

LONDON BOROUGH OR REDBRIDGE CHILDREN'S TRUST

CORPORATE PARENTING STRATEGY

2013– 2016

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1. Foreword

Children in the care of the Council are and must be the very greatest priority for any local authority and Members, both individually and collectively are privileged to be considered to be the corporate parents of children who are, for whatever reason, unable to remain living with their families or carers. As councillors it is our responsibility to ensure that the children in our care have the very best care, education and support that we are able to provide and that we to continue to offer our help until our young people are able to manage on their own until they are 21 or 25 if in education. Just as any parent would want nothing less than the best for their children so it is for the officers and Members of the Council to make sure that we set our aspirations and hopes for our young people to be everything we would want for our own children and do our very best to help them to achieve their dreams.

Councillor Alan Weinberg Cabinet Member to Children's Services

2. Introduction

Corporate parenting is the term used to describe the duties and responsibilities of a local authority in respect of the children looked after by the authority. Although the management of children's social care services is the responsibility of the London Borough of Redbridge (LBR) Children's Trust, parental responsibility for looked after children is the responsibility of the whole council. In addition the local authority should enrol the support of its partner agencies in helping them to fulfil their obligations in respect of their corporate parenting responsibilities for the children looked after by the council.

In 1998 the secretary of state for health, Frank Dobson, wrote to all local authority councillors reminding them that they were ultimately responsible for the quality of care in their council for children looked after by them. Corporate parenting relates to all children looked after by the authority, wherever they are placed, including young people receiving after care services up to, in some circumstances, 25 years of age

Corporate parenting is about offering at least the same standards of care as would a 'reasonable parent' in respect of the children looked after by the council. The outcomes for children who have been looked after can be poor with the reasons which brought them into care such as abuse, neglect, separation, loss and rejection significantly affecting their subsequent life experiences. As adults; they do less well educationally; they are over represented in the criminal justice system; have poorer health outcomes including an increased risk of suffering from mental health difficulties; have an increased likelihood of becoming homeless and experience economic and relationships difficulties in their own families.

It is important that being looked after responds effectively to this disadvantage.

The thrust of corporate parenting is about improving the life chances of children looked after – protecting their welfare, promoting their wellbeing, enhancing their

lives and helping them reach their full potential. Everyone should have high aspirations for, and expectations of, children who are looked after

A key strand of corporate parenting is that it should be undertaken in consultation with children and young people who should have a say about how services for them are provided on both an individual and collective basis.

In addition to enrolling the support of all chief officers within the local authority and partner agencies such as police, probation, youth justice, connexions, health and schools, the local authority should harness the support and resources of local communities, sport and leisure facilities, business and faith groups

3. Principles underpinning the Corporate Parenting Strategy

The following principles underpin the corporate parenting strategy:-

- To enhance children's' life chances by being looked after
- For everyone in the council and partner agencies to have high aspirations and expectations for looked after children
- To ensure that council policies and decisions do not disadvantage looked after children or be to the detriment of the services intended to improve their life chances
- To ensure that the impact of policies and decisions are considered with regard to how these will affect children looked after
- To ensure that the best interests of children looked after are promoted throughout the council
- To make it the responsibility of all elected members to behave as a 'good parent' to children looked after at a corporate, professional and personal level where appropriate.
- To ensure that all actions and activities undertaken under corporate parenting are carried out in consultation and with the participation of children and young people looked after
- To ensure that through its duties and responsibilities as corporate parent to children looked after the council harnesses the support and resources of local business, community groups, leisure and sport facilities and faith groups
- To recognise and celebrate the achievements of looked after children in all aspect of their lives
- To ensure that placements provide a safe, positive and caring environment which takes into account children's race, gender, culture, religion, sexuality, disability or special needs

4. National and Local Context

National statistics from the Department for Education show that as at 31st March 2012 there were;

- 67,050 looked after children

- 50,260 (75%) looked after children cared for in foster placements
- 3,450 looked after children were adopted

(Department for Education, BIS, and National Statistics for 31st March 2012 released on 25th September 2012)

The comparable (provisional) statistics for Redbridge show that as at 31st March 2013 there were;

- 206 looked after children (217 at the end of March 2012 and 210 at the end of March 2011)
- 167 (81%) looked after children cared for in family settings
- 4 looked after children adopted (5 at the end of March 2012 and 9 at the end of March 2011)

Historically, Redbridge has a low number of looked after children per 10,000 of the population aged 0 - 17 years when compared with the average of statistical neighbours - 29.32 at the end of March 2013 and 32.9 at the end of March 2012 (statistical neighbours - 51.9)

5. Achievements to date and examples of good practice

- Looked after children are offered as priority, places in their preferred schools in the borough
- The mayor holds an annual achievement celebration for looked after children
- The children's trust holds an annual educational achievement award ceremony for looked after children
- All children are given extra tuition according to their need
- Mathematics and English tuition sessions to GCSE standard are held at Station Road for care leavers unable to manage a college setting. Crèche facilities are also available during these sessions for care leavers who are parents
- The staying put scheme enables care leavers to remain with their foster carers after their 18th birthday
- Care leavers are entitled to 'council housing' as a right. This is done with the North East London consortium which results in a real choice of suitable and appropriate accommodation
- Looked after young people who attend university are given a bursary of £2,000 in addition to allowances to cover the extra costs of living as a student
- Looked after young people who attend further education or training are given financial assistance with course fees, travel costs, course related materials and equipment
- There are two children in care councils. A very active one for older children and young people and newly developed one for younger children
- Looked after children have free passes to the borough's leisure centers
- The looked after children's health nurse is co-located with the children looked after away from home social work teams to enhance communication and joint

work

- An annual winter party is held for foster carers to show appreciation for the work they do
- An annual children's Christmas party is held
- A Christmas day celebration is held for care leavers who have nowhere to go on Christmas day

6. The Corporate Parenting Strategy

The aims of the Corporate Parenting Strategy are to improve local understanding of the needs of looked after children and bring about change and improvements in the care system, achieve raised expectations and deliver improved outcomes for looked after children, young people and care leavers.

6.1 Effective Corporate Parenting

Corporate parenting is about meeting well children's basic needs for shelter, comfort, food, education, care, affection and future development. Good corporate parenting is about offering at least the same standard of care that any reasonable parent would want for their own child. This means that looked after children should be ***cared about***, as well as ***cared for*** and that ***all*** aspects of their health, development and wellbeing should be promoted and assured.

6.2 The Corporate Parenting Panel

The corporate parenting panel is made up of a group of councillors, senior officers, partners and representatives from the children in care council who meet together regularly on a quarterly basis. There is an agenda which is informed by a forward plan which is agreed following consultation with looked after children, young people and care leavers. There are minutes of the panel meetings to record discussion and decisions. The corporate parenting panel is responsible for driving significant improvements and developments to ensure that looked after children receive high quality care and services that meet their needs, support their progress and deliver positive outcomes.

Best practice suggests that there are a number of components that need to be in place in order to improve outcomes for looked after children. The corporate parenting panel is tasked with ensuring that the following key components are in place and working effectively:-

- Children's participation - opportunities to engage, consult and receive feedback
- Leadership and governance - accountability, vision, and influence with all key stakeholders
- Management information - access to qualitative and quantitative data about practice and performance, including stakeholder views and complaints
- Scrutiny - ability to identify, challenge and support practice and performance

that leads to service improvements

The objectives of the corporate parenting panel are attached as Appendix 1

6.3 Management information required by the corporate parenting panel to enable robust scrutiny of performance, to inform priorities and determine what action needs to be taken

To inform the work of the corporate parenting board and to enable it to set priorities performance management information is necessary. This information relates to the life chances of children looked after, supported by research and evidence as to where activity can be directed which makes a difference. This focuses on the areas where children looked after historically do not do well and which, if improved, make a difference as to how they will fare as adults. This includes:-.

- Improving their educational achievement, school attendance and attainment,
- Getting a job and living in a good standard of accommodation on becoming a care leaver
- Promoting their health (both physical and emotional),
- Having stable placements
- Supporting offenders to reintegrate into work, education and establish positive relationships
- Mitigating the negative impact of young people who go missing
- Supporting care leavers who are parents to successfully care for their children

Performance management information is attached to this report as an appendix. This will be updated on an annual basis and used to inform future priorities and actions of the corporate parenting board.

6.4 Looked after children and young people and care leavers

Whilst looked after, children and young people are in care, the local authority takes on, or shares, parental responsibility with birth parents. Looked after children need alternative care and accommodation for a variety of different reasons but in most cases there are concerns about the parenting they have received and in many cases this includes situations where children and young people have been abused or neglected. In the case of asylum seeking children and children and young people whose parents have died, there may not be a parent or relative available to care for them. Once children become looked after, they may be placed with family or friends, foster carers or in a children's home. Children may cease to be looked after through returning home, adoption, special guardianship or residence orders that

Corporate parenting responsibilities also extend to care leavers who start to prepare to leave local authority care from the age of 16 years. From 18 to 21 (or 25

if in education) looked after children remain care leavers to whom the local authority holds a number of responsibilities. Care leavers may be placed in semi-independent and supported living accommodation to help them acquire appropriate living skills and prepare them for the transition to independence as a young adult.

6.5 Corporate parents

All councillors assume the role of corporate parent to children looked after by the local authority when they become an elected member. This is a role that all councillors acquire not just those who are interested in, or involved with, children's issues or who are involved with the work of the corporate parenting panel. Councillors have a legal duty to take an interest in the wellbeing and development of looked after children and actively promote their life chances and positive outcomes. In their role as a corporate parent, councillors can be a powerful advocate for looked after children, ensuring that their needs are met and that they receive opportunities to make a success of their lives.

The director of children's services and the lead member hold particular responsibility for looked after children. The director has a professional responsibility for children's services and the lead member holds political responsibility. Together the director and lead member should provide a clear and unambiguous top line of accountability for children's wellbeing. They should have a complementary working relationship and report to the chief executive and council leader who should ensure the needs of all looked after children are reflected across the whole council and local strategic partnership and have a duty to:-

- Take steps to ensure that they know how the council performs on national indicators in respect of the looked after children in their council. Such as through the scrutiny process.
- Champion the rights of looked after children in their electoral wards, through their links in the community and directly and through their other roles for example, as school governors
- Champion the rights of looked after children in their service areas
- Ensure that the allocation of resources is adequate to meet the needs of looked after children

6.6 The corporate parenting role

The corporate parenting role can be demonstrated in a number of different ways, including, but not restricted to;

- Engaging with looked after children to ascertain their views, wishes and feelings and supporting them to have a voice and participate in planning and decision making processes
- Being aspirational and championing the needs of looked after children

- Influencing others to work collaboratively and share responsibility for promoting and meeting the needs of looked after children
- Ensuring provision of high quality care and placements that offer safe, stable and nurturing environments where looked after children can thrive
- Ensuring access to good quality schools, colleges and other educational institutions that provide teaching and learning opportunities to help looked after children achieve their full potential
- Ensuring access to good quality health services that identify needs promptly and offer targeted and specialist treatment to looked after children when necessary
- Acknowledging and celebrating looked after children's achievements
- Understanding the impact of all council decisions on looked after children
- Being knowledgeable about the needs and circumstances of looked after children and being aware how these may change over time
- Ensuring that the quality of service delivery and overall performance is good and that action is taken to address any shortcomings that may occur
- Understanding what the local improvement priorities are and ensuring that action and intervention makes a positive difference and improves outcomes for looked after children

6.7 Legal duties and responsibilities

The Children Act 1989 sets out the local authority's legal duties and responsibilities which underpin service provision for looked after children, young people and care leavers. Although the term corporate parenting is not specifically mentioned in the Children Act 1989 it is a term that has been widely adopted and is included in the recent guidance associated with the Act.

Subsequent legislation, regulations and government advice has extended and strengthened the obligations of local authorities towards looked after children, including:-

- 1998 letter from the Secretary of State for Health, Frank Dobson regarding councilors roles and responsibilities toward looked after children
- Children (Leaving Care) Act 2000 - extended the types of service and upper age limit of young people the local authority are responsible for as a corporate parent
- Subsequent government guidance issued for councilors has reiterated the role that they should play in being an effective corporate parent for looked after children in their care. The "If this were my child" (DfES 2003) guidance posed the benchmark question to develop the necessary mind set for achieving high quality outcomes for looked after children. This established a clear expectation that once a child becomes looked after all councilors and officers of the council need to be concerned about them 'as if they were their own children'.
- Children Act 2004 - contains a statutory requirement for local authorities to promote the educational achievement of looked after children and emphasizes the role of collaborative service agreements to achieve the right

type of service provision

- Children & Young People Act 2008 - reinforced the message that all councils, and particularly elected members, hold responsibility for ensuring good outcomes for looked after children

More recently in April 2011, further statutory guidance was introduced to clarify the local authority's responsibilities for looked after children. The revised statutory guidance is presented as a suite of documents as follows;

- Care Planning, Placement & Care reviews
- Planning Transitions to Adulthood for Care Leavers
- Independent Reviewing Officer (IRO) Handbook
- Sufficiency - securing sufficient accommodation for looked after children
- Short Breaks

7. What makes a difference?

The following are a range of activities and areas which can act as protective factors and can militate against some of the disadvantage which may have been experienced by looked after children. They are also actions undertaken by a good parent to give their children a good start in life. Because of their experiences, some children may need extra support to take advantage of opportunities offered.

7.1 Education

Education is probably the single most influential factor in ensuring that children fare well and are successful as adults. Things which support educational achievement and attainment of looked after children are that they:-

- are offered, as priority, places in the schools that are best for them
- are not excluded from school
- are provided with extra help and tuition, particularly at test and examination times
- are encouraged and supported to go on to further and higher education
- are encouraged and supported to go on to further and higher education

7.2 Placements

Children do best in families, preferably their own but if they are unable to live with their own family then an alternative family is the best option and this may include living with someone within their own extended family, a foster family or under Residence, Special Guardianship or Adoption Orders. If children cannot live in a family setting good quality residential care can be a positive option.

There are a number of ways by which children's placements can be supported, for example by:-

- Harnessing the resources of the borough to advertise for foster and adoptive carers.
- Making available a range of resources to support the recruitment, training and approval of foster and adoptive carers
- Maximising the resources available to enhance children's lives
- Providing accommodation to enable children to return to live with their family or with foster or adoptive carers
- Providing finance, professional support and expertise to extend foster or adoptive carers' homes to enable brothers and sisters to live together or to increase the number of children which a carer can accommodate.

As well as improving children's life chances through stable family settings, such placements are economically advantageous to the council compared to the use of residential care.

7.3 Interests and talents

Having an interest or a talent is a very significant factor in improving children's life chances and hence when a child has an interest or a talent whatever this is it should be nurtured and developed improving self-esteem and achievement which often result in much better outcomes in adult life.

Supporting children's interests and talents can be achieved in the following ways, by:-

- Identifying a mentor within the council who can coach, encourage and develop these skills and talents
- Making available resources to purchase any special equipment, clothing or materials to enable the child to participate on an equal footing with other children

7.4 Health

Improving children's health and wellbeing is not just about medical, dental checks and eye tests – important though these are - it is about those caring for them being concerned and alert to children's wellbeing both physical and emotional and responding in a timely and appropriately manner.

7.5 Jobs, apprenticeships and work experience

The LBR and its partner agencies are major employers in the borough and in respect of looked after children they are the 'family businesses'.

As 'family businesses' the following opportunities could be made available to looked after young people in when they leave school:-

- Work experience opportunities particularly in preparation for higher or further education
- Priority access to apprenticeships within the council
- Priority access to employment with the LBR or its partner agencies
- Making available LBR employees to help prepare/equip young people for world of work, higher or further education

Employees could offer support and guidance to looked after young people and care leavers in respect of work experience, jobs, apprenticeships, further and higher education on both a professional and personal capacity, if appropriate

7.6 Offending

Young people's lives can be blighted by offending behaviour. It affects their ability to obtain and keep jobs, maintain stable relationships and somewhere decent to live. Diverting young people from and reducing offending is critical to their life experiences as adults.

The Youth Offending Service has a key role in working with looked after children who are looked after

7.7 Celebration of achievements

As well as focusing on activities to improve their life chances it is important to recognise and celebrate their achievements and successes of looked after children

8. Links to other plans and strategies

8.1 The children and young people's plan

The London borough of Redbridge children's services published the Children and Young People's plan for 2011-2014, which identifies five overarching strategic priorities for the delivery of universal, targeted and specialist services for children, young people and their families, including looked after children, young people and care leavers. The Corporate Parenting Strategy sits within the overarching Children & Young People's Plan.

8.2 The placement commissioning strategy

This outlines the range of placements required to meet the needs of children looked after by the borough and how these will be commissioned. Placements may be delivered by in-house providers or purchased from private or voluntary sector providers. Placements may be purchased on a 'spot purchase' basis, through contractual relationships, directly or in collaboration with others. Commissioning is the primary mechanism for delivering good outcomes in the

most efficient and effective way. .

8.3 The Sufficiency Strategy

The sufficiency duty is defined as 'sufficient accommodation within a local authority area which meets the needs of children that the local authority are looking after and whose circumstances are such that it would be consistent with their welfare for them to be provided with accommodation that is in the local authority area' (Statutory Guidance on Securing Sufficient Accommodation for Looked After Children. (Department for Children, Schools and Families 2010).

The purpose of the sufficiency strategy is to increase the number of children in the right placement, to improve placement stability and thus improve outcomes for looked after children. This entails undertaking a strategic needs assessment in order to establish information about children, the types of placements required, the range and number of placements available and where there may be a shortfall, how the gap will be bridged.

9. The Child in Care Council

The Child in Care Council (CiCC) in Redbridge comprises two groups, one for older (14 years +) and one for younger (11 - 14 years) looked after children, young people and care leavers. The CiCCs provide an opportunity for looked after children to come together on a fortnightly basis to discuss the issues that really matter to them. The CiCCs have regular opportunities to engage and consult with councillors and senior officers and are able to give a voice to local looked after children. The CiCCs are also represented on the corporate parenting panel. The CiCCs provide a mechanism for open and transparent engagement with looked after children at every level of planning, commissioning, service design and evaluation.

10. The Corporate Parenting Pledge

The "Care Matters" (2006) government initiative required local authorities to develop a corporate parenting pledge for looked after children. The pledge sets out the looked after children's entitlements and specific opportunities and support that is available to them. The CiCCs have a role in developing and regularly reviewing the pledge.

11. Corporate Parenting Priorities

The corporate parenting panel has identified four broad priority areas over the next three years, as follows:-

- Children's consultation and participation
- Councillor induction, training and support
- Practice and performance
- Service developments

12. Areas for Development

- Develop the recently initiated multi-agency corporate parenting officers group(See Appendix 2)
- Identify looked after children's' champions in all services of the council and partner agencies whose role it is to promote looked after children in their organisation
- School leavers to be offered work experience, apprenticeships and/or a job with the council and/or partner agencies
- Harness local business to provide work experience or apprenticeships for care leavers.
- Harness local sports and leisure facilities to promote children's interests and talents. Particularly beneficial can be a local football team or other high profile sports organisations.
- Link care leavers who are going into higher education with an 'interested adult' from the same field who can support them through their course on a personal and professional level.
- Identify children's interests and talents and link them with an interested adult from the LBR and partner agencies who can support/coach/develop their talent.
- Link with community and faith groups to ensure that children's ethnicity and spiritual needs are promoted. Explore also as a good source of foster or adoptive carer recruitment
- Use existing council media and publicity resources to further advertise for and recruit foster and adoptive carers

OBJECTIVES OF THE CORPORATE PARENTING PANEL

The purpose of the panel is to ensure that the whole council and partner agencies act as 'good parents' to all children looked after and care leavers by promoting their life chances and making sure that their welfare and wellbeing are safeguarded.

The corporate parenting panel is responsible for driving significant improvements and developments to ensure that looked after children receive high quality care and services that meet their needs, support their progress and deliver positive outcomes by:-

- Ensuring that the best interests of looked after children are promoted throughout the council and in partner agencies
- Ensuring that placement provide a safe, positive and caring environment which takes into account children's race, gender, culture, religion, sexuality, disability or special needs
- Scrutinizing performance information as it relates to looked after children and is outlined in the corporate parenting strategy
- Ensuring that everyone in the council and partner agencies have high aspirations and expectations of looked after children
- Ensuring that council policies and decisions do not disadvantage looked after children or be to the detriment of services intended to improve their life chances
- Ensuring that children are consulted and their wishes and feelings taken in to account in respect of their own care plans and in the development of services for them
- Celebrating looked after children's achievements
- Setting priorities
- Monitoring the implementation of the corporate parenting action plan

ADDENDUM TO THE CORPORATE PARENTING STRATEGY

LOOKED AFTER CHILDREN PERFORMANCE INFORMATION AND DATA

1st April 2012 to 31st March 2013 (unless otherwise stated)

At the 31st March 2013 there were 206 children looked after

Gender

Female	Male
91	115

Age Breakdown

Under 5	51
6-10 years	40
11-13 years	25
14-16 years	63
Over 17 years	27
Total	206

Legal Status

	Total
Interim care order	23
Full care order	62
Placement order granted	22
On remand, or committed for trial or sentence, and accommodated by LA	1
Under police protection and in local authority accommodation	0
Single period of accommodation under section 20 of the Children Act 1989	98
Total	206

Ethnicity

Ethnic Breakdown of Children in Care – (Short Categories)

White	93
Mixed	36
Asian or Asian British	27
Black or Black British	43
Other Ethnic Groups	7

Placements by Type

Residential	28
Voluntary Homes and Independent Schools (VH & IS)	5
Independent Living	5
Foster Care-	126
Foster Care – family and friends	35
Placed for adoption	5
Placed with Parents	1
Secure Accommodation	1
Total	206

Placements by Provider

Own provision by LA	97
Other LA provision	4
Other public provision	1
Private Provision	99
Voluntary/Third Sector Provision	4
With Parents	1

1) Education:-

- 84 (62%) of children have personal education plans
- No children were excluded from school
- 11 children had fixed term exclusions from school
- 17 children were absent from school during the year
- Achievement in SATS test and GCSEs
 - 29% of children achieved 5+ A-C GCSEs including English and maths
 - 57% of children achieved 5+ A-C GCSEs excluding English and maths
 - 80% of children achieved Key stage in English, maths and science
- 16 (9%) of young people are in higher and further education

- LBR was 5th in the local authority national league tables (2011) in respect of the educational achievements of their looked after children
- 2) Health:-
- 134 (89.9%) of children have health assessments
 - 133 (89.3%) of children have dental checks
 - 135 (90.6%) of children are up to date with immunizations
- 3) Placements: at 31/03/2013
- 179 (81.7%) children placed in family settings.168 out of 206(81.6%) at 31/03/2013
 - 15 (7.2%) children had more than three moves in the year.13 (6.3%) at 31/03/13.
 - 54 out of 71 (75%) children had been in their placement for 2.5 years or more.52 out of 71(73.2%)
 - 6 children placed for adoption(7)
 - 4 (2.5%) children adopted
 - 97 (111)(46.6%)(53.8%) children placed out with the borough of which 43 (20.7%)(20.8%) are placed more than 20 miles from home
- 4) Number of Care Leavers - 144
- 17 out of 24 (71%) are in education, employment or training aged 19
 - 22 out of 24 (92%) are in suitable housing aged 19
 - 27 (19%) are parents
 - 144 (100%) are still in touch with leaving care service
- 5) Offending:-
- 8 (5.4%) looked after children who were convicted, reprimanded or given a final warning for criminal behaviour
 - 3 children had there placement recorded as being a young offenders institution.
 - 14 children remanded to care of the local authority (not all may have been looked after prior to being remanded)
- 6) Unauthorised absences from placement
- There were no looked after children missing on an unauthorised basis from their placement on the 3st March 2013.Three children were missing on an unauthorised basis during the year on 4 occasions.

Development Report

Corporate Parenting Multi-Disciplinary Officers Group

1. Leaving Care

- 1.1 Following the transfer of the Leaving Care Service to Barnardo's as a social work practice pilot, closer working arrangements have been arranged between the leaving care and looked after teams with a personal advisor being allocated at the final child care review.
- 1.2 Further programmes for care leavers have been organised around cooking and household maintenance. A further recommendation from the Corporate Parenting Officers group was to extend this programme to the economic use of heating and the avoidance of fuel poverty
- 1.3 The Foyer project has now introduced a series of initiatives designed to deal with homophobic bullying, experienced by some care leavers and the Children's Trust agreed to provide support to Foyer workers
- 1.4 The Youth Service agreed to participate in additional sessions for care leavers on pathways to education and employment, alcohol misuse and healthy living.
- 1.5 Work Redbridge also agreed to organise seminars for care leavers on training to increase confidence, support creating a CV and exploring opportunities for additional training, employment and volunteering
- 1.6 Workforce development agreed to provide two weeks work experience for young people

2. Children Looked After

- 2.1 The Children's Rights Officer has been undertaking a 6 month pilot project offering support to young people aged 12 and above who are the subject of a child protection conference. In the light of its success it has been agreed to introduce a part time post to focus on this work.
- 2.2 The Youth Service are providing increased opportunities for children looked after by using the Youth Bus to meet with young people in a variety of locations
- 2.3 The Youth Service has also developed a Duke of Edinburgh Award scheme to engage with children in care and it was agreed to provide these services to young people placed out of the borough. The Head of Youth Services will contact the authorities where looked after children are placed in order to ensure that they are able to access local services
- 2.4 The Youth Offending Service is working with the looked after children social work teams to ensure that all necessary Youth Offending Service input is available to young people at risk of offending. This work has been extended to include foster carers

- 2.5 CAMHS Services have now been increased for LAC with a community psychiatric nurse (CPN) allocated to LAC and one to care leavers. There are also CPNs now allocated to the Early Intervention Service and to Disability/SEN Services
- 2.6 A Connexions advisor is now attached to the LAC service and has contacted all LAC who are in year 11. All other LACs are in the process of being contacted by Connexions who are also liaising with foster carers
- 2.7 In addition to the LAC nurse attached to the LAC Service the Clinical Community Group (CCG) is keen for designated nurses and GPs to be more closely involved in the health of children in care. Dr O'Brien, recently appointed as the GP representative has met with senior managers in the Children's Trust to improve the communications with GPs.

7th November 2013

Patrick Power

Managing Director Children's Trust