


<p>Council</p> <p>17 July 2024</p>	 <p>TOWER HAMLETS</p>
<p>Report of: Steve Reddy, Corporate Director, Children's Services</p>	<p>Classification: Open (Unrestricted)</p>
<p>Corporate Parenting Board Annual Report 2023-24</p>	

Lead Member	Councillor Maium Talukdar, Deputy Mayor and Cabinet Member for Education and Lifelong Learning (Statutory Deputy Mayor)
Originating Officer(s)	Susannah Beasley-Murray, (Divisional Director of Supporting Families)
Wards affected	All
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
Exempt information	N/A
Strategic Plan Priority / Outcome	1. A better deal for children and young people: aspiration, education and skills

Executive Summary

The Corporate Parenting Board Annual Report 2023 to 2024 sets out the purpose of the board, how it functions in Tower Hamlets, what has been achieved over the last year, and how corporate parenting priorities are being taken forward for the council and partners.

Recommendations:

Council is recommended to:

1. Note the contents of the Corporate Parenting Board Annual Report

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 CPB Annual Report 2023-24 provides information on a wide range of achievements including:
- Initiatives and activities to recruit Foster Carers including information sessions and campaigns, networking with schools and engagement with faith leaders (with visits to mosques and churches).
 - Pilot led by Independent Reviewing Officers (IROs) for a cohort of children co-creating their care plans during themed visits before reviews - ensuring their active participation and preparation for these significant meetings.
 - Introduction of IRO report summaries in age-appropriate language - directly engaging children in understanding the critical decisions regarding their lives.
 - Launch of practice guidance around language for professionals to help empower people to write and talk more thoughtfully.
 - Virtual School (VS) Awards celebrating and honouring all our young people with a range of awards that recognised their achievements, from academic excellence to involvement in our enrichment programme. Special guests were award-winning care-experienced speaker Jaz Ampaw-Farr and the rapping maths teacher Christian Foley, alongside an alumnus of the VS.

- Work to improve the understanding and awareness of health assessments amongst children and young people. A TikTok video has been co-produced with them and presented by one of our care experienced young people. Alongside the video a leaflet was produced so that the information can be promoted and shared through several channels including the 'Know Now' App.
- The programme offered to young people on Wednesday evenings at Kitcat Terrace has been refreshed and expanded with a more structured approach with themed activities. The new enhanced offer includes maths and English tutors, representatives from Careers Young WorkPath, health and emotional wellbeing services and housing services.

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 and young people 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.
- 7.4 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

- Appendix 1 – Tower Hamlets Corporate Parenting Board Annual Report 2023/24

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

- NONE.

Officer contact details for documents:

Susannah Beasley-Murray, (Divisional Director of Supporting Families)