

Corporate Parenting



**Corporate Parenting Meeting
5th June 2020**

MINUTES

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Friday 5th June 2020

09:00 – 10:30

ATTENDEES

Senator Sam Mézec, Minister for Children and Housing and Culture, Chair

Senator Tracey Vallois, Minister for Education

Deputy Richard Renouf, Minister for Health & Social Services

Connétable Len Norman, Minister for Home Affairs

Connétable Philip Le Sueur

Deputy Robert Ward

Mark Rogers, Director General of CYPES

Mark Owers, Director of Safeguarding

Suzie Philips, Data and Informatics Manager

Sheree Maher, Children's Rights Officer.

Carly Glover, Jersey Cares

Marie Claire Hannigan, Private Secretary to the Minister for Children and Housing *taking minutes*.

1 Welcome and Apologies

1.1 The Minister welcomed everyone participating via Teams due to Covid – 19.

1.2 The Minister acknowledged that's Covid 19 had meant a lengthy period since the last meeting held on the 3rd December 2020.

1.3 The following apologies were noted:

Andrew Heaven, Director Children's Policy

Susan Devlin, Director

Steve Brightly

2 Previous Minutes & Actions

2.1 The Minutes from the previous meeting held on the 3rd of December 2019 were approved.

3 Presentation on Key Data

3.1 Mark Owers introduced Suzie Philips, the data and informatics manager for the Children's Service. Suzie Philips gave a presentation which outlined the department's response to COVID-19. Mark Owers highlighted the importance of using the data to understand children's needs and assist in ensuring resources are there to meet them.

3.2 Suzie Philips confirmed that the number of looked after children has remained stable since October 2019. There are have been 45 Care Orders and 25 article 17 cases (Provision of Accommodation). The total of 35 children are in foster care.

3.3 There are currently 19 children off island which has reduced from 24. No children have been placed off island since October 2018.

3.4 The staffing issues at residential units were discussed, the data shows that 76% of staff are able to work, Heads of Service have been working in the homes to provide additional cover.

3.5 A third of school age children known to the service have been attending school. Majority in Mont a labbe and Le Rocquier. The service is closely monitoring Personal Education Plans (PEPS) to see how the closure of schools has impacted the educational developments.

3.6 Mark Owers confirmed that 8 social workers (agency) have left the service. This required 6 children to have a new social worker. The data showed the improvement in a longer term stability for Looked After Children (LAC) with a reduction in the number of social workers.

3.7 Suzie Philips highlighted the area of concern in the foster carer's capacity. The service has 6 available foster carers. 23 Foster Carers are unavailable to take children mainly due to health issues. The placement available (10) are mainly for younger children, there is 1 that can take a child over 12.

3.8 The data showed that Fieldview and Casa Mia has reached capacity. The service is preparing for a spike in referrals once children return to school and safeguarding concerns are highlighted.

3.9 There are currently 47 Care Leavers, several care leavers have look to the service for assistance during the COVID 19 pandemic. Several LAC have reached the age of 18 over the past few months. Care leavers are contacted by the service dependent of risk register. Those marked at red are contacted at least 3 times a week, Amber are contacted twice a week and are receiving support from adult mental health, and Green are contacted once a fortnight.

- 3.10 Suzie Philips confirmed that 15 Young People are currently seeking work, 18 are unable to seek work due to parenting commitments. Young People in work are currently facing a number of challenges this includes a reduction in hours and the fear of loss of employment.
- 3.11 Mark Owers confirmed that one new young person has moved into Fieldview. 15 are currently in supported accommodation. Wellbeing is key, and the Permanence team are working closely with care leavers.
- 3.12 Carly Glover praised the work of Suzie Philips and thanked her for her dedication in assisting with the coordination of 550 parcel of toys and homemade items for children during the crisis.
- 3.13 Carly had questions arising from data re the number of school age children in care who have access to an electronic device and access to broadband and the response to those children who don't have access to either.
- 3.14 Mark Owers confirmed that children in foster homes that are at school age have access to devices and broadband. The Minister for Education confirmed that Telecoms provided free internet access to children and care leavers during the pandemic but acknowledges that this generous offer did not cover the issue of devices.
- 3.15 The board requested the figures of the take up of the offer from Jersey Telecoms, and those children in care who have access to devices and the internet. The board would also like to know the data surrounding the engagement in learning and training over the COVID 19 period. – Mark Owers and Suzie Philips to action.
- 3.16 The Minister for Education confirmed that 240 devices have been ordered by CYPES, these are not exclusively for LAC.
- 3.17 Request for the board to add data request for those who have been offered advocacy through Jersey Cares over the last 6 months. Mark Owers and Suzie Philips to action.
- 3.18 Carly Glover requested the board provide data showing those who have been offered advocacy through Jersey Cares over the last 6 months. Mark Owers and Suzie Philips to review whether data is captured in the system.
- 3.19 Carly Glover queried the figure of care leavers at 47, Carly confirmed there were over 100 care leavers in the island. Discussion around how to engage with those not currently actively working with the service. Mark Owers and Suzie Philips raised the difficulties in gathering data as some care leavers have not been in contact with the service for several years and may have left the island. Discussion around a joint approach with other departments such as CLS as to which care leavers are still based on island. A communications plan will be launched to reaffirm the care leavers offer which may attract more enquires as to eligibility and assistance.

3.20 Mark address the referral to Jersey Cares and confirmed to the board that the service is working closely with Jersey Cares in trying to address the transparency regarding the way in which young people are provided information re Jersey Cares. Sheree Maher confirmed that it's the choice of the young person as to which service they engage with. The Children rights team promote the service of Jersey Cares and highlight the benefits of the Jersey Cares Community.

3.21 Sheree Maher confirmed that the Children's Rights Team are now up to full complement and are ready to push forward with engagement and participation. Sheree highlighted that for young people to make an informed choice they need to hear from Jersey Cares as to what independent advocacy is. Discussion around using other methods of communicating the service rather than a leaflet. Sheree confirmed that her and the team work collectively with Jersey Cares.

3.22 Connétable Philip Le Sueur asked how Social Workers are coping with the workload. Mark Owers shared the data sheet from the presentation which showed that overall caseloads for staff had reduced. This has allowed more capacity to focus on LAC, Care Leavers and Child Protection cases. There has been a fall in demand in the service during COVID 19 45% of the services referrals come from schools, so school closures have had an impact. The board discussed the early launch of the Children's and family hub this will ensure assistance is directed to the cases much earlier to avoid statutory interventions.

3.23 The board agreed that the graphical representations were very helpful in the presentation.

4 COVID 19 Response Update

4.1 Mark Owers confirmed that the service was managing direct contact with families, cases are all risk assessed – traffic light system. COVID-19 has forced the service to be more thoughtful promoting a reflective practice.

4.2 Those families highlighted as Red are having direct contact wither through walks with the social worker, visits taking place in the garden or if required visits in the home with Social Workers wearing PPE. Amber contact takes place outdoors in an open space – reflective restorative practice work being undertaken. Those cases highlighted as Green are cases where direct contact is not necessary, but households engage with the service using technology.

4.3 Sheree Maher confirmed that the Children's Rights team are assisting the permanence team and assisting the in maintaining the relationships. Children Rights Officers have been offering walk and talk sessions which have been beneficial during the COVID situation. The COVID pandemic has provided an opportunity for closer worker between teams to the benefit of young people.

5 COVID 19 Recovery update

5.1 Islands services organised and reshaped due to COVID 19. Adult Mental Health Services were withdrawn quickly without the impact on Care Leavers being though through. One Care Leaver wrote

a powerful email which drove the change to provide care leavers with more support in Adult Mental Health with designated support workers being a primary issue. This resource is beneficial for young people. The service has received mix feedback regarding the gaps in transferring to adult mental health. Care Leavers are positive that their concerns have been listened too and that they have influenced changes to the services.

5.2 Susan Devlin confirmed that to ensure the redesign of CAMHS was successful that a consideration would have to be taken as to the transition pathway for young people leaving CAMHS and entering Adult Mental Health. Longer term goals are for the offer from Adult Mental Health to be consistent for all care leavers. Susan Devlin confirmed that CAMHS and Adult Mental Health need to work together to ensure the best outcome for young people.

5.3 Mark Owers confirmed that they were interviewing Personal Assistants to support the care leavers team. He also confirmed the creation of two further boards:

- 1) Children Looked After Partnership Board, this consists of internal staff and colleagues from the education service. This board will hold the service to account, it will assist in coordinating the support and aligning the reviews for each individual child. This board will meet monthly.
- 2) Care Leavers Outcome Board, this board will understand the pathways from being a looked after child and a care leaver. Board consists of Steve Jacksons from CLS, important department to help the service understand the flow of children and young people through CLS and the access to necessary and entitled benefits. Will also tie in with the Housing Gateway. This board will hold the service to account around the support care leavers receive. The Children's Commissioner, Jersey Cares and Sheree Maher are starting to think about offering training to staff and departments about care leavers and how it feels to be a care leaver ensuring the voice of the young person is heard.

5.4 These boards will act as the eyes and ears for the Corporate Parenting Board, quarterly reports will be presented from each board mentioned above.

6 Direct Engagement with Care Leavers

6.1 Carly Glover started the conversation about asking what the board would like to know in order to best equip it to lead out in enabling care experienced people to 'thrive'. The Chair confirmed that he would like to see face to face discussions with Care Leavers in the most meaningful relaxed way as possible. This is particularly frustrating during COVID as a virtual teams meeting is not the right environment, its hard to build rapport and will diminish the relationships they are trying to build.

6.2 Carly Glover from Jersey Cares confirmed that some Care Leavers had a 'listened too' fatigue – whereby they are asked to relay experiences but see little change. The Minister and Chair requested that Carly presents an opportunity to meet with Care Leavers whereby Ministers and Senior Leadership can explain the positive changes but also listen to feedback from those using the service. That feedback should be then used to facilitate change which can be demonstrated. Carly confirmed she will go back

and ask them their thoughts, discussion around an outdoor meeting, Sheree and Marie Claire confirmed they would assist.

- 6.3 Sheree Maher confirmed there were a lot of positive comments from care leavers, they have a high level of interest and want to engage and want to be involved. Especially around improving the Care Leavers offer.
- 6.4 Mark Rogers would like Care leavers to feel free to express whether the Government were right to bring forward the Care leavers offer? Did they settle on the including the rights things within the offer? When they are accessed id the experience positive? Important points for the board to consider.
- 6.5 Mark Rogers also think its important to ask Care Leavers what they think the board need to know about their lives to best support them. This is an easy and challenging question and will help in establishing the training programme for Corporate Parenting to ensure the voice of the young person is heard.
- 6.6 Deputy Richard Renouf would like to know what experience care leavers have had registering with GP's. Has it worked well? Have there been instances they have not been able to access the health care they need? What barriers exist to care leavers and health. The deputy also requested feedback as to how care leavers experience accessing other services including Brook, Youthful Minds and Mind Jersey.
- 6.7 Carly Glover actioned with providing feedback to the questions asked by Mark Rogers and Deputy Renouf.
- 6.8 Carly Glover reported positive feedback regarding sensitive and positive interactions with the Police and Care Leavers. Relationship between Care Leavers and Hon Police particularly positive, further work to be done with the parishes.
- 6.9 Discussion around how young people are feeling wrongly targeted by the Police during lockdown and the initial relaxation of rules. The Minister from Home Affairs confirmed that Julian Blazeby and Alison Fossey are working closely with Children's Service to rectify the messaging and work more proactively with young people. The Minister confirmed that young people are welcomed into the station to help build relationships. He raised his concerns about recent comments in the press from the Children's Commissioner which has undermined the relationship between the police and young people.
- 6.10 Mark Rogers confirmed that Government Officials were meeting to discuss the issues raised regarding the relationship between young people and the police. Short term results from the conversations have highlighted that further joined up conversations and service delivery in government is important. This is challenging as the service is operating in unfamiliar circumstances. Mark Rogers confirmed that officials will continue to meet to stay alert to what people are saying about services. The great joint working between the youth service and police was recognised and praised by the board.

6.11 Mark Rogers confirmed that the longer-term objective was to restart the work regarding the Youth Justice Work which has been paused due to COVID 19. This will ensure the overall strategy is being developed to get the balance between diversion, restorative approaches and the need to be good firm, and fair criminal justice system.

6.12 The Minister for Home Affairs suggested that once young people can return to school it will elevate a lot of the issues that are arising around anti-social behaviour as they will interacting with peers and being stimulated socially and educationally. The Minister raised his concerns around the mental health impact on young people from being social isolated for lengthy periods of time. Mark Rogers confirmed that the logistics of all children being back at school is being worked on by officers from CYPES

6.13 Carly Glover sought reassurance from the board that there was a commitment to acting on behalf of feedback where the board determines it appropriate to do so. The board gave its assurance that any systematic failures or improve a wider response then commitment will be made to facilitate change.

7 Board Membership

7.1 Mark Owers confirmed that the inspection by OFSTED in the summer highlighted the recommendation that the membership of the Corporate Board be expanded to include more lived experience. More external representatives required examples include the Independent Reviewing Officer, Officer from the transformation legislation programme. The Minister and Chair confirmed that the delays in moving the membership of the board forward were due to COVID 19.

7.2 Next steps to include inviting the Independent Reviewing Officer to the meeting. Invite independent members with a good representation of those skills particular around health and employment.

7.3 Board wanted insight into the areas surrounding employment and those young people either unemployed or facing unemployment. Figures to be obtained for future meetings. Mark Rogers is keen to open up the responsibility across government to ensure young people and care leavers are included in the economic recovery.

8 Forward Planning

8.1 The Chair suggested that forward planning enables the best opportunity to support young people.

8.2 The Chair also recommended that a plus one system could be adopted for future meetings whereby a subject expert could be invited in to join the meeting to provide the board with the rich information and data they require. The plus one could also include Care Experience children and other third-party agencies who have particular influence or opinions on that item.

8.3 Future good forward planning and good routine prepping invitation etc to be set up. Marie Claire to liaise with Mark Rogers and the Chair as to how they want the meetings to run in future. Proactive

approach and the items are to be scheduled regularly at the Minister for Children's Ministerial meetings. The board agreed that future planning will assist with the strategic challenges that the Government face.

- 8.4 The board agreed that it was critical to ensure that economic decision that the government are making take care leavers and looked after children into account.
- 8.5 The board agreed to meet sooner than originally planned due to the amount of work that has occurred over the COVID 19 peak. The board agreed to meet in 6 weeks' time.
- 9 AOB
- 9.1 Mark Rogers reflected that he wants to know what Care Leavers want the board to be looking at. Statistics need to be stronger in this area.
- 9.2 Themes emerging from the Children's survey will be reviewed.
- 9.3 Requested that Suzie Philips is added to the distribution list for future meetings.
- 9.4 There being no further business, the meeting closed at 10:30