



Corporate Parenting Meeting

28th March 2022

MINUTES*

Corporate Parenting 28th March 2022 15:30-17:30

ATTENDEES

Minister for Children and Education, Chair
Assistant Minister for Children and Education and Health and Social Services and Representative for the Comité des Connétables – apologies
Minister for Health & Social Services
Minister for Home Affairs
Minister for Housing
Care Ambassadors
Director of Safeguarding and Care
Group Director of Integrated Services and Commissioning
Independent Reviewing Officer Team Manager
Mentor and Participation Co-ordinator
Chief Executive Officer of Government of Jersey
Chief Executive Officer of Jersey Cares
Chief Executive of Brightly
Head of Virtual School
Acting Director General Justice and Home Affairs
Director General Health and Community Services
Head of Policy - Strategic Policy, Planning and Performance
Head of Office, Children, Young People, Education and Skills
Minute Taker, Research and Administration Officer

1. Welcome, Apologies and Introduction

1.1. The Minister for Children and Education welcomed everyone to the Board, noting that the focus was on discussing what corporate parenting was and who has the responsibility. He welcomed the Care Ambassadors, who would join in the discussion.

1.2. He noted the following apologies:

Assistant Minister for Children and Education
Interim Director General of Children, Young People, Education and Skills
Children's Commissioner
Director General Customer and Local Services
Director General Infrastructure, Housing and Environment
Private Secretary - Minister for Children and Education

2. Previous Minutes and Actions Clarifications

2.1. The Minutes of the previous meeting held on 24th January 2022 were approved subject to the following comments.

2.2. The Chief Executive of Brightly, who was unable to attend the last meeting, hoped to clarify the point regarding the Greffe being contacted to induct new politicians. He wished to know who was going to conduct the induction and when it would be completed. The Minister for Children and Education confirmed that the Greffe went



out to various departments to discuss items to be included in the induction. The Director of Safeguarding and Care confirmed that he would speak to the Greffe in advance of the next election to table corporate parenting as an important induction item for new members. The Minister for Home Affairs agreed to speak to the Privileges and Procedures Committee to check that Corporate Parenting was on the induction plan for new States Members. The Chief Executive Officer of the Government suggested that the Director of Safeguarding and Care liaise with SPPP regarding what to include in the training for new States Members. She suggested that the induction might take place over a longer period of up to six months. The Care Ambassadors enquired about the Greffe and the Minister for Children and Education explained the role of the States Greffe for the efficient running of the States Assembly. The Group Director of Integrated Services and Commissioning highlighted that at the time of the last election they had not been as far along the journey of establishing the Corporate Parenting Board following the Care Inquiry. She noted that Board was now in a very different place. The Chief Executive of Brightly enquired about possible training with the Jersey Care Commission and Jersey Cares, which the Care Ambassadors might be involved with. The Independent Reviewing Officer Team Manager noted that one of the points of the workshop was to discuss the vision and priorities moving forward.

- 2.3. The Chief Executive Officer of Jersey Cares apologised for attending the meeting virtually. Her point was regarding the actions. She attended the meeting in September and put in some amendment in as timely a manner as she could, with just a few days available. One of those amendments related to an action. It was the final action of the meeting and it was to identify and address the housing crisis for children on the edge of care, children in care, and care leavers. The amendment didn't appear in the minutes. She raised that with the Interim Director General who asked that she raise it in this meeting for a point of clarification. She suggested to put in mitigations, so such an error didn't happen again and that might be a simple step, such as to read the actions at the end of each meeting and have those agreed by all present and also to have the minutes available in a timely enough manner to allow for meaningful amendments and for the amendments process to be clear and transparent. The Minister for Children and Education confirmed that it is always good to go through the actions. The Minister noted that the Board had struggled with administrative support and noted this had now been stabilised.
- 2.4. The Minister for Housing noted that the question about the induction is pertinent. It was important to start thinking about the induction due to the tightened schedule of States Sittings occurring after the election, meaning that there will be less time for the inductions that used to take place in the two weeks after the election. It was important that new States Members were aware of their role in terms of the protection of children, especially those in the care of the Minister and, of course, the Corporate Parenting Board and its work. He felt more should have taken place to brief States Members regarding corporate parenting. He stated that the induction should be for all States Members not just new States Members. He suggested that, due to an overload of information in the initial weeks after the election, it was best to complete the corporate training session for Members in September. He suggested backing up the training with some videos or visual aids. The Minister for Children confirmed that corporate parenting was on the induction list for new States Members.
- 2.5. The Chief Executive of Brightly mentioned the Government Corporate Parenting Lead and asked for an example where that model had been implemented successfully. He

expressed concern that the model was too complicated and time consuming. The Minister for Children and Education confirmed that it was to ensure that every department had a Lead to ensure that corporate parenting was being considered. The Director of Safeguard and Care gave the example of the Corporate Parenting Lead for CLS, who tracked the progress of the care leavers offer. At the CLS Senior Leadership Team Meeting there is an agenda item on corporate parenting. There is an information sharing protocol with CLS, which provides lists of young people from the age of 16 who have been in the care of the Minister, for Back to Work Programmes and housing needs. This allowed for forward planning and the tracking of progress regarding the care leavers offer. Corporate Parenting had also been included as a key part of the business planning cycle for each department. The Corporate Parenting Lead in each department would make sure that each business plan had a specific section on corporate parenting. This would inform the corporate parenting strategy on an annual basis and from an auditing perspective allow each department to be held to account. This structure needed to be embedded. The Chief Executive of Brightly still raised concerns about the implementation of this. The Director of Safeguarding and Care noted that the Chief Executive Officer of the Government of Jersey had been invited as a member of the Corporate Parenting Board to make sure that each Government department was held to account for its corporate parenting priorities and objectives. The Chief Executive Officer of the Government took note of concerns raised about how this model was applied in practice.

3. Visioning and Priorities Workshop

- 3.1. The workshop panel introduced themselves, including the Director of Safeguarding and Care, the Independent Reviewing Officer Team Manager, the Mentor and Participation Co-ordinator and also two Care Ambassadors. The workshop was to think about progress and also vision for the future. The workshop would explore consideration of what the corporate parenting strategy was and what it meant to individual members of the Board. The workshop would help everyone feel an ownership of the agenda and fully engaged. It was important that the right people were in the room for the Board meetings to gain traction and the right support. The Board had not met as frequently during Covid-19 and there had also been three changes in the Minister for Children and Education. The workshop was to prepare the Corporate Parenting Board for the new Assembly, so that it was in the strongest place possible and starting with a really strong introduction for new members. The workshop was to provide an introduction and review of the entitlement offer for our children and young people, a review of the work Scotland had done around corporate parenting and discussion activities.
- 3.2. The Director of Safeguarding and Care highlighted two documents, the Guide for Young People and Children in Care and the Support Entitlement for Children in Care. These were the current published positions as related to corporate parenting functions. He highlighted that these were the entry level positions and a minimum to build upon. These documents were a starting place. The priorities of the entitlement for children in care were health and wellbeing, education and training, finance, and relationships. He recognised that children in care often achieved less educational outcomes than their peers, so it was important that from an early age the right support was in place. The focus was making the homes children lived in as good as possible. The priorities for young people leaving care also included housing and employment. There were challenges around housing and whilst care leavers were in the highest



priority band, this was a shared band with other people with a high level of housing need. He noted that there were currently three care leavers in bed and breakfast accommodation and there was a challenge having the right housing available. The Government was also the largest employer in the island, and this could be made to work for the children the Government was parents to. The Director of Safeguarding and Care also highlighted the importance of good relationships and the central role Personal Advisors played. The Personal Advisors were important to help care leavers navigate the complexities of accessing Government services. He noted that often it was internal rules, such as the Financial Manual, which stopped the Government from acting quickly and doing the things you would do as a parent. This was the beginning of the journey. The Care Ambassadors noted that the offer came first and that the young people were invited to give feedback on the offer. There were focus groups held. The Minister for Children and Education highlighted that developing the details beneath the headlines was important. He noted that as the biggest employer the Government should leverage opportunities for care leavers. The Director of Safeguarding and Care noted that, without being outside the equal opportunities policy, the Government could help care leavers with employment and housing.

- 3.3. The Chief Executive Officer of Jersey Cares noted that Jersey Cares was commissioned by the Government to provide advocacy, participation, and accountability. She noted what the organisation heard from care leavers about the offer, as it was launched in February 2020 as a statutory promise, was that it was a promise without a plan. She noted that there was not an implementation plan and that the Prison Governor was not aware of it. She noted that she was really worried that it was just formalizing broken promises, and that it had been a difficult experience, shared by the Personal Advisors, on whether or not to even share the offer. She noted that it is not in print circulation, so they have to share a hyperlink. Notwithstanding the tremendous work of a wide range of professionals, who were frustrated as anyone else.
- 3.4. The Chief Executive of Brightly noted in February 2020, for the first time ever, the Government wrote down what it would provide to those in care and care leavers. Brightly provided financial support to children in care and those leaving care and was still doing so. It is the bank of Mum and Dad, when Mum and Dad aren't around. He noted that he received applications every day by staff within the Government of Jersey for things detailed in the offer. This suggested that it was not embedded internally within the Government. For example, protecting mental wellbeing is of equal importance to maintaining physical wellbeing and all care leavers should be eligible to access a Mental Wellbeing Officer. He noted applications of this nature were received by the charity. This is an example of people who don't know they are eligible or professionals supporting them who do not know they are eligible. The Director of Safeguarding and Care suggested that the services are not yet as strong as they need to be. He acknowledged that this was a work in progress. The Care Ambassadors noted that private waiting lists were quicker, but private care was not in the offer. They felt parents would try and provide private mental health support for their own children. They also highlighted that more liaising needed to be done to make people aware of the offer. It was also important to consult with those who were receiving the offer. The Director of Safeguarding and Care noted the importance of how young people experienced access to the offer, whether they understood what they were entitled to, and could access this with ease.



- 3.5. The Chief Executive Officer of the Government asked which parts of the offer worked well. The Care Ambassadors agreed that the Personal Advisors were brilliant. The Personal Advisors tried to find solutions and liaised with the right agencies to help. They were a service working with care leavers, not at them. The Care Ambassadors would like to see Personal Advisors given to younger people from the age of 14. It was important for consistency. The Minister for Children and Education agreed with the need to work with and engage care leavers. The Personal Advisors provided consistency and loved speaking to the young people. The Director of Safeguarding and Care highlighted the importance of the Personal Advisor relationships. He noted that they were recruiting two more Personal Advisors as one third of those in care were over 16. There were five Personal Advisors at the moment, going up to seven, with further senior line management. The Personal Advisors would work with no more than 14 young people. Sometimes finding solutions for care leavers can take a lot of Officer effort, including Ministerial Decisions. It could be simpler. The Minister for Children and Education questioned about HR rules for prioritising care leavers for Government job roles. The Director of Safeguarding and Care noted the need to put children in the Government's care first for apprentice schemes.
- 3.6. The Minister for Housing highlighted the issue of those going away to university and their access to accommodation on the island when returning during the holidays. The Minister expressed concern about this particular housing scenario for care leavers. The Minister for Children and Education agreed the need to meet with the Chief Executive Officer of the Government on this issue. The Chief Executive Officer of the Government enquired about any necessary legislative changes. The Head of Policy confirmed that he would enquire whether there was enough legislation to cover housing for care leavers. There had been a lot of new legislation brought forward. He would need to explore whether Ministers have the scope in the law to prioritise housing for care leavers. The Minister for Children and Education confirmed that the new law had some strong wording around identified provision and need. The Minister for Health also enquired whether care leavers would be prioritised on health lists. The Director of Safeguarding and Care noted the need to understand whether care leavers could be prioritised on the Housing Gateway or health waiting lists or whether they got benefits whilst away at university. The Head of Policy felt that the new law would not allow care leavers to be prioritised on waiting lists. The Minister for Children and Education also highlighted the issues around time people had been resident in the island and prioritising children.
- 3.7. The Independent Reviewing Officer Team Manager was developing the Children's Social Care Participation Strategy. She had met with 62 people including parents, carers, and young people. She had been inspired by the work in Scotland that was revamping the care services. They had co-created a new strategy and a video with Nicola Sturgeon showing the launch of this strategy was played to the Board. The Independent Review Team Manager circulated some papers based on Scottish care service's work, which focussed on needs, aspirational services, responsibilities, provision of services, working together, monitoring, and evaluating.
- 3.8. The Board was given the task to spend time in small groups talking about what they had heard and read. The Board was asked to consider if they were aware of the entitlements, what they liked about them, and whether anything was missing or needed changing. They were also asked to consider the documents from Scotland. The Board were additionally asked to consider the documents under discussion



through the eyes of the children that they knew and loved. The Mentor and Participation Co-ordinator asked the Board to consider if the offer would be good enough for their own children.

- 3.9. The Chief Executive Officer of the Government noted that, reading the documents as a parent, some of the information didn't feel tailored to individual needs. There was a need to test out the process for access and see how it worked. The Group Director of Integrated Services and Commissioning spoke about not giving up as a parent. Sometimes the professional doesn't have sufficient staying power. The Chief Executive Officer of the Government spoke about missing headings, such as the response when young people were at risk or when they got into trouble. The Interim Director General of Home Affairs agreed that there could be more detail provided about what would happen if something did go wrong. Perhaps some details about justice. The Director of Safeguarding and Care noted that the Attorney General's advice was clear that we seek not to criminalise children in the care of the Minister. There was, however, a need to consider consequential thinking and also the victims. The Mentor and Participation Co-ordinator pointed out that those with complex trauma might struggle with consequential thinking and needed a lot of support and guidance to come to those conclusions. The Head of Office noted that the group spoke about having high ambitions for young people and that parenting does not stop at 25. The Group Director of Integrated Services and Commissioning noted that the Scottish sentencing guidelines for young people required the consideration of the impact of trauma before sentencing. This was hugely significant.
- 3.10. The Chief Executive of Jersey Cares noted the challenge housing availability, the pace at which change can come, and the clarity of what is happening at the moment. She spoke about the National House Project, started in England by two people who headed up Local Authorities and saw some of the issues for homes for care leavers. They provide support in 13, soon to be 20, English Councils and Scottish Local Authorities and over a nine-month period young people are supported to create their home. This could be by building or working on the interior to gain skills. They do it as a community and invite in employers to look at opportunities. The young people can stay in the home as long as they like and the success rate for keeping a home is 96%. There is an offer of support from the Scottish Independent Care Review Chair of pairing Jersey with comparative Scottish Local Authorities with similar challenges; pairing groups with each other in order to have accountability and peer mentoring to improve together. Jersey Cares would be happy to talk about this more.
- 3.11. The Minister for Children and Education stated that every child is different, and everyone has different needs and aspirations. A static list might not be what children and young people need and want. Parents have a good idea of a child's needs. The Personal Advisors struggle to identify who can provide the right help within Government. Relationships, based on understanding, were at the core of the offer and individuals needed to champion the young people to get what they needed. The Chief Executive of Brightly highlighted that this was a universal offering, but everyone had unique needs. Things should not be written down unless they could be delivered. It would raise false expectations and lead to further mistrust, for example housing. There is still a need to be aspirational. The document should be honest and tell young people that they would be put on a waiting list for accommodation, if this is what could be offered. The Independent Reviewing Officer Team Manager agreed with the importance of building up trust and not saying things we could not deliver. The



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Director of Safeguarding and Care noted that the document written for young people, but also that there needed to be some work to highlight ambition versus where we were currently placed. The Head of Policy felt that it was important to know and identify where the blocks were in the documents and address them. As a Board it was important to have difficult conversations and address where the blocks were. Whilst the Personal Advisor relationships were to be celebrated, it was important to know where weaknesses were and address them. The Director of Safeguarding and Care agreed that dealing with these issues was a fundamental task of the Board. The Head of Policy noted that it was a real problem having care leavers living in guest houses. The Minister for Children and Education noted the financial packages put together for Ukrainian refugees and highlighted that, with such a mindset, provision could be put in place for care leavers. The Minister for Health noted the Government has funds and is in the same position as a parent with good financial resources. There was capacity to provide financial assistance. The Group Director of Integrated Services and Commissioning noted that we know that the structural system in Jersey has barriers, with different people with different entitlements. She suggested that the Corporate Parenting Board needed to go back to the Council of Ministers with an annual Report. The Director of Safeguarding and Care noted that Children's Services is buying in private mental health support and also paid for accommodation in the private sector. This had caused problems with the Financial Manual rules. The big macro rules sometimes affected the way in which services could move with agility to support care leavers. The Head of Office suggested some process mapping. The Director of Safeguarding and Care agreed, noting the need to sit with central Government and understand how different departments interfaced with one another.

- 3.12. The Chief Executive Officer of Jersey Cares noted why can't we do what we have done for the Ukrainian families and during Covid-19 creatively. Nine professionals had been taken to Leeds to share their journey from Ofsted poor to Ofsted outstanding in eight years. There were three key things in making that happen: courage, values, and permissions. People making things happen in the system don't have the permission. There are houses somewhere, people are going to sleep on the street or on the sofa if they don't have somewhere to stay. The people finding them places to stay don't have permissions in the system. She noted that the key was really good bureaucracy that enables good lives. The Minister for Children and Education agreed that it was important to have those right permissions embedded in the system. The Interim Director General of Home Affairs noted that the Board had now been meeting more regularly. There was a need to be transparent about the deficits in service delivery with the new Government. She noted that it feels like we are hitting the right point in the cycle for reprioritisation and highlighting this in a Report. The Minister for Children and Education noted that the Public Finance Manual could be changed by the Treasurer. The Director of Safeguarding and Care agreed that it was working out who could change things around with permission. He mentioned that an audit for corporate parenting in Government departments had not happened. He saw that the role of the Corporate Parenting Board was to hold Government to account. He felt that reports should be more regular than annually. The Head of Office enquired about the structures underneath the Board. The Director of Safeguarding and Care outlined the Care Leavers Outcome Board and the Children in Care Partnership Board. He noted that there had been a full self-assessment at the Care Leavers Outcome Board, using an English self-assessment tool, to see how well they were performing against the core areas of what a corporate parent's task is. That Report needed to come to the Corporate Parenting Board. He highlighted the



importance of self-assessment to review progress in core areas. The Director of Safeguarding and Care was the Government Corporate Parenting Lead. Previously there had not been the capacity and capability to push this across Government.

- 3.13. The Mentor and Participation Co-ordinator also highlighted the need to engage with those in care and care leavers. The two priorities they had chosen was education and strength-based language. It was also important to reach young people who did not wish to come to Care Ambassadors. There would be a booklet on strength-based language. The Director of Safeguarding and Care also noted the feelings of young people who go missing. The Mentor and Participation Co-ordinator agreed that children who go missing are angry and upset by the language used and wanted to see their friends. They might not see the risk.
- 3.14. The Minister for Children and Education asked about the next steps. The Independent Reviewing Officer Team Manager asked about the vision for the Board. She asked people to think about what the Board was to achieve, how the Board would achieve this and how the Board would know that they are making a difference. The Care Ambassadors shared two examples of good corporate parenting from both Personal Advisors and Student Finance. Corporate parenting was doing what you want for your own children. The Director of Safeguarding and Care noted that the vision at a simple level should be “Is it good enough for our own children and how do we make it that good?”
- 3.15. The Minister for Children and Education felt that this Corporate Parenting Board had been the best one yet. There had been a change in format away from PowerPoint slides toward focussed discussion and getting the right actions and the right directions. The Head of Office and the Minister for Children and Education needed to meet with the Chief Executive Officer of the Government about the changes to be made. The Care Ambassadors were keen to see real change happen. The Minister for Children and Education made the commitment to see that changes were made outside of the Board and committed to speak to the right people to make the changes. The Care Ambassadors were keen that the Minister held himself to account and actively worked towards making change happen.
- 3.16. The Director of Safeguarding and Care shared an idea from the Group Director of Customer Operations of Customer and Local Services:

He recommended that it would be much better for care leavers if they were not forced to continually negotiate between different Government departments to gain relatively small amounts of funding. It would be useful to set up a central fund with appropriate governance, which would provide funding of up to an agreed amount per year (say £20K) to allow the care leaver to take up education, training or employment with appropriate financial backing (so this could be topping up the maintenance grant provided for a student in the UK or cost of driving lessons and buying a second-hand car to be able to get to work, etc). The fund would act like a generous but responsible parent who was supporting their child to make the best start in adult life.

The Independent Reviewing Officer Team Manager noted it was about everyone knowing their responsibility as corporate parents, not just individuals on the Board. Every department had a role to play, and it was important to get procedures in place in every department. The Minister for Children and Education felt that the Chief



Executive Officer of the Government was key to this and was keen to arrange a meeting with her to discuss Government wide corporate parenting as soon as possible. The Mentor and Participation Co-ordinator felt that the suggestion would make many of the problems of navigating Government departments disappear. It was not the care leavers' problem that they have to go round the houses to get some assistance. The Care Ambassadors expressed that some of the benefit rules had caused them issues. The Chief Executive of Brightly noted that as a parent we provide for the day to day needs of our children to the best of our ability. Parents also try to have extra resources for when children need them, such as their first car. He agreed with a similar model as the suggestion, to allow care leavers to have an extra fund for their needs. The Minister for Children and Education noted that these sums were not massive. The Director of Safeguarding and Care noted that lots of money was spent in Officer salaries managing the bureaucracy and trying to find a work around for a small amount of money. Such a scheme might save Officer time, reduce inefficiencies, and make the system easier. The Independent Reviewing Officer Team Manager noted it was important to change the rules, so these difficulties were not encountered. It should not be an exception; it should be normal practice. The Care Ambassadors were concerned that young people might be going without as there was no one to advocate their needs. The Director of Safeguarding and Care agreed to work up option based on the suggestion from the Group Director of Customer Operations of Customer and Local Services. The Housing Minister agreed that this suggestion was the most tangible suggestion from the meeting.

3.17. The Mentor and Participation Co-ordinator gave the Board a final task for Head, Heart and Hands, to think about take-away messages from the workshop. This was to think about what had been learnt, how it make them feel and what they will do. The Research and Admin Officer agreed to work to compile the final answers of the Board with the Independent Reviewing Officer Team Manager. The Director of Safeguarding and Care especially thanked the Care Ambassadors for their contribution to the meeting.

ACTIONS

The Minister for Home Affairs to speak to the Privileges and Procedures Committee to check that Corporate Parenting was on the induction plan for new States Members.

The Director of Safeguarding and Care to liaise with SPPP regarding training for new States Members and arranging training for all States Members in September.

Everyone to agree the actions at the end of each meeting.

The Research and Admin Officer to send out minutes in advance of future Board meeting.

The Director of Safeguarding & Care and Head of Office to review processes, via process mapping, to test if the entitlement offer was easily accessible.

The Minister for Children and Education and Head of Office to meet with the Chief Executive Officer of the Government to discuss corporate parenting processes across Government.

The Head of Policy to make enquiries regarding the scope of Children's legislation and how it relates to housing, benefits and health priorities.

Corporate Parenting



The Chief Executive Officer of Jersey Cares to provide further information about offer from Scottish Independent Care Review Chair for twinning with Jersey.

The Corporate Parenting Board to provide a Report for Council of Ministers.

The Director of Safeguarding and Care to share with Board Members, the suggestion from the Group Director of Customer Operations of Customer and Local Services, to explore whether we should develop a central care leaver fund.

The Research and Admin Officer to work to compile answers from the Board task with the Independent Reviewing Officer (IRO) Team Manager.

The Director of Safeguarding and Care to bring the Self-Assessment Report from the Care Leavers Outcome Board to the Corporate Parenting Board.

***These minutes remain unapproved due to the change in Government in 2022.**