

## Note of last Children & Young People Board meeting

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<b>Title:</b>	Children & Young People Board
<b>Date:</b>	Thursday 26 September 2019
<b>Venue:</b>	Westminster Room, 8th Floor, 18 Smith Square, London, SW1P 3HZ

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### Attendance

An attendance list is attached as [Appendix A](#) to this note

### Item Discussion, decisions and actions

#### 1 Welcome, Apologies and Declarations of Interest

The Chair welcomed members to meeting, and gave a brief introduction and her career history at Leeds City Council, including touching on the improvements made within the Chair's children services. Introductions were given around the table, including the authorities members were representing.

Apologies were noted, which can be found at [Appendix A](#).

The Following declarations were made:

- Deputy Chair, Cllr Mark Cory, declared he is a part-time teacher for 16 – 18 year olds. This was in relation to item four.

#### 2 Review of Statutory Guidance for Local Authorities on Providing Youth Services

Item two was introduced by Paul Scholfield and Katie Harman, from the Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport (DCMS).

Paul and Katie gave an overview of the Government's plans to review the Statutory Guidance for Local Authorities in respect of their duty to provide youth services. The aim of the review is to clarify the Government's expectations around the duty. As part of the review, there is a call for evidence to better understand how the current guidance is being used and what improvements may need to be made to the guidance. The review will not be considering any changes to the statutory duty itself.

Paul and Katie's presentation gave an overview of their plans for the eight week consultation, due to be released in October, and sought input from Board members on what the revised consultation should include. Their presentation included details around:

- The review's remit: this work does not include looked after young people, young people within the youth justice system, troubled families, or young people with SEND.
- The work was inherited from the Department of Education, and forms part of the 2010 Education Act. Paul reminded members that this agenda hasn't been reviewed for nine years.

21 November 2019

- Funding arrangements for local government and how this has declined substantially in recent years.
- The role of the local government sector and its development away from directly providing these services.
- The different models of funding and service providers.
- The youth investment fund; DCMS is currently in discussion with the Treasury, which has given a 'green light' for investment in major new developments for front line services and infrastructure.

In the discussion that followed, members made the following points:

A significant part of the discussion focused around funding, mainly: the need to recruit and retain quality and well-qualified staff, including investment in wages; balancing this with the investment in infrastructure; and the need to ensure funding across the country is fair and sustainable.

Members questioned if this call for evidence will be used to discuss investment opportunities with the Treasury. Paul confirmed it would.

Concerns were raised over looked after young people, and the most vulnerable within areas not being included in this work. Paul responded that whilst this work is not aimed directly at this vulnerable group of young people, his team continue to jointly work with other government departments to produce a coherent, quality offer for local areas.

Members agreed that recreational activities and skills are vital for young people's development; however, members raised concerns that was no mention to safeguarding issues and questioned how this consultation will address the knife crime epidemic. Paul responded that local police and crime commissioner safeguarding frameworks will be adopted, and stated that this funding will aim to dramatically reduce serious youth crime.

Members also mentioned the need for digital components, given the important part the digital and creative plays a part in young people's lives, and if the consultation will engage young people. Paul responded that digital and creative will form a large part of the consultation's agenda, and that the work aims to engage young people through voluntary and statutory, front-line organisations. This led onto a discussion regarding the need to link up private, statutory and third sector organisations and the importance in ensuring all three sectors are consulted. Paul agreed with this.

Members discussed the LGA's Bright Future Campaign, and agreed that much of this can form a basis of the response to the consultation. Members also urged Paul and Katie to use Bright Futures as a platform when formulating the consultation.

The Chair thanked Paul and Katy for their time, and stated the Board will be keeping a close focus on the DCMS' work in this area.

### **Decisions**

1. Members provided feedback to DCMS colleagues on the content of the revised statutory guidance.
2. Members provided feedback to officers to shape the LGA's response to the review.

### **3 Adoption and Special Guardianship Leadership Board**

Andrew Christie CBE introduced item three. His introductions focused on the Adoption and Special Guardianship Leadership Board (ASGLB), which provides leadership to the adoption and special guardianship (SG) system in England and to drive improvements in performance.

As Chair of the Board, Andrew provided an update to members on the Board's current work and priorities, and to receive feedback on these from board members. This included:

- The focus and drive on adoption under the adoption reform grant. Andrew's aim is to broaden this agenda to include SG's, as they share the same issues and values. Andrew reminded members that under an adoption order a birth parents rights is extinguished as soon as that order comes into effect. Under a SG order, their rights are not extinguished.
- Slide two of Andrew's presentation focused on the blueprint for adoption and SG and mentioned that a councils statutory duty doesn't end after these orders are made. This included an update on care leavers and children with disabilities.
- Slide three focused on the increase of looked after children, however, adoption orders largely remain at the same number.
- An update on the recruitment of adopters, and the differences county and city authorities.
- Key partners in this work – including the NHS, CAMHS, and the education sector.

In the discussion that followed, members made the following points:

Members discussed the need to ensure councils make a 'whole life commitment' for every looked after child in foster care, under adoption orders and under SGO's. Members also agreed how vital SGO's are.

Members spoke at length about the difference between adoption and SG's, and their plans and structures. The overall consensus was that whilst adoption arrangements are extremely well structured, SGO's are not.

Concerns were raised around the number orders that are being made by the Courts, which local government do not agree with, as well as the costs of private adoption agencies and their adequacy.

Discussions were held between members and Andrew over the data featured in his presentation, how these were gathered and the rationale behind trends that were presented. .

#### **Decision**

1. The Board provided feedback to the ASGLB from their own authorities.

### **4 Youth Participation in Education, Training and Employment**

Bushra Jamil, Adviser, introduced item four. Bushra commented that the paper provides a brief context on youth participation policy and provision. It sets out the core areas of focus for this policy: careers advice and guidance, technical education (T levels) and NEETs. A

draft policy position for lobbying, along with a summary action plan on how this piece of policy work will be developed. This work forms part of our wider Work Local ambition.

The youth participation policy work will be jointly developed by this Board, People and Places, and City Regions Boards to ensure read-across. Bushra commented that the City Regions and People and Places Board are holding roundtables for the devolution agenda, and requested member volunteers from the CYP Board,

In the discussion that followed, members made the following points:

Member welcomed this work, but stated that introducing skills at a much younger age should be considered, in order for appropriate time for young people to develop the skills they wish too – and leaving enough time for them to change their mind. Members agreed that child and young people's aspirations should be at the forefront of this work.

Members mentioned the LGA's Bright Futures campaign again, and agreed that this work should also be incorporated into the campaign in order to lobby government with a more integrated campaign.

Members discussed NEET services, which have been heavily impacted by government cuts.

Members expressed their support for apprenticeships around the table, and agreed that wording and terminology and further advertisement for apprenticeships need refreshing. Members also agreed that apprenticeships need to be meaningful, and not just a tick-box exercise or free labour for an organisation to undertake. Members also discussed the need to equalise vocational and academic pathways.

Deputy Chair Cllr Mark Cory, and Cllr Imran Khan, volunteered to attend the skills roundtable.

### **Decisions**

1. Members agreed the policy position and provided comments on its scope and contents (**paras 21-38**) to officers.
2. Members agreed that the policy, action plan and next steps are moving in the right direction (**paras 39-45**).

## **5 Membership and Terms of Reference for 2019/20**

Benn Cain, Member Services Officer, introduced item five. His update included an outline of the terms of reference and membership for the Board for the 2019/20 meeting cycle, as well as the outside bodies to which the Board is asked appoint for.

In the discussion that followed, members made the following points:

- Deputy Chairs Cllr Mark Cory and Cllr Julie Fallon requested to swap their nominations to the advised outside bodies, following discussions with the political group offices.

### **Decisions**

1. Members formally noted the membership of the Board for 2019/20 at **Appendix A**; and
2. Members agreed the appointments to Outside Bodies for 2019/20 at **Appendix B**.  
The final nomination list is as follows:
  - a. Children's Improvement Board – Chair, Cllr Judith Blake.
  - b. Adoption and Special Guardianship Leadership Board – Cllr Susie Charles.
  - c. National Youth Agency – Deputy Chair, Cllr Mark Cory.
  - d. LGA's Unaccompanied Asylum Seeking Children – Deputy Chair, Cllr Julie Fallon.
3. Members agreed the Board's Terms of Reference for 2019/20 at **Appendix C**; and
4. Members formally noted the list of Board dates for 2019/20 at **Appendix D**.

## **6 Board Work Programme and Priorities Report for the 2019/20 meeting cycle**

Item six was introduced by Ian Keating, Principal Policy Adviser. The paper sets out proposals for the Children and Young People Board's (CYP) priorities and work programme for 2019/20. Ian stated that following commented made by members, officers will develop a work programme to deliver these priorities.

In the discussion that followed, members made the following points:

Members mentioned the LGA's Bright Futures campaign, and mentioned the refresh to be republished in the upcoming NCAS conference. They agreed that given its successes, it is vital the LGA still use it as a government lobbying tool.

Members also requested an update paper to give new members a chance to see what Board activity has been undertaken so far.

Members discussed paragraph eight and nine in the report and the fragmentation in the education system.

Members discussion featured around potential vulnerable children who are being home schooled, or children that drop out of education. Members also discussed the relationship with regional schools commissioners and the sector.

Member discussed child poverty and the importance of picking this work up within the Board's work programme.

Other areas of interest included contextual safeguarding (such as county lines (which falls under the LGA's Safer & Stronger Communities Board – SSCB – remit)), and the whole SEND system (not just the high-needs funding). Members argued for more joint-up working and updates from other linked Boards such as SSCB and CWB.

### **Action**

1. The Bright Futures campaign updated document to be circulated to the Board.

### **Decisions**

1. Cllr Dick Madden was appointed as Member Champion for the LGA's Bright Future

- campaign. This included an update to the Board every six months.
2. Members discussed and agreed to the Board's priorities and work programme for 2019/20.

## **7 Note of last Children & Young People Board meeting**

Members agreed to the note of the last Children & Young People Board meeting, which took place on 13 June 2019.

### **Appendix A - Attendance**

Position/Role	Councillor	Authority
Chairman	Cllr Judith Blake CBE	Leeds City Council
Vice-Chairman	Cllr Teresa Heritage	Hertfordshire County Council
Deputy-chairman	Cllr Mark Cory	Colchester Borough Council
	Cllr Julie Fallon	Conwy County Borough Council
Members	Cllr Susie Charles	Lancashire County Council
	Cllr Matthew Golby	Northamptonshire County Council
	Cllr Roger Gough	Kent County Council
	Cllr Dick Madden	Essex County Council
	Cllr Rachel Eden	Reading Borough Council
	Cllr Sara Rowbotham	Rochdale Metropolitan Borough Council
	Cllr Imran Khan	Bradford Metropolitan District Council
	Cllr Lesley Williams MBE	Gloucestershire County Council
	Cllr Nick Cott	Newcastle upon Tyne City Council
Cllr Judy Jennings	Epping Forest District Council	
Apologies	Cllr Patricia Bradwell OBE	Lincolnshire County Council
	Cllr Laura Mayes	Wiltshire Council
	Cllr James Beckles	Newham London Borough Council
	Cllr Alisa Flemming	London Borough of Croydon
	Dr Phil Norrey	Devon County Council