

Minutes of the Children and Young People's Overview and Scrutiny Board

18 August 2021

-: Present :-

Councillor Bye (Chairman)

Councillors Barnby, Douglas-Dunbar, Loxton and Howgate

Co-opted Member

Laura Colman, Primary Parent Governor Representative

Non-voting Co-opted Member

Brent Davison, Devon and Cornwall Police

(Also in attendance: Councillors Steve Darling)

14. Apologies

It was reported that, in accordance with the wishes of the Liberal Democrat Group, the membership of the Board had been amended to include Councillor Howgate instead of Councillor Mandy Darling. Apologies for absence were also received Tatiana Wilson (Co-opted Member) and Mike Cook and Jo Morrell (non-voting Co-opted Members). Councillor Steve Darling represented Councillor Law as Cabinet Member.

15. Minutes

The Minutes of the meeting of the Board held on 27 July 2021 were confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

16. Corporate Parenting Strategy

Further to the meeting of the Board held on 27 July 2021 (Minute 10/7/21 refers), Members considered the final draft Corporate Parenting Strategy due to be presented to the Cabinet on 24 August 2021. The Strategy had been updated in light of consultation responses received from the Corporate Parenting Board and Foster Carer Forum. Members noted the main changes to the document since their original consideration and fully supported the proposed tone and content of the Strategy with a partnership approach to achieve the best for our cared for and care experienced young people.

The Director of Children's Services, Nancy Meehan, and the Leader of the Council, Councillor Steve Darling, also provided an update on the work of the Strategic Partnership Child Friendly Sub-Group and the four sub-groups which would be looking at actions to help the Council, local businesses, community, voluntary and statutory agencies work together to make Torbay a Child Friendly place to live, work and play.

Resolved (unanimously):

That the Cabinet be recommended:

1. to approve the Corporate Parenting Strategy;
2. to recommend to Full Council that the Corporate Parenting Strategy become a Policy Framework document; and
3. that following engagement with children and young people a further updated Corporate Parenting Strategy be prepared for consideration by Council.

17. Exploitation Update

Katie Buckley, Exploitation Team Manager outlined the submitted presentation which provided an update in respect of criminal and sexual exploitation of children and young people in Torbay, along with the support and action being taken to address this. Members were provided with examples of some of the individuals and groups impacted and how the multi-agency teams worked together to identify and support those affected by exploitation, working with the individuals and their families.

Members noted that there were currently 133 people who were receiving support through the Exploitation Team and raised concern that there may be more individuals who were victims of exploitation who were not known to the Council. It was acknowledged that historically the Council had not known or been able to accurately record details of those who were being exploited but work carried out by the Team over the past 18 months had led to improved systems and working practices being put in place to enable more accurate information to be recorded and acted upon. A new IT system was due to be implemented in November 2021 as part of the new Children's Services Liquid Logic software which would also improve the live access and analysing of information to better meet the needs of these individuals and by the most appropriate agencies.

The Board acknowledged the improvements in the recording of individuals but were concerned about continued support once they turned 18 years old as, unless they were a looked after or care experienced young person, they ceased to be the responsibility of Children's Services and moved to Adult Services.

The Leader of the Council, Councillor Steve Darling, commended recent training on exploitation software and report writing, which he and Councillor Law attended

and encouraged this to be delivered wider to partner organisations to help them understand the impact of the language used when referring to young people.

Resolved (unanimously):

1. the Board to receive six monthly updates exploitation to include:
 - a. reporting outcomes and challenges arising from the work of the Exploitation Team and multi-agency partnership; and
 - b. hidden impacts of Covid-19 and what action has been taken to address this; and
2. the Democratic Services Team Leader to send a link to all Members to 'It was Hard to Escape' – [The Child Safeguarding Practice Review Panel - It was hard to escape - report \(publishing.service.gov.uk\)](https://publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/944116/it-was-hard-to-escape-report.pdf).

Chairman