chair advised of a free prescription service and a group of dentists across London, who are offering support to care leavers.
- b) In respect of the 2-year funding, the Department will be looking to maximise resources in other organisations: i.e. – HMIP, in respect of getting young people back into employment, and a lot of private sector employers are supporting this. There is a strong governance group across London, feeding into leading care networks.

- c) The Chair had met with the Executive Director, Community and Children's Services, to organise a member briefing promoting apprenticeships in City Organisations.

RESOLVED, that – the report be noted.

7. **PARTICIPATION SERVICE - SUMMER ACTIVITIES**

The Sub Committee received a report of the Executive Director, Community and Children's Services which outlined Summer activities, provided by the Participation Service over the summer holidays, for looked-after children and care leavers.

Members noted that young people from the CiCC would be invited to attend the Safeguarding Sub Committee, when the Pledge is reviewed. This will also provide an opportunity for them to provide feedback on the activities they enjoy. Members asked if the City could resume hosting CiCC meetings at Guildhall, with lunch provided, as this had ceased during the pandemic.

The Assistant Director advised that, as of August 2022, there are currently 13 children in care and 52 care leavers. Some prefer not to engage, and some attend all events and activities. The CiCC meetings average attendance is between 10 and 15. Although the number of boys is greater, there is no gender bias in terms of the choice of activities. Some of the older female care leavers choose to go on trips and activities with their Social Worker. Members noted that a recent paintballing event in Croydon was in a fairly remote location, so transport provision would be reviewed in the future.

RESOLVED, that – the report be noted.

8. **CORPORATE SAFEGUARDING POLICY**

The Sub Committee received a report of the Executive Director, Community and Children's Services which provided the latest version of the Corporate Safeguarding Policy, following its annual review.

RESOLVED, that – the report be noted.

9. **AN INTRODUCTION TO ADULT SAFEGUARDING**

The Sub Committee received a report of the Executive Director, Community and Children's Services, which outlined the legislative context for adult safeguarding.

During the discussion, the following points were noted:

- a) The distinction between areas which fall under Section 42 of the Care Act, which is aimed at immediate risk, and others which have less defined responsibilities around prevention. The officer explained that Adult Safeguarding focusses on the outcomes that the adult might be seeking, but they don't always align with the preferences of the family or the advice of the Social Worker.

- b) In terms of the ageing population, officers had been analysing census data in order to model liberty protection, which appears later on this agenda, and the anticipated increasing demands on adult social care. Similar modelling was also underway in terms of the energy crisis, using the City's demography. Whilst there is a 10-year plan for Health Integration, there is still uncertainty about government funding, and the Health and Care Levy has changed. However, the modelling and transformation will help the service to prepare within available resources.
- c) The City Corporation is fortunate in that its numbers are low but it has less resources than other local authorities. However, the City also knows its clients very well, and the home care provision was recently re-tendered to provide intensive support on discharge and/or preventing hospital admissions. Members noted that the risk is active but being mitigated as far as possible.
- d) All urgent concerns about safeguarding should be acted on without consent. However, if assistance is refused, then it becomes a matter of mental capacity and consent. Staff in public facing services receive safeguarding training; a recent rise in reporting suggests a higher level of awareness.
- e) The Safeguarding Adults Board commissions training for multi-agency professionals in terms of identification and awareness of Safeguarding and the Department monitors take up.

RESOLVED, that – the report be noted.

10. **LIBERTY PROTECTION SAFEGUARDING**

The Sub Committee received a report of the Executive Director, Community and Children's Services, in respect of the Mental Capacity (Amendment) Act 2019, which replaced the Deprivation of Liberty Safeguards (DoLS) with the Liberty Protection Safeguards.

During the discussion on this item, the following points were noted:

- a) The legislation was postponed during Covid but there are currently no implementation dates, nor details around the training and qualification pathways for new Mental Capacity Professionals. Once these details are known, the Department will need a minimum of 6-months to train staff. Members noted that a liberty protection safeguard, or deprivation of liberty, had previously been defined by the Courts. As this had been a very wide definition, it was likely that it would narrow within the new Code of Practice, which is expected during the Winter of 2022/23. In the City, the numbers had always been low.
- b) Under current case law, anyone under continuous supervision will be subject to deprivation of liberty protection, including those who are allowed into the community but need to be back at a certain time. Early indications suggest that these clients might fall out of scope of the new legislation.

Following an initial impact assessment, the implementation group do not expect a significant impact on the City. The biggest changes are likely to be in respect of 16-17 year olds, as the deprivation of liberty safeguard only applied at age 18 or above. There was also an expectation that it would be cost neutral, with government funding becoming available for training and development.

- c) Members asked if they could have further training once the new procedures had been published and noted the recent training session around Children's Safeguarding had been very well attended by Sub Committee Members.

RESOLVED, that – the report be noted.

11. WORKING TOGETHER TO IMPROVE SCHOOL ATTENDANCE

The Sub Committee received a report of the Executive Director, Community and Children's Services, which advised Members of plans to respond to new guidance from the DfE (Published in May 2022) in respect of improving school attendance.

Members noted that the number of home educated children has been fairly static for the past few years, except during the pandemic.

RESOLVED, that – the report be noted.

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

The Sub Committee received a report of the Executive Director, Community and Children's Services in respect of the City of London's Special Education Needs and Disability (SEND) Strategy 2020–24. The report provided an update on progress in implementing the second key outcome; i.e. – to ensure that all children and young people with SEND are well-prepared for a successful transition to adulthood.

Members noted that officers were preparing for the new inspection framework, which would take effect from January 2023. The officer agreed to provide members with information in respect of the number of Education Welfare Officers on SEND support after the meeting – THIS IS DONE.

RESOLVED, that – the report be noted.

13. INDEPENDENT REVIEWING OFFICER (IRO), ANNUAL REPORT FOR 2021-2022

The Sub Committee received a report of the Executive Director, Community and Children's Services, which provided an overview of the Independent Reviewing Service in the City of London, as set out in the Independent Reviewing Officer (IRO) Annual Report for 2021–2022.

RESOLVED, that – the report be noted.

14. **ADULT SOCIAL CARE SAFEGUARDING PERFORMANCE REPORT Q1 2022/23**

The Sub Committee received a report of the Executive Director, Community and Children's Services, which provided an update on safeguarding performance across the Adult Social Care Service. Members noted the additional detail in respect of the Mental Capacity Act, which will be part of the transformation project.

RESOLVED, that – the report be noted.

15. **CHILDREN AND FAMILIES SERVICE PERFORMANCE - MONTH 4 2022/23 (JULY 2022)**

The Sub Committee received a report of the Executive Director, Community and Children's Services, which provided an update on service performance across the Children and Families Service.

Members noted that there are currently 17 cases in early help, 20 children in need, none on child protection plans, 10 looked after children and 59 care leavers. Officers were looking to move data onto a more interactive dashboard and would like to trial this with Members. The Chair welcomed this suggestion as it would be very helpful in terms of strategic planning.

RESOLVED, that – the report be noted.

16. **CHILDREN'S SOCIAL CARE SELF EVALUATION AND SERVICE DEVELOPMENT PLAN**

The Sub Committee received a report of the Executive Director, Community and Children's Services, which presented the self-evaluation for the City of London Corporation's Children and Families Service for 2022. It also set out the Service Development Plan (SDP).

During the discussion on this item, the following points were noted:

- a) Whilst it would not be prudent to train everyone in every aspect of social care, the officer explained that each member of the management team has at least 10 years' experience. Each professional has a lead area; i.e. – unaccompanied minors; gangs etc. and this enables social workers to develop expertise in a particular field. Regular basic training is provided, and an action learning set approach, with safeguarding at the core. For example, if a social worker has a case in court, then it is a learning opportunity for all. Training needs are also picked up as part of the appraisal process and supervisions. Since the 2020 Ofsted Inspection, the team produce a 'child in need tracker', which links to supervision notes. Some concerns raised about supervision had been unfounded but it was being monitored on the service development plan.
- b) The capacity of the management team had increased in line with the number of new social workers, and in response to the growing number of unaccompanied asylum seeking children.

- c) The recruitment and retention policy requires caseloads to be allocated across the service, with resilience built in for leave and sickness cover. Pan London peer work also enables learning from colleagues in other authorities.
- d) A bid submitted last year, seeking funding for short breaks for parents of children with SEND, but this was unsuccessful as the provision in Hackney was deemed to be sufficient. However, the Team strive to go beyond statutory responsibilities and had submitted another bid this year, seeking an additional support worker and a project manager. Pre-paid cards and bank accounts had been introduced to give families more flexibility.

RESOLVED, that – the report be noted.

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

There were no questions.

18. ANY OTHER BUSINESS THE CHAIRMAN CONSIDERS URGENT

There were no items.

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

Items	Paragraphs
21 - 24	1 and 2

20. NHS NORTH EAST LONDON (NEL) (CITY & HACKNEY) CARE EXPERIENCED CHILDREN ANNUAL REPORT 2021-2022

The Sub Committee received a report of the Designated Doctor and Nurse for Looked After Children, City and Hackney. Members noted that the allocated nurse provision had been increased to 1 fte and a recruitment process was underway. However, as the numbers in the City are very small, it can cause a large swing in percentages. Given the increased mental health challenges since the pandemic, there is now a family therapy clinic at Kings College. Members also noted that a ‘Healthy Smiles’ campaign for vulnerable children is underway.

RESOLVED, that – the report be noted.

21. INDEPENDENT REVIEWING OFFICER (IRO), ANNUAL REPORT FOR 2021-2022 - APPENDIX

The Sub Committee received a non-public appendix in respect of agenda item 13.

22. **ADULT SOCIAL CARE SAFEGUARDING PERFORMANCE REPORT Q1 2022/23 - APPENDIX**
The Sub Committee received a non-public appendix in respect of agenda item 14.
23. **CHILDREN AND FAMILIES SERVICE PERFORMANCE - MONTH 4 2022/23 (JULY 2022) - APPENDIX**
The Sub Committee received a non-public appendix in respect of agenda item 15.
24. **CHILDREN'S SOCIAL CARE SELF EVALUATION AND SERVICE DEVELOPMENT PLAN - APPENDIX**
The Sub Committee received a non-public appendix in respect of agenda item 16.
25. **NON-PUBLIC QUESTIONS ON MATTERS RELATING TO THE WORK OF THE SUB-COMMITTEE**
There were no questions
26. **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 closed at 4 pm

Chairman

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