

Minutes of a meeting of the Corporate Parenting Panel held on Wednesday, 19 October 2022 in Committee Room 1 City Hall

Commenced 4.42 pm
Concluded 5.51 pm

Present – Councillors

LABOUR	CONSERVATIVE	LIBERAL DEMOCRAT
Duffy Thirkill Alipoor	Pollard	Knox

NON VOTING CO-OPTED MEMBERS

Claire Smith West Yorkshire Police
Sue Lowndes Bradford Council Assitant Director, Schools

ALSO PRESENT:

Jill Bell Governance Officer, BC Corporate Resources
Jonathan Cooper Head, Virtual School (HT/VS)
Ali Jan Haider Bradford District and Craven Integrated Heath and Care Partnership
Nicky Hale Bradford Council – Interim Head of Service for Children Looked After (iHoS/CLA)
Amandip Johal Bradford Council Interim Assistant Director Safeguarding and Review, Commissioning & Provider Services (iAD/SRCP)
David Johnson Bradford Council Interim Deputy Director, Children’s Social Services (iDD/CSS)
Louise Kay Bradford Council Leaving Care services (LCS)
Dr Catherine Murray Consultant Paediatrician and Designated Doctor for Children Looked After
Helen Osman Helen Osman Governance Services (Clerk)

Apologies: Jude MacDonald West Yorkshire Heath and Care Partnership (WYHCP)

Councillor Duffy in the Chair

33. SUMMARY OF ACTIONS

Action No.	Action	Person	Timing
1	iAD/SRCP to advise the Panel on the date of publication of the savings policy for young people in care.	A Johal	31-10-2022
2	LCS to provide to the Panel the timeline of steps towards completion of the entitlements document for young people in care.	L Kay	31-10-2022
3	Agenda for the 07-12-2022 Panel meeting with young people to include a brief presentation on the Council's response to the request for clearer information on entitlements.	A Johal	31-10-2022
4	Corporate Parenting Strategy to be put to Chair for sign-off in principle and brought to the next formal CPP meeting for ratification.	A Johal	Sign-off: 31-10-2022 Ratification: 08-02-2023
5	iAD/SRCP to feed back to young people on their request for free gym access for those placed outside Bradford via: a) Newsletter; and b) The next Panel meeting with Young People, clearing the response with the Chair in advance.	A Johal	07-12-2022
6	Young people to be asked at their next meeting with the Panel for feedback on the additional activities they would like to promote their physical and emotional health.	A Johal	07-12-2022
7	Panel members and officers to consider how to develop the Panel's relationships with young people in its care.	All	07-12-2022
8	Chair to liaise with iAD/SRCP to identify major issues expected to arise in each Theme and advise the Lead Panel Members accordingly.	Cllr Duffy	18-11-2022
9	Governance Officer to advise on procedure for the appointment of additional Co-opted Panel members.	J Bell	31-10-2022
10	Head/VS to provide details of GB/VS membership to Cllr Pollard and consult Cllr Pollard and Clerk on the date and agenda for the first GB meeting.	J Cooper	Autumn 2 half term

The Chair thanked Jill Bell, who was due to retire on 09 December 2022, for her many years of service to Bradford Council and wished her well for the future.

34. DISCLOSURES OF INTEREST

No disclosures of interest in matters under consideration were made.

35. MINUTES

Questions on minutes

Savings policy

Asked whether the savings policy for young people in had now been finalised, the interim Assistant Director for Safeguarding and Review, Commissioning & Provider Services (iAD/SRCP) said that a few final details remained to be resolved. The Panel asked to be informed of when the policy would be available.

Action: iAD/SRCP

Document setting out entitlements of young people in care

The Panel asked for an update on the production of the revised document on the entitlements of young people in care, including:

whether the Working Group with young people, due to be established in the autumn to oversee the clarity and comprehensibility of the entitlements document, had started work;

progress on supporting young people to prepare a flow chart summarising their entitlements; and

the scope to bring forward completion of the document from the planned date of April 2023, in light of the importance of young people being able to understand their entitlements.

Leaving Care services (LCS) said that the entitlements document had been updated and signed off in May 2022 and was now under review. Young people had been consulted on a paper version of the document in September: their feedback had indicated that they found the document wordy. LCS was updating the document on the website, where it was presented as a flowchart. The Panel made clear that it was essential that Bradford's young people in care should understand their entitlements: their feedback when they met the Panel on 08 June 2022 had made clear that they did not do so. The Panel asked again what scope there was to bring forward the proposed date of completion of the document from April 2023. LCS said that the document was under continual review. The delay to completion was caused by IT issues.

The Panel asked for a timeline for the various elements of the production of the entitlements document so that it could monitor progress.

Action: LCS

Noting that young people had indicated their wish to be involved in development of the flowchart, the Panel asked who was leading on its preparation and sought assurance that the consultation that officers had held with young people in September did not cut across the Panel's original discussion with young people on 08 June 2022. LCS said that the September 2022 consultation had involved the same young people that the Panel had met on 08 June 2022. Officers had showed young people the Coram website and asked whether that was what they

needed: they had said that it was. The link to Coram would therefore be included in the Council's offer.

The Panel agreed that its meeting with young people on 07 December 2022 should include a brief presentation on how the Council had responded to the request for clearer information on entitlements and invite young people to give feedback on whether the response met their needs.

Action: iAD/SRCP

The Panel noted that the first version of the entitlements document had been completed; working groups with young people were ongoing; and officers would present the document to young people at the Panel meeting of 07 December 2022.

Corporate Parenting Strategy

Asked for an update on the re-drafting of the Corporate Parenting Strategy to make it comprehensible to young people, iAD/SRCP said that the document, which followed a "you said ... We will ..." format, had been reviewed with young people to ensure that it was clear to them. The document had been signed off internally and was on its way to the Chair.

Replying to the Panel's observation that the consultation with young people at its meeting on 08 June 2022 had given them little time to consider a long and densely written document, iAD/SRCP said that officers had consulted further with all groups of young people of different ages to ensure that the offer was clear to them.

The Panel agreed that the Chair, in consultation with the Deputy Chair, should sign off the Corporate Parenting Strategy in principle and that the document should be brought to the next formal meeting for ratification.

Action: iAD/SRCP

Gym membership for young people placed outside Bradford District

Asked how officers proposed to respond to the request that young people placed outside Bradford be given the same free gym membership as those placed within the District, Interim Deputy Director, Children's Social Services (iDD/CSS) said that it would be necessary to consider how to finance it and the scope to enter into reciprocal arrangements with other local authorities (LAs). LCS added that, although it was not part of the Bradford Council offer, discretionary grants could be made to young people placed outside Bradford on request.

Asked how this would be fed back to young people, officers said that they would explain openly that every LA was financially challenged and that requests that required additional expenditure were unlikely to be agreed. This feedback would be given at the next Panel meeting with young people on 07 December 2022 and disseminated more widely through the newsletter. The Chair asked that the wording be cleared with her in advance.

Action: iAD/SRCP

Activities to promote better physical and emotional health

Asked how officers proposed to take forward the request for an extended range of activities to promote physical and emotional health, iAD/SRCP said that officers were exploring with young people (a) their awareness of existing activities and (b) their views on what more was needed. *The Panel agreed* that this should be discussed with young people at their meeting with the Panel on 07 December

2022.

Action: iAD/SRCP

Safeguarding restrictions on young people in care going out by themselves

Asked how officers proposed to respond to the request made by young people for a clearer understanding of the reasons for, and scope of, restrictions on their freedom to go out by themselves, iAD/SRCP said that this would be discussed at the November 2022 meeting of the forum for young people in care. Experts from the legal and fostering teams would explain the context and that the restrictions depended on the circumstances and setting rules for each individual young person. The Panel considered that officers also needed to make it clear to young people how they could challenge such restrictions and ensure that they had appropriate representation.

Asked to what extent the safeguarding concerns relating to an individual young person were discussed with that young person by their social worker, iDD/CSS said that children who were being exploited did not necessarily recognise that fact and therefore did not understand or accept the reasons for restrictions. Ongoing conversations were required to help them to understand. Young people needed to know that they could challenge such restrictions through several avenues, including their social worker in the first instance, the Regulation 44 visitor if they lived in a residential facility, an advocate, teacher, foster carer or member of children's home staff: CSS would accept concerns received through any route. The Panel noted that, ultimately, it might not be possible to give a young person unrestricted outside liberty: in that case, the reasons needed to be explained clearly.

Asked how this would be promulgated to young people who did not attend the meeting with the Panel on 07 December 2022, iAD/SRCP said that it would be included in the newsletter. Asked whether this was also made clear to young people as they entered the care system, the Interim Head of Service for Children Looked After (iHoS/CLA) said that, as they entered care, conversations were held with young people about their circumstances and the rules that applied to them. As their circumstances changed, so did their care plans: the skill lay in ensuring that carers, social workers, advocates and other professionals remained up to date with the evolving restrictions.

Requests in general from young people

The Panel noted that it would not always be possible to accede to the requests of young people. This needed to be explained openly at the time of the request to avoid a lengthy bureaucratic process. In some cases, a request made, for example, at a Panel meeting with Young People would have to be refused – with a clear explanation – at the time, minuted, and no further action taken

Panel feedback on activity session with young people at the meeting on 31 August 2022

Panel members said that the activity day had provided an opportunity to interact with young people in a relaxed and informal way and had enabled young people to display leadership. It had highlighted the contrived nature of the Panel's usual interactions with young people, including at its regular meetings with them: the presentations and discussions, while providing useful feedback, did not allow for the development of relationships. Panel members and officers agreed to reflect further on how relationships could be developed more effectively.

Action: All

Resolved -

That the minutes of the meeting held on 31 August 2022 be signed as a correct record.

ACTION: Director of Legal and Governance

36. INSPECTION OF REPORTS AND BACKGROUND PAPERS

There were no appeals submitted by the public to review decisions to restrict documents.

37. NATIONAL IMPLEMENTATION ADVISER FOR CARE LEAVERS VISIT 8 AND 9 SEPTEMBER 2022

The Assistant Director Safeguarding and Review, Commissioning and Provider Services provided feedback on the two- day formal visit by the National Implementation Adviser for Care Leavers which took place on 8 and 9 September 2022.

The Chair said that Cllrs Thirkill and Dunbar had attended a session with the National Implementation Adviser for Care Leavers, who had offered to visit Bradford to review its provision and make recommendations. That visit had taken place on 08 and 09 September 2022 and the Adviser had made recommendation about the governance of corporate parenting, including the deployment of Link Councillors to progress specific areas of work.

The Chair invited iAD/SRCP to give an overview of the recommendations. iAD/SRCP said that the Adviser had met Councillors and officers. He had spoken of strengthening the membership of the Panel. He had acknowledged that Bradford was on a continuing journey of improvement and that the Panel itself was undergoing change, including the adoption of a Link Councillor/Champion approach. He had recommended that the Panel:

- confirm the themes on which it needed to focus to improve the Council's effectiveness as corporate parent;
- consider how to ensure that Council portfolio-holders for the areas covered by those themes establish sub-groups comprising the agencies and decision-makers for those strands of work – this would help to embed the Champion model; and
- review its membership and consider the membership of the theme sub-groups with a view to strengthening relationships with key partners such as the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP).

The Adviser had considered that, together, these recommendations would bring about the necessary whole-Council approach to its role as corporate parent.

The Chair had reviewed the responsibilities of Council portfolio holders and how

they impacted on the Council's role as corporate parenting. She had trawled Good and Outstanding LAs to learn how they organised the governance of corporate parenting. The outcome had been a list of corporate parenting responsibilities within each portfolio. The Panel needed to identify the themes from among these responsibilities. She asked members to consider the themes that would be required and which of them they would each prefer to lead, reporting back to each meeting of the Panel. The following themes and Panel Leads were agreed and would be adapted or refined as necessary in light of experience:

Theme	Panel lead	Initial thoughts
Further Education and skills	Cllr Alipoor	Linking with Cllr I Khan on Skills House. Identification of work opportunities for young people with the Council, helping them to adjust to working structures. Support to obtain apprenticeship positions.
Education (schools)	Cllr Pollard - Chair of Virtual School Governing Body	
Health	Ali Jan Haider - Bradford District & Craven Integrated Health & Care Partnership	In this very broad theme it would be important to focus tightly on the areas that <i>young people themselves</i> considered of most immediate relevance to them. It might be necessary for the Panel Lead to bring in other people to work on different areas within the theme.
Housing	Cllr Thirkill	Liaising with Louise Kay, LCS.
Leisure	Cllr Knox	Including liaison with Head/Virtual School on potential scope to draw on Pupil Premium Plus funding for leisure purposes.
Youth Justice	Claire Smith – WY police	Including: avoiding the criminalisation of young people in care.
Adults and businesses	Cllr Duffy	

The Chair would:

- inform portfolio-holders of the names of the lead Panel Members who would contact them to progress this work; and
- with iAD/SRCP, identify the major issues expected to arise within each theme and advise Lead Panel members accordingly.

Action: Chair

Resolved –

- (1) That the Panel noted the importance of acting in liaison with the appropriate portfolio-holders to ensure that they recognised the importance of resourcing these areas of work. The role of Councillors and officers as corporate parent was a collective one and was apolitical: Panel members needed to emphasise in their work with portfolio-holders and other Council members their cross-party responsibility for going beyond the statutory minimum requirement to provide the best for Bradford’s young people. As a political leadership team, the Panel needed to ensure that tangible action was taken in each of the themes.
- (2) That as work progressed on each theme, the Panel would consider how best to inform young people of the actions that had been taken and the outcomes, and to gain their feedback on the impact.
- (3) That the Panel considered that the representation of partners through its co-opted members should be expanded to include:
 - Housing
 - Department of Work and Pensions
 - Youth Justice
- (4) That the Governance Officer advise on procedure for the appointment of additional Co-opted Panel members.

Acton: All, Governance Officer (4)

38. FUTURE MEETINGS

The Panel agreed as follows:

The meeting on 07 December 2022 would be held with young people at a venue to be determined: the theme would be education.

The agenda for the meeting on 08 February 2023 would include:

The annual report on health

Education

A brief update on the progress of each Theme Lead member

Asked when the first meeting of the Governing Body (GB) for the Virtual School (VS) would be held, Head/VS said that membership of the GB had been agreed and the next step would be to provide

details of the membership to the Chair (Cllr Pollard) and agree with him an initial meeting date in the Autumn 2 half term. The Chair reminded him that the membership of the GB must be approved by the Panel and that the Clerk should be consulted on the agenda and date for the first meeting.

Action: Head of Virtual School

Chair

Note: These minutes are subject to approval as a correct record at the next meeting of the Corporate Parenting Panel.

THESE MINUTES HAVE BEEN PRODUCED, WHEREVER POSSIBLE, ON RECYCLED PAPER