

HEALTH AND WELLBEING BOARD MINUTES

Thursday 8 July 2021 at 6.00 pm

Council Chamber - Lambeth Town Hall, Brixton, London, SW2 1RW

Members Present: Andrew Eyres, Councillor Jim Dickson (Chair), Ruth Hutt, Councillor Edward Davie and Adrian McLachlan

Apologies: Jane Fryer, Councillor Sonia Winifred, Jill Lockett and Andrew Bland

Also present online: Councillor Lucy Caldicott, Fiona Connolly, Sarah Corlett, Merlin Joseph, Catherine Pearson, and Natalia Sali

1 Declarations of Interest

There were none.

2 Minutes of Previous Meeting

RESOLVED: That the minutes of previous meeting held on 29 April be approved and signed by the Chair as a correct record of the meeting.

3 Child Friendly Lambeth

Councillor Ed Davie, Cabinet Member for Children and Young People; Merlin Joseph, Strategic Director of Children's Services; Abi Onaboye, Director of Children's Commissioning and Community Safety; and Cath Millington, Corporate Parenting Lead, presented the report and noted:

- Lambeth was a young borough and need to promote and utilise children's and young people's energy, diversity, and talent.
- The recent murder of a 16-year-old in Streatham reinforced that those with power needed to ensure all young people should be safe and able to get the best possible outcomes.
- Lambeth had high levels of violence, child poverty, obesity and air pollution compared to national averages.
- Leeds had initiated UNICEF's Child Friendly City programme from 2008 following its inadequate ratings, putting children's rights and voices at the heart of all work, and had made significant progress towards improving children's lives.
- Lambeth was seeking this accreditation from UNICEF, with Lambeth now entering the consultative discovery phase of the four-year process, which would be followed by Action Plan development.
- Delivery would not be a quick fix and required continuous work to reshape culture, communications and forming cooperative working arrangements and leadership.
- There was enthusiasm for the proposals, but co-working across communities, families, and third parties' (statutory partners, agencies and voluntary community sector) needed to be improved.

- There would be joint working between UNICEF and the Council throughout the programme.

The Committee next heard from Jaden Evelyn and Serena Cobbinah, Lambeth Youth Council:

- It was important that children and young people were heard and involved in planning and delivery.
- Lambeth would need to utilise its Youth Forums and associated groups, track young people through engagement and ensure this reached a wide demographic of young people.
- Covid-19 had meant that most young persons could not do work experience or learn life skills and denied young people the right to show their talents due to cancelled exams and schooling. The pandemic had also illuminated issues such as homelessness.

In response to the Board's questions, the Cabinet Member and officers noted:

- There were significant population changes and turnover in the borough, particularly in the north of the borough and in younger age groups, which would need to be accounted for during the Programme. In discussion it was noted that the latest census results were awaited.
- This was an opportunity to combine the work of Lambeth's young people, partners and officers, and the Council welcomed active involvement.
- Responsibility in Lambeth fell across all directorates and not just to Children's Services; and would need to be a partnership approach across the borough.
- The discovery phase needed to reach out to communities, actively engage young people, and ensure it captured people's view. It was noted that all organisations that played key roles in the borough (e.g., police, fire, schools, etc.) needed to participate.
- A small cross-directorate team was being assembled in Lambeth for the discovery phase and to coordinate the Council's input.
- Lambeth young people's health and wellbeing was rated well in the 2000s, but the Council had lost ground since with lower funding and the removal of key building blocks of this success by central Government, which this Programme, LEAP and other initiatives would correct.
- The Programme's framework would be embedded into partner organisations and local areas.

The Chair noted the importance of project resourcing to ensure sustainability, and that all partners were involved and in agreement to promote unified messages. The Board asked to be kept abreast of developments, and for themselves and the Lambeth Together Strategic Board to be involved in delivery.

RESOLVED:

1. To note the report and consider the partnerships' input into the programme.

4 Lambeth Early Action Partnership (LEAP)

Councillor Ed Davie, Cabinet Member for Children and Young People; Merlin Joseph, Strategic Director of Children's Services; Laura Griffin, Commissioning Lead: Early Years and Parenting; Laura McFarlane, NCB; and Chris Wellings, NCB, introduced the report and stated:

- The National Children's Bureau (NCB) worked closely with the Council and other partners to deliver evidence-based programmes across the borough.
- LEAP aimed to spread knowledge and expertise, through programmes such as the

Raising Early Achievement in Literacy (REAL).

- The NCB were working borough-wide with children's centres and associated organisations to improve identification of children that required support.
- There had been communicative disconnects between services, noting that midwives could assess special education needs, but previously had no formal means to progress.
- LEAP had reviewed national and international evidence on inequalities in early years services.
- The Set-Up Phase had piloted new interventions, which the Evaluation Phase (2021-25) would scale up, utilising data management systems across the early years system.

The Board next received representation from Emma Cavallito, Parent Representative and Champion, and Charlene Hope, LEAP Board member, who noted:

- LEAP provided support, development, information-sharing, a place to meet other parents, and a sense of community through a range of different physical and emotional engagement activities, which was particularly important during the pandemic.
- LEAP made members feel empowered by asking them what they needed or wanted to see improved, and parents could shape the Programme and local community services.
- LEAP informed parents of local activities and had helped mitigate isolation during lockdown and improved parents' mental health.
- LEAP's Parent Champion courses was well-supported, increased links within the community and benefitted children, through one-to-one discussions with parents and invitations to children's centres to register children or discuss concerns, such as speech therapy.

In response to questions, the Cabinet Member and officers replied:

- Engagement was a key driver of LEAP and it was developing into a sophisticated platform, drawing in data from statutory and voluntary partners.
- Virtual engagement had presented difficulties around inequalities, especially with digital divides, and how closely participants could work with one another, but there was significant take-up of online support, such as the breast-feeding group.
- Service providers were a key component to deliver the LEAP goals.

In discussion, the Board noted the significant achievements of the Programme and the positive impact it was having on the whole population. The Chair thanked witnesses for their representations and asked that the Board be kept informed of further work, including early years foundation stage changes.

RESOLVED:

1. To review and note the content of Appendix 1 as submitted by the National Children's Bureau as the lead organisation for the LEAP programme.

5 Corporate Parenting Board Annual Report

Councillor Ed Davie, Cabinet Member for Children and Young People; Merlin Joseph, Strategic Director of Children's Services; Alex Kubeyinje, Director of Children's Social Care; and Cath Millington, Corporate Parenting Lead, presented the report and noted:

- Their recent attendance at Dulwich College's graduation ceremony reinforced their roles as corporate parents and responsibilities to the children in their care.
- Foster carers were previously not content with services, but Lambeth now received feedback from carers in other boroughs asking why their local authorities did not follow

Lambeth's model.

- The last 12 months had seen a significant drive and updates to the corporate parenting offer and how the Council worked with young people as corporate parents.

The Committee heard representations from Akira Williams, Chair of Children in Care Council and London Kick; and Robert Devcic, Lambeth Foster Care Association and foster parent, who noted:

- The Children in Care Council aimed to improve the care system and children's overall outcomes.
- The Foster Care Association (FCA) offered better support to foster carers than independent foster agencies.
- There was no longer a confrontational culture between the FCA and the Council, but close collaborative relationships through monthly meetings with social care and children-in-care teams and co-working to shape policies in partnership.
- The FCA allowed comparative analysis with the other 19 south east local authorities.
- The Foster Carers Handbook set out the legal requirements for foster carers, was regularly updated and had been digitised to link with associated Acts and partners' policies to improve integration and clarity for all.
- Having foster carers attend strategic meetings helped share lived experiences and enable decision-makers to hear these first-hand.
- Council tax reductions, equating to £100 a week, combined with additional tutoring and support, had been successful in boosting foster recruitment during Covid-19.
- Following research across 30 local authorities, the Foster Care Charter was to be updated to detail best practice, using the Fostering Network as a template, and was to be further consulted on.
- It was important to have both foster carers and corporate parents input on policy and ensure they were listened to.
- The allegations policy was under review to improve recruitment and retention, and further training and workshops would be provided.

In response to questions from the Board, the Cabinet Members and officers replied:

- The corporate parenting structure had been embedded across the Council and partners.
- Improving joint-working was key for success, such as regular meetings with health colleagues.
- Items of further support included free prescriptions for eligible care leavers.
- Children Looked After and care leavers were at the heart of practice, sat on the Strategic Board, and could input into policies and procedures.
- Suitable housing, mental health, events to share experiences, understanding different cultures, and independence were key issues raised by children.
- Lambeth worked closely with the Children in Care Council and was looking for new young people to participate, sit on the Board, co-facilitate sessions, and to review and revise plans.
- The Corporate Parenting Board was led and supported by young people and offered them an opportunity to engage and hear from senior staff and elected representatives.
- Lambeth provided challenge to the Lambeth Foster Care Association, reiterating that it was essential all children, including those in foster care, had the best possible start in life.
- Champions were crucial, in particular to their role-modelling function for children especially for those of similar ethnic groups to their champions, so that all children could excel.
- Future success needed the input of LAC and care leavers and for them to continue to support and input into the programme to develop and improve it further.

- Being in employment, education and training were important measures of success; however, 40% of care leavers were not and when not so engaged they were likely to have worse life outcomes. Lambeth needed to increase participation and offer more, noting that all children had talents and potential, but needed opportunities to demonstrate their capabilities.

The Board noted its gratitude for children's, officers' and Members' work, and that this would continue to be a priority for the Board and wider Council.

RESOLVED:

1. To note the Corporate Parenting Board Annual Report before its consideration by the Corporate Parenting Board and Full Council.
2. To discuss the role of health partners and how they contribute to the objectives of the Board.

6 Lambeth Children's Partnership update

The Chair and noted the report had been covered during the *Child Friendly Lambeth* item, above.

Merlin Joseph, Strategic Director for Children's Services, recorded that the SEND and Inclusion Strategy was planned to be considered by Cabinet in September.

APPROVED:

1. To note the contents of the report.

7 Director of Public Health Quarterly Report

Ruth Hutt, Director of Public Health, introduced the report and in response to questions noted:

- Additional mental health funding had been received and was being used to expand associated projects and prolong ongoing workstreams.
- The Holiday Activity and Food Programme would help address some of the issues faced by Lambeth's residents, such as food poverty and providing holiday provision.
- Surge testing was underway and was increasing in all parts of the borough but would need to be closely monitored from 19 July when the Government's lockdown measures ended.

The Chair thanked officers for their detailed report, noting that the Council and partners continued to work to mitigate the pandemic, but cautioned against resurgences of winter flu bringing further demands on an already stretched Public Health team to deliver.

APPROVED:

1. To note the report.

8 Update: Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services in Lambeth

Councillor Ed Davie, Cabinet Member for Children and Young People; and Merlin Joseph, Strategic Director of Children's Services, introduced this report and in response to questions stated:

- Mean waiting times and referrals had increased in the last year, largely as a result of

Covid-19. This was having significant impacts on children and young people, and some waiting times were not acceptable.

- The paper detailed mitigating actions, although slow central Government response to these issues had not helped and it needed to be closely monitored.
- Additional investment was welcome and would allow interventions such as SLAM's review of supporting young people before entry into CAMHS services. However, Lambeth CAMHS did not have suitable numbers of staff available and recruiting qualified staff was an acute problem.
- The Children's Alliance were developing items such as the CAMHS in Schools Pilots.
- A wide-ranging discussion was required on providing CAMHS with more support.
- Workforce fatigue and stress was a concern and was under review. The Adults and Health and Children's Services directorates would discuss how to provide a joined-up approach.

The Chair thanks the Cabinet Member and Strategic Director for their comments and asked that the report be discussed in greater detail at the next Board meeting, noting that waiting times in particular required addressing.

APPROVED:

1. To note the report.

The Chair thanked everyone present for attending and gave special thank for the representations from young people, noting the next Health and Wellbeing Board was scheduled to take place on 21 October.

The meeting ended at 8.08 pm

CHAIR
HEALTH AND WELLBEING BOARD
Thursday 21 October 2021

Date of Despatch: Friday 30 July 2021

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