

<p>Council</p> <p>27 July 2022</p>	 <p>TOWER HAMLETS</p>
<p>Report of: Susannah Beasley-Murray, Director of Supporting Families</p>	<p>Classification: Unrestricted</p>
<p>Corporate Parenting Board Annual Report 2021-22</p>	

Lead Member	Councillor Maium Talukdar, Cabinet Member for Children, Youth Services and Education
Originating Officer(s)	Tracy Stanley, Strategy & Policy Officer, Children and Culture
Wards affected	All wards
Key Decision?	No
Reason for Key Decision	This report has been reviewed as not meeting the Key Decision criteria.
Forward Plan Notice Published	N/A
Strategic Plan Priority / Outcome	[State Priority and/or Outcome from the Strategic Plan 2020-23] Priority 1 - People are aspirational, independent and have equal access to opportunities

Executive Summary

The Corporate Parenting Board Annual Report 2021 to 2022 sets out the purpose of the board, how it functions in Tower Hamlets, what has been achieved over the last year, priorities and planned work for the future.

Recommendations:

Council is recommended to:

1. Note the contents of the Corporate Parenting Board Annual Report 2021-22

1 REASONS FOR THE DECISIONS

- 1.1 Not applicable

2 ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS

2.1 Not applicable

3 DETAILS OF THE REPORT

3.1 The Tower Hamlets Corporate Parenting Board (CPB) demonstrates our continuing commitment to the corporate parenting principles and shows how we deliver on them across many partnerships and services. The board meets on a quarterly basis and has representation from Councillors, young people, foster-carers, partner organisations and senior managers from across the Council.

3.2 Alongside the Children Living in Care Council (CLICC) the board provides a forum where children and young people in the care of the council have direct access to senior leaders and decision makers to share their views and raise and address issues. The board is able to take a strategic approach to the experiences of children looked after and care leavers and work with partners to continually develop and strengthen practice in relation to our corporate parenting responsibilities.

3.3 The CLICC has produced a 'Wish List' of their priorities and this is set out in full in the CPB Annual Report. The list has also been incorporated within the 'What are our priorities?' sections of the annual report and is reflected in details of progress made during the last year and plans for the future.

3.4 The CPB Annual Report 2021-2022 provides information on a wide range of achievements including:

- Development of the Children Living in Care Council (CLICC) with establishment of further forums for specific age groups:
 - CLICC Plus (for 18 to 25 year olds) – A Chair and Deputy Chair have been appointed and recruitment in underway to appoint Leads for independent living, education, employment & training, safety & security, health & wellbeing and finances
 - Teen CLICC (for 13 to 17 year olds) – a group of young people are working with the Haileybury Youth Centre Girls Group to develop the CLICC for this age range. A Chair and Deputy Chair have been appointed and the 'Share my World' consultation gathered feedback on care experiences
 - Junior CLICC (for 8 to 12 year olds) – discussions have taken place with some interested families and this group will continue to be developed in 2022.
- Design and launch of the 'Know Now' APP for Care Experienced Young People with young people involved to ensure it meets their needs.

- Information & advice sessions with young people at Kitcat Terrace – including regular attendance of relevant professionals and partner agencies such as Police, Children and Adolescent Mental Health Services and the Department of Work and Pensions to answer questions and share information.
- Supporting young people through transitions and referrals - Personal Advisors (PAs) are now involved at an earlier stage (by the time a young person is 17 and a half years old) to assist in the transition from cared for to care experienced services.
- Educational attainment Year 11 at GCSE - the Virtual School have achieved the best ever recorded outcomes at GCSE for children in our care. The percentage achieving a Level 4+ pass in English and Maths with 3 other subjects has risen from 19% to 46% (the national average is 14%).
- Blended learning and digital provision - 16,899 devices were distributed to schools in Tower Hamlets, including to children in our care and care experienced young people, via the scheme in place during the pandemic. This is more devices per child than any other authority in the UK.
- Delivery of Initial Health Assessments (IHAs) and responding to the pandemic:
 - Face to face IHAs recommenced in Sep 2020 and any previous virtual IHAs were reviewed to ensure that there was previous/future face to face medical contact to validate the assessment.
 - A literature review was carried out into the pros and cons of virtual health contacts. This supported more reflective discussions about virtual and face to face health assessments. The literature review was followed with a video blog and '7-minute' briefing document to aid learning and support multi-agency partners.
- Children and Adolescent Mental Health Service (CAMHS) in Social Care Team - 83 new referrals to the team for children (or sibling groups) on a Looked After Child (LAC) Plan in 2021. The Tower Hamlets CAMHS in Social Care Team aims to fill the gap where there are needs but local (for young people out of borough) CAMHS are not able to provide support.

3.5 The report also sets out 'next steps' and plans for the future, including:

- Further development and expansion of Children Living in Care Council (CLICC) groups
- Delivery of 'Create your own Podcast' Project to bring to light the day-to-day experiences of care experienced young people
- Increased training and awareness for social workers and personal advisers on services and support available for children

- Service development and establishment of a Learning Hub at Kitcat Terrace providing more face to face support and rolling programmes, including functional Maths & English
- Delivery of Mantra Music Project providing mentoring and music industry opportunities to a group of care experienced young people
- Development of health pathways, guidelines and services to refer to the priorities set out by young people to ensure they are acknowledged and addressed within service changes
- Health steering group to led initiatives such as development of a local health profile and health passports
- Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS), the CLICC and other stakeholders to develop an Emotional Wellbeing Champion Pilot Scheme for care experienced young people.

4 EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1 The Tower Hamlets Corporate Parenting Board (CPB) is committed to delivering on the corporate parenting principles for all children in care and care leavers. This report provides information about how the board does this through its activities, engagement and plans for the future.

5 OTHER STATUTORY IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 This section of the report is used to highlight further specific statutory implications that are either not covered in the main body of the report or are required to be highlighted to ensure decision makers give them proper consideration. Examples of other implications may be:
- Best Value Implications,
 - Consultations,
 - Environmental (including air quality),
 - Risk Management,
 - Crime Reduction,
 - Safeguarding.
 - Data Protection / Privacy Impact Assessment.

- 5.2 There are no other specific statutory implications.

6 COMMENTS OF THE CHIEF FINANCE OFFICER

- 6.1 There are no direct financial implications to this report

7 COMMENTS OF LEGAL SERVICES

- 7.1 Section 1 of the Children and Social Work Act 2017 sets out seven principles which local authorities should follow when carrying out functions in relation to children who are or have been looked after by them. Broadly speaking these principles require local authorities to aim to secure the best possible outcome for these children and young people.

- 7.2 Statutory guidance ‘Applying corporate parenting principles to looked after children and care leavers’ (February 2018) sets out how these principles should be applied.
- 7.3 Although the creation and maintenance of a Corporate Parenting Board is not a statutory requirement, it is suggested as good practice in the guidance. Section 111 of the Local Government Act 1972 permits a local authority to do anything which is calculated to facilitate the discharge of any of its functions. The matters referred to in this report comply with the above legislation and guidance.
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Linked Reports, Appendices and Background Documents

Linked Report

- NONE

Appendices

- Corporate Parenting Board Annual Report 2021-22

Background Documents – Local Authorities (Executive Arrangements)(Access to Information)(England) Regulations 2012

- NONE

Officer contact details for documents:

Tracy Stanley, Strategy & Policy Officer - Children and Culture