

Minutes of last Children & Young People Board meeting

Children & Young People Board

Thursday, 29 September 2022

Hybrid Meeting - 18 Smith Square and Online

Attendance

An attendance list is attached as **Appendix A**

Item	Decisions and actions
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1	Welcome, Apologies and Substitutes, Declarations of Interest
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The Chair welcomed members to the Children and Young People Board meeting.

Cllr Mark Cory declared that he was a part-time teacher and member of NEU.

Apologies were given by Cllr Kam Kaur, Cllr Adam Ellison and Cllr Adrian Hardman with Cllr Ryan Brent, Cllr Leigh Redman and Cllr Robert Flatley in attendance as substitutes.

2	Note of the Previous Meeting
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Members of the Children and Young People Board agreed the minutes of the meeting held on 7 June 2022.

3	Children & Young People Board 2022/23: Terms of Reference, Membership and Appointments to Outside Bodies
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The Chair introduced the item which the terms of reference and membership for the LGA's Children and Young People Board for the 2022/23 meeting cycle.

Following the brief discussion, members made no comments.

Decision:

Members of the Children and Young People Board noted and agreed the report.

4	Board Work Programme and Priorities Report for 2022/23
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The Chair introduced the report which set out proposals for the Children and Young People Board's (CYP) priorities and work programme for 2022/23.

During the discussion, members made the following comments:

- Members raised that there needed to be a crosscutting theme across the Board with budgets being a serious concern. The key significance was how children would be looked after as budgets were completely out of control and had a knock-on effect on other areas. Cooperatives to be looked at with regard to placements.
- One of the biggest challenges was the huge rise in poverty and direct impact on services. Cost of living crisis should be of particular focus and should be an item for the next Board meeting.
- Members suggested that a task and finish group looking at placement sufficiency would be helpful, including considering best practice in this area, particularly as placement budgets were so high. The role of Independent Fostering Agencies should be included in this work.
- Early years should be considered as an education path, the earlier children were placed in an educational setting the better.
- With regard to workforce, raising awareness on the good work social workers do was important to counter the negativity surrounding this area.
- Members suggested encapsulating the cost-of-living crisis in two ways which were the organisational impacts of inflation, energy costs, cost of living and pressures across local government budgets, education and third sector; and the cost of living and poverty and how that impacted individuals.
- Members raised concerns that the increase in Education, Health and Care Plans (EHCPs) was driven by schools looking for funding, which was destructive as children were being labelled unnecessarily and was causing a significant financial challenge for local authorities.
- Members were keen to get a position from the LGA on food and nutrition for children, including free school meals. The holiday activity fund did not cover the full six weeks in the summer holidays and did not include half term holidays.
- Early years was a clear focus from government and it would be worth looking to include people not having access to childcare and the problems it has caused during the pandemic as well as now.
- Members raised concerns about children's health, including the significant cuts to the public health grant in recent years.

The chair concluded that the main theme was the cost of living and to set up a task and finish group around areas raised to share best practice.

Decision:

Members of the Children and Young People Board noted and agreed the report.

Actions:

- Officers to consider a task and finish group looking at placement sufficiency and discuss with lead members.
- Officers to consider the cost-of-living crisis as a key focus and identify a route for the Board to feed into LGA-wide work in this area.

5 Support for unaccompanied asylum-seeking children

The Chair introduced the item which outlined challenges for councils in relation to supporting unaccompanied asylum-seeking children, along with a range of proposals for improvement, including both existing and recommended LGA positions.

Louise Smith, Senior Adviser, informed the Board that changes had been made to the National Transfer Scheme (NTS) to try to ensure children could transfer to their new homes more quickly. The changes expected councils to support more unaccompanied asylum-seeking children with the threshold increasing from 0.07 per cent of a council's child population to 0.1 per cent on 24 August 2022. Councils would receive more funding to support children when they are above the 0.07 per cent threshold.

Louise added that LGA had always been clear that placing children in hotels was unacceptable and needed to be a driver of system change. However, the LGA wanted to continue to work with government to look at the impact and deliverability of the recent announcements on councils, children and Strategic Migration Partnerships.

Members were asked to consider recommendations outlined in the paper.

During the discussion, members made the following comments:

- Members commented that a series of reception and safe care services to replace hotels made more sense to have but the concern was how long they would stay there for. Changing timescales for councils to transfer children from where they had arrived from 10 days to 5 days was difficult for local authorities due to the lack of information for both the local authorities and minors themselves. This was particularly relevant where children were being placed in rural areas with no connection to their culture and therefore needed time to

be prepared for this.

- Members said that there were not enough adequate resources to support children when they became care leavers.
- Members noted that often children were traumatised due to the horrific journeys made to get to the UK and recommended that the LGA lobby the Government for the opening of safe legal routes to the UK and the strengthening of rights around family reunification.
- High quality supported lodging may be a good option for young people.
- Members asked if there was a figure for the number of young people in temporary accommodation such as hotels who were waiting on age assessments. Louise responded that the full age assessment took place when they arrived at the council which sometimes caused challenges for both councils and young people as it was expensive and lengthy.
- Members notes that there was some good practice around the country in ensuring unaccompanied children received the support they needed and suggested a role for the LGA in identifying and sharing this good practice, for example through holding a webinar.

Decision:

Members of the Children and Young People Board noted the report and agreed the recommendations.

Actions:

- Officers to lobby government for the opening of safe legal routes to the UK and strengthening of rights around family reunification.
- Officers to consider a webinar to share best practice.

6 A Vision for Children and Young People

The Chair introduced the report which sought the views of the Children and Young People Board on a potential medium to long-term vision for children and young people, which could be used to guide the LGA's policy work in this area and influence the Government and the manifestos for the next general election.

During the discussion, members made the following comments:

- Members wanted to put in an ask for a more joined up system with local authorities at the forefront. There was fragmentation and lack of connection within the education system and this needed to be a priority.
- Members asked why immigration was mentioned under

the “stable, loving homes and trusted relationships” theme. Louise responded that this referred to some children seeking asylum in England living in hotels and B&Bs.

- Mental health and wellbeing was important to consider as part of the report.
- Members considered how to engage young people in this work. Louise responded that work would be done with national organisations, and it was also important for councils to engage with young people and good practice examples of how councils were doing this were available on the LGA website.
- Members expressed it would be useful to get regions to share best practice and give feedback which would provide further information and capture all local authorities.

Decision:

Members of the Children and Young People Board noted the paper.

7 Schools Workforce Pay

The Chair introduced the report which gave members the opportunity to hear negotiations around pay for school support staff.

The Chair invited Selena Lansley and Harry Honnor, Senior Advisers in the LGA’s Workforce and Negotiations team, to present to the Board.

Selena informed the Board that she would be giving an overview of the National Employers’ Organisation for School Teachers (NEOST) which the LGA were majority members of and the response back to the Government’s consultation. Selena highlighted the following key points:

- Due to changes in government that the two-year deal was not agreed but rather a one-year deal.
- Majority of teachers would receive a 5 percent increase if the proposal was agreed as expected.
- Starting salary for Early Career Teachers outside of London is at £28,000 which is an uplift of 8.9 percent.
- Government have confirmed no additional funding would be given.
- Launched a survey and received 106 responses.
 - 86 percent indicated they would have to make significant adjustments to budgets required.
 - 70 percent indicated that they would need to restructure roles within the school as an impact of the pay award.
 - 40 percent indicated that they estimated an affordability gap of 5 percent and above (taking into account

- inflation costs, energy cost and school support staff pay award).
- 79 percent indicated the pay award would aid in future recruitment.
- 42 percent indicated the pay award would not support better retention.

Harry highlighted the following key points:

- On the 25 July, the National Employers agreed unanimously to make the following one-year (1 April 2022 to 31 March 2023), final offer:
 - With effect from 1 April 2022, an increase of £1,925 on all NJC pay points 1 and above.
 - With effect from 1 April 2022, an increase of 4.04 per cent on all allowances.
 - With effect from 1 April 2023, an increase of one day to all employees' annual leave entitlement.
 - With effect from 1 April 2023, the deletion of pay point 1 from the NJC pay spine.
- The offer would achieve a bottom rate of pay of £10.50 with effect from 1 April 2022 (which equates to a pay increase of 10.50 per cent for employees on pay point 1); everyone on the NJC pay spine would receive a minimum 4.04 per cent pay increase; and the deletion of pay point 1 on 1 April 2023, would increase the bottom rate to £10.60 (providing 10p headroom above the current upper-end forecast for the NLW on that date).
- If the offer was accepted, it would increase the national pay bill by 6.886 per cent (£1.045bn).
- UNISON had announced its members had accepted the offer by 65 percent, Unite's consultation was due to end 14 October and GMB's consultation was due to end 21 October.

Following the discussion members made no comments.

Decision:

Members of the Children and Young People Board noted the paper.

Date of Next Meeting: Thursday, 3 November 2022, 4.00 pm,
NCASC - Manchester

Appendix A -Attendance

Position/Role	Councillor	Authority
Chairman	Cllr Louise Gittins	Cheshire West and Chester Council
Vice-Chairman	Cllr Patricia Bradwell OBE	Lincolnshire County Council
Deputy-chairman	Cllr Lucy Nethsingha	Cambridgeshire County Council

	Cllr Julie Fallon	Conwy County Borough Council
Members	Cllr Roger Gough Cllr Laura Mayes Cllr Antony Mullen Cllr Mark Sutton Cllr Beverley Momenabadi Cllr Fiona Venner Cllr Imran Khan Cllr Mili Patel Cllr Tim Roca Cllr Mark Cory	Kent County Council Wiltshire Council Sunderland City Staffordshire County Council Wolverhampton City Leeds City Council Bradford Metropolitan District Council Brent Council Westminster City Council Colchester Borough Council
Apologies	Cllr Kam Kaur Cllr Adrian Hardman Cllr Adam Ellison	Warwickshire County Council Worcestershire County Council South Tyneside Council