

CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE PORTFOLIO

Minutes of the meeting held at 2.40 pm on 17 November 2011

Present:

Councillor Ernest Noad

Also Present:

Councillor Robert Evans

23 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

No declarations of interest were received.

24 QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC ATTENDING THE MEETING

No questions were received.

25 MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 20 DECEMBER 2010

RESOLVED that the minutes of the Special CYP Portfolio Holder meeting held on 20th December 2010 be signed.

26 FOSTER PARENTS ALLOWANCES Report DCYP11123

On the 11 October 2011, Members of the Executive Working Party: Safeguarding and Corporate Parenting considered a report outlining an Officer review of foster carer allowances which identified a number of issues and options in relation to current and future payments to foster carers in the Borough. In considering the report, Members asked for further detailed work to be undertaken on two of the options, and the revised report on Foster Carer Allowances was presented to the Members of the Executive Working Party on the 14 November 2011.

Given the timescale required for effective consultation with all key stakeholders, a special meeting of the Children and Young People Portfolio Holder was convened to consider this report, and the release of the proposals for consultation.

In considering the report, the Portfolio Holder commented that the proposals had received full scrutiny at the meeting of the Executive Working Party for Child Safeguarding and Corporate Parenting and Members of the Working Party had supported the proposals outlined in the report.

The Director CYP reported comments from Mr Brian James, the Looked After Children Representative on the Children and Young People PDS Committee, which had been received by email:

“Apologies that I can't be there today however I would offer my support to both items. In relation to Item 4 - it is positive to read 5.15, 5.18 and 5.21 -5.31- my only points are: 5.18 - 2nd sentence - the word 'not' seems out of place? My second point is with ref to paragraphs 5.26-5.31 - re. DLA - I feel that this is a slight distraction from the need to recognise the shortfall of foster carers for complex children - the DLA is a payment that the child would get anywhere it doesn't enhance the allowance recognising the increased attention required.”

Officers clarified that the second line of paragraph 5.18 needed to be amended to read “...*the enhanced fee does **no** more than maintain the status quo of their current payments.*”

Councillor Robert Evans expressed some concerns that the enhanced fee would not address the issue of additional remuneration for foster carers of disabled children. In response, the Portfolio Holder reported that the Child Safeguarding and Corporate Parenting Working Group had requested that the proposals be released for consultation to enable those foster carers affected to comment and respond to the proposals.

RESOLVED that the recommended option for the policy and payment strategy – Option 2 – be endorsed and that formal consultation with London Borough of Bromley foster carers be progressed over a period of six weeks.

27 BROMLEY SHORT BREAK SERVICE STATEMENT 2011 Report DCYP11122

As from 1 April 2011, new Statutory Short Break Regulations provided further detail on how Local Authorities must perform their duty within the Children Act 1989 to provide, as part of the range of services they provided for families, breaks from caring for carers of disabled children; the purpose of short breaks being to support them to continue to care for their children at home and to allow them to do so more effectively. Within these Regulations was a requirement to produce and publish an annual Short Breaks Services Statement, the first of which must be published by 1 October 2011, or as soon as possible thereafter.

Following consideration by Bromley's Executive Working Party: Special Educational Needs and Disabilities, a draft statement was prepared to fulfil the requirements of Department for Education. The Portfolio Holder considered a report seeking the final approval to the statement following consultation with all key partner agencies.

The Director CYP reported comments which had been received by Mr Brian James, Co-opted representative for Looked After Children on the CYP PDS Committee, which had been received by email:

“Item 5 - thank you for being so ahead of other authorities on short breaks - excellent statement of what actually happens in LBB!”

The Portfolio Holder reported that he felt that this was a positive step forward.

RESOLVED that the Short Breaks Services statement be approved and published by the London Borough of Bromley in line with the required Statutory Duty.

28 LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 1972 AS AMENDED BY THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT (ACCESS TO INFORMATION) (VARIATION ORDER 2006, AND THE FREEDOM OF INFORMATION ACT 2000.

RESOLVED that the Press and public be excluded during consideration of the items of business listed below as it is likely in view of the nature of the business to be transacted or the nature of the proceedings that if members of the Press and public were present there would be disclosure to them of exempt information.

29 EXEMPT MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 20 DECEMBER 2010

RESOLVED that the exempt minutes of the meeting held on 20th December 2010 be signed.

The Meeting ended at 2.45 pm

Chairman