

THE CORPORATE PARENTING PANEL

The Corporate Parenting Panel met on four occasions between August 2024 and May 2025. The Panel had the opportunity to participate in two Children's Takeover sessions with a group of Children in Care and Care experienced young adults presenting to Members and officers.

The Panel provide a forum to focus on the council's legal obligations and responsibilities towards children in care and young people leaving care.

The Panel is in place to ensure and monitor the corporate discharge of the Council's responsibilities as corporate parents. And to scrutinise the performance and quality of services to Children in care and care experienced young people, monitoring adherence to the legislation that governs the work of those services.

MEMBERSHIP/CORPORATE PARENTS

Councillor Jason Frost (Chair)
Councillor Oscar Ford
Councillor Mandy Anderson
Councillor Stephanie Nunn
Councillor Frankie Walker

The Panel also consists of officers, partner agencies and foster carers

The Panel considered the following reports as part of the process:

COCOON MANAGEMENT FORUM FEEDBACK

The Panel received an update from a Young Person who is a member of the management team of the Cocoon Centre.

The Young Person explained to the Panel that the young people were currently involved in rewriting the Havering Care Local Offer. It was explained that the current document is lengthy and repetitive, making it challenging to navigate for young people.

The proposal is to create two versions: a detailed version and a shorter, more digestible version with bolded keywords, bullet points, and visuals for clarity.

It was stated that the plan is to engage young people through a poll to determine preferred terminology, moving away from "leaving care" to something like "care experienced."

Suggestion on Content and Format Improvements included:

- Introduction of concise summaries, bullet points, and "Did You Know?" facts to replace dense paragraphs.

- Inclusion of relevant contact information at the end of each chapter, instead of in a separate section.
- Enhanced visual appeal with images and a colourful design.

The following feedback on current Local Offer was noted:

- Discussion highlighted inconsistencies in entitlement awareness among young people.
- Suggestions for improvement in communicating entitlements like the setting-up home allowance.

The Panel noted the Collaboration with Procurement on a new procurement initiative to secure better deals on essential goods (e.g. white goods) for care leavers, potentially using contracts or recycled goods.

The Panel and officers acknowledged that long documents may deter young people from engaging with the local offer.

It was mentioned that there was progress in reducing the document length from 27 pages to 12 and working toward further refinement.

Officers explained the following next step:

- To finalise both document versions, integrating young people's input on terminology.
- Expand the approach to improve documents for children in care, ensuring accessibility and relevance.
- Develop user-friendly descriptions of key processes and roles, such as pathway plans and health assessments.

The Panel commended the team's effort in making the local offer user-friendly and suggested encouragement to extend the initiative to other policy documents.

SAY IT LOUDER FEEDBACK ON SUMMER ACTIVITIES PRESENTATION

The Panel received an update presentation regarding activities done with the Children in Care Council 'Say It Louder' and feedback from the Youth Influence and Participation Services.

Members noted the following updates and activities:

- **Say it Louder :**
 - Ran a school holiday programme for six weeks (July-August) with various activities.

- Attendance ranged between 8-15 young people per session. Activities included:
 - Light cooking and healthy eating workshops.
 - Arts and crafts projects.
 - Cultural trips to Tate Modern and other landmarks in London.
 - Positive feedback received from young people, highlighting increased confidence and engagement.
- Trips and Visits:
 - Visit to the Tate Modern provided cultural exposure.
 - Interaction with other children in care groups in Tower Hamlets.
 - Key observations from the Young people:
 - The Tower Hamlets youth centre was more resourceful but had lower engagement compared to "My Place."
- Feedback and Testimonies:
 - Participants expressed enjoyment and rated the activities highly (e.g., 8/10).
 - A focus on improving youth-oriented resources and opportunities was suggested.
- Upcoming Events and Initiatives:
 - October:
 - "Show and Tell" activity focused on inspirational figures from minority communities.
 - Caribbean meal planned.
 - November:
 - Participation in National Youth Week with arts and crafts activities involving corporate parents and partners.
 - December:
 - Christmas activities, including the design of personalized gifts by young people.
 - Corporate Parenting Involvement:
 - Young people will contribute to the neglect strategy and corporate parenting priorities.
 - Ongoing work with youth at risk of exploitation or under justice orders.
- Special Projects
 - Romford Market Project (Partnership with Eastside Heritage Charity):
 - Focus on engaging young people (ages 8-25) and foster carers creatively.
 - Activities include market-themed workshops, interviews with market traders, and public exhibitions.
 - National Lottery funding applied for the initiative.
- Recognition and Celebration
 - Corporate Parenting Virtual School Achievements Awards December 5:
 - Celebration of achievements across academic and extracurricular domains with a disco event went very well.

- Outcomes of Previous Projects
 - Successful mural project at the Cocoon led to young participants pursuing relevant skills and qualifications, including painting and decorating certifications.
- Key Action Points:
 - Further promotion of the SAY Louder Forum and extend opportunities for wider youth engagement.
 - Plan more activities for upcoming holidays and facilitate more resourceful youth spaces.
 - Finalize plans for the December awards and Romford Market project.

Members noted the activities that the Young People participated in and acknowledged ongoing contributions and future objectives.

PERFORMANCE DATASET

The Panel received the Corporate Parenting dataset 2024/25 as at 31 August 2024. The key performance indicators update had been benchmarked against London and Statistical Neighbours.

The number of Children in care increased by 19% during 2023/24, from 235 at 30th April 2023 up to 280 at 31st March 2024. Followed by stabilisation between April and August 2024. It was stated that the decision about a child entering care are scrutinised for proportionality, whilst family support networks are also leveraged in response to the child's needs, where safe to do so.

On Placement Trends, it was noted that there was an increased reliance on in-house carers (50% in-house placements, up from 49% in 2023/24). Following changes to legislation regarding Semi-Independent (supported), accommodation have now been implemented, with Ofsted taking over the regulation of these services. The service currently has 8% of the cohort in such a place. There is a small increase in children placed more than 20 miles outside their home area, now at 17.9%.

On Placement stability, the service reported an improved outcomes and placement stability through better management and matching to support young people to remain in their respective placements

Members were informed that challenges remain in emergency placements and finding placement for older children in care. It was stated that sufficiency of suitable placements and the fostering strategy work is a priority for the service.

The Panel noted that at start of period 2024/25 there has been a steady decrease in Young People Not in Education, Employment, or Training (NEET) numbers due to improved staffing and department collaboration. The Service is working with support

from other departments to promote the apprenticeship scheme for the young people. The service has a commitment to supporting apprenticeships, with 5 having started in September 2024.

In 2023/24 there were challenges with the Initial Health Assessments (IHAs) performance but 2024/25 has seen improvement and performance was now above target since May. It was reported that the Annual review health assessments met the 90% target in 2023/24, with continued strong performance this year.

Performance in relation to up to date PEPs has remained strong. All school aged children are currently placed in 'Good' or 'Outstanding' schools and any child placed in a school that 'Required Improvement' was been closely monitored by our Virtual School colleagues.

The Panel noted that grading system for schools will transition to a multi-dimensional approach by September 2025, following a policy change.

Members noted the performance update, acknowledged the positive trends and the areas that required improvement.

CIC HEALTH SUBGROUP REPORT

The Panel received a report from the health subgroup. It was stated that the children in care's health subgroup in Havering has been a longstanding subgroup of the Havering Corporate Parenting Panel, however for numerous reasons the group had not met between May-December 2023.

The subgroup resumed meetings in January 2024 with an updated membership and terms of reference. Co-chairing arrangements was established with the Interim Head of Corporate Parenting Service.

Roles and Functions outlined included:

- Meetings held every six weeks.
- Strategic advice and recommendations provided to the Corporate Parenting Panel on health matters of looked after children.
- Responsibilities include preparing annual health reports, auditing health data, resolving performance issues, and implementing legislative changes.

The subgroup detailed the following year-to-date activities:

- Regular agenda items: data review, audits, updates on initiatives like Healthy Smiles and the health assessment pathway for asylum-seeking children.
- Introduced themed meetings to address specific health areas. The first theme focused on mental health, with outcomes pending.

The subgroup informed the Panel about the Adoption Medical Process Task and Finish Group.

- Collaborative efforts to review and improve adoption medical processes.
- Recommendations include joint working across agencies, addressing training gaps, and enhancing administrative support.

The report outlined the following data challenges:

- Persistent discrepancies in health assessment data due to varied data collection methods.
- Issues noted in dental checks, optician reviews, and immunisation data accuracy.
- Local audits suggest better compliance than reflected in official statistics.

The Panel noted the future themes and plans that provided suggestions that include focusing on transitions to adulthood and immunisation pathways for unaccompanied asylum-seeking children.

The Panel was informed that the Interim Designated Nurse departed on 2nd October 2024. The health subgroup will continue to meet under the leadership of the LBH Interim Head of Corporate Parenting Service, with support from the Designate for Safeguarding Children and/or the Named Nurse for Looked After Children (NELFT).

It was stated that regular updates will be provided to the Corporate Parenting Panel as per the terms of reference.

The Panel noted the report.

NORTH EAST LONDON HUB FOSTERING & MOCKINGBIRD UPDATE

The Panel received a presentation update from the Head of Corporate Parenting and Fostering Service Manager on the North East London Fostering & Mockingbird.

It was stated that the current number of In-House Carers stood at 95 carers with 4 new households approved this financial year and 5 currently being assessed.

On Training & Recruitment: 4 more households are waiting to attend the Skills to Foster training.

There have been 4 resignations this financial year (mainly retirements) and 1 more pending. Communication issues have been raised as a concern by some departing carers.

The service has continued to make the following improvement:

- Assessment Process:
 - Timeliness improved by starting DBS checks and medicals as soon as suitability is determined.
 - Target: Approve at least 12 households (possibly 14) by March next year.
- Communication:

- Daily meetings with the placements team at 10:00 AM to improve sufficiency and ensure effective matching.
- Encouraging verbal communication over excessive emails to resolve issues faster.
- Weekly meetings every Monday to review carers on hold, ensuring regular updates and follow-ups.

Within the Fostering Panel, areas of improvement identified included expanding the Central panel members list and completing interviews for 5 additional independent panel members.

It was also stated that the Fostering Panel require elected Members to sit on its Panel. This would enhance their knowledge of the service and would ensure that as Corporate Parents there was further scrutiny of foster carers.

The service had faced the following challenges:

- Resignations: Retirements and communication concerns among carers.
- Administrative Delays: Efforts to streamline the medical process with the medical advisor to reduce delays in approvals.

Members noted the significant strides in improving processes, communication and sufficiency while addressing challenges like resignations and delays. The Panel recognised the goal is to enhance support and efficiency for both current and prospective carers.

The Service outline the use of Connected Carers: It was noted that an increase numbers of carers who are connected to children, sometimes called Kinship carers were being enrolled. There were currently 17 Connected carer households who care for 27 children. It was also stated that the service has 19 temporarily approved households who care for 28 children.

The Panel was informed about the introduction of training and equal financial support for connected carers which highlighted their invaluable contribution and ensures they are well-equipped to succeed in their fostering role.

The presentation outlined the following initiatives that will support children in care, some of these have already started, the others to move forward shortly.

- Local Community Fostering - A government initiative - Six East London Local Authorities working together to increase recruitment of carers.
- Mockingbird - Mockingbird is fostering initiative using an extended 'family' structure of support to a group of carers. The Service is trying to create a fostering community in order to give children and families the best possible experience of foster care.

- **Fostering Friendly** - Fostering Friendly an initiative developed by the Fostering Network. Nearly 40% of foster carers are in employment, having a supportive employer can make all the difference. The service wants LBH to become a Fostering Friendly local authority as this will increase opportunities for partnership working and also aid recruitment
- **Supported Lodgings** – The Service recognize that a number of people cannot commit to being a foster carer for a variety of reasons. There may be scope for these people to become a host for supported lodgings and care for our older teenagers.

The report addressed the issue of Foster Carer retention, it was stated that the importance of retaining existing foster carers is as critical as recruitment. The Panel noted efforts that are being made to address their needs and improve their experience. The Service recognised key Issues such as communication and consistency as major concerns raised by carers.

The Panel discussed the importance of leveraging community leaders for honours nominations and updates on new fostering initiatives aimed at tackling the national shortage of carers. It was noted that collaboration with local authorities and implementation of innovative programmes remain a priority.

The Panel noted the update from the Fostering Service.

CORPORATE PARENTING PANEL - TERMS OF REFERENCE

The Panel received the Terms of Reference of the Corporate Parenting Panel.

The Panel was advised that the Corporate Parenting Panel of the London Borough of Havering focuses on the Council's legal obligations and responsibilities towards children in care and young people leaving care. It applies the key Corporate Parenting principles outlined in the Children and Social Work Act 2017 to ensure secure, nurturing, and positive experiences for children in care and care leavers, enabling them to lead fulfilling lives.

The aim of the Corporate Parenting Panel is to act as responsible parents to all children in care and care leavers, ensuring that the Council's pledge to children in care and the local offer to care leavers is fulfilled. The Panel will raise awareness of the needs of children in care and care leavers throughout the Council and its partners.

Objectives

- Listen to the voices of Children and Young People, consider their views, and ensure these are reflected in service delivery.
- Ensure and monitor the corporate discharge of the Council's responsibilities as corporate parents.
- Scrutinise the quality of services provided to children in care and care experienced young people, monitoring adherence to relevant legislation.

- Equip councillors to fulfil their duties as corporate parents, providing effective leadership and contributing to strategic planning processes.
- Ensure councillors have knowledge and understanding of how the Local Authority meets the needs of children and their families.

The Corporate Parenting Panel oversees the following areas:

- The Voice of Children in Care and Care Leavers via feedback from the Children in Care Council (Say it Louder) and the Cocoon Management Group (Care Leavers)
- Children in Care Outcomes (including foster care, residential care, secure placements, placements with their own parents under care orders, and semi-independent accommodation)
- Young people who are Care Leavers
- Safeguarding Children in Care and Care Leavers (including contextualised Safeguarding and Youth Justice)
- Education of children in care and care experienced children
- Health needs of children and young people in public care
- Housing needs of care leavers

The Corporate Parenting Panel noted the terms of reference including the membership of the Panel.

YOUNG PEOPLE'S VOICE - CIC COUNCIL

The Panel received a presentation from Young People's CIC group. The Panel was advised of the following activities that the group undertook.

- Visit to Tower Hamlets CiC Group
- Birthday celebrations of Young people
- Black History Month Events: Presentations on famous people
- Participated in the Coram Voice Competition (March 2025)
- Residential in Isle of Wight
- Day Activities in and around the borough:
 - Ice Skating
 - Cosmos
 - Laser Tag
 - Cooking

The Panel was advised of the following activities that the Young people are looking forward to undertake:

- Activities:

- Ice hockey game
- China Town Visit
- Go Ape
- Visiting other Local Authority CiC Youth Clubs
- London Dungeons
- Science Museum and Natural History Museum
- Karaoke Night
- Children in Care Abroad

The Panel noted the following aspirations of the Young People

- Involving more young people in the Youth Group
- Restarting the Say It Louder Forum
- Recruitment campaign to increase numbers coming to forum
- Topics of interest :
 - Women's Safety
 - The Children in Care Pledge
 - Concerns around contacting Social Workers and PA's
 - Welcome pack for CiC

The Young People advised the Panel of the following skills they would like to develop further:

- Cooking
- Independence skills eg.: managing finances and budgeting
- Sewing and embroidery
- CV development and employability skills
- Work experience
- Sitting on interview panels

YOUNG PEOPLE'S VOICE - COCOON YOUTH MANAGEMENT GROUP

The Panel received a presentation from Youth Management Team. The topic for the day was Mental Health, in recognition of International Mental Health Awareness Month.

The following points were outlined for discussion:

- Introduction to the Youth Management Team: Who we are and what we do
- Future aims and aspirations of the Youth Management Team
- Main discussion topic: Mental Health Awareness

The Youth Management Team members shared their motivation for joining the Youth Management Team which included ensuring that the voices, opinions, struggles, and achievements of care-experienced young people are heard, celebrated, and amplified. Their advocacy work began through involvement in initiatives such as Total Respect training and has since grown into a strong passion for making systemic improvements in social services and leaving care. They expressed a continued commitment to supporting and advocating for care-experienced individuals.

The meeting reaffirmed the Youth Management Team's commitment to advocacy, collaboration, and systemic improvement. The Head of Corporate Parenting advised Members that the service remain focused on ensuring that care-experienced young people have a platform to voice their needs and contribute meaningfully to changes in the care system.

OFSTED MONITORING VISIT

The Director Children Services (DCS) provided the Panel an update on the Ofsted monitoring visit, highlighting positive feedback on investment, management, and social workers. Areas for improvement included supervision, care planning, and recording.

It was noted that following the full Inspection of Local Authority Children's Services (ILACS) conducted in December 2023, the local authority is now subject to ongoing monitoring by both the Department for Education (DfE) and Ofsted. Monitoring visits are scheduled every three months, with the most recent visit occurred in March 2024. The primary focus areas during this visit were:

- Children in Care
- Homeless children aged 16–17, including those presenting at the "front door"
- Children in Supported Accommodation (previously known as semi-independent accommodation)
- Missing Children

The Director Children Services advised that the Inspectors sought to understand how the authority identifies and addresses the needs of these vulnerable groups, particularly in light of previous findings from the December 2023 inspection.

Six audited cases were reviewed to assess the quality and sufficiency of internal auditing processes. Inspectors examined whether the local authority demonstrated robust knowledge of children's cases and applied appropriate scrutiny.

Engagement included multiple off-site and on-site conversations involving:

- Chief Executive
- Councillor Frost – Lead Member
- Councillor Ford – Chair of the Corporate Parenting Panel
- Foster Carer Association (FCA)
- Director of Children's Services (DCS)

A total of 17 social workers were interviewed during the two-day onsite visit.

The Panel noted that the next monitoring visit is anticipated to take place between June and September 2025, with the focus likely on care-experienced young people. Confirmation is pending. The DCS has requested that visits not occur in August due to summer holidays and availability of partners.

The service received the following key findings and feedback from Inspectors, a number of positive observations, including:

- Recognition of the significant financial investment made by the Council and leadership.
- Acknowledgment of the positive impact of the new permanent senior management team.
- Commendation for the establishment of:
 - Corporate Parenting Service
 - Children in Care Teams
 - 16+ Service

It was noted that these services were not in place prior to September 2023.

The Panel was advised that the Performance Metrics Noted as Improving:

- Short-term placement stability (number of placement moves)
- Long-term placement stability (children in care for 2.5 years, with at least 2 years in the same home)
- Timeliness and quality of visits
- Children in Care Reviews
- Use of accurate and consistent performance data

The Panel was advised that the Inspectors highlighted the dedication and skill of social workers across the service, particularly noting their advocacy, commitment, and expertise. The Children with Disabilities Team received specific mention.

Feedback from Children in Care Council and Young People

Positive feedback was received from the Children in Care Council ("Say It Louder"), including comments on:

- Supporting the development of interests
- Promoting relationship-building

Two key areas for improvement raised by young people and now being addressed:

1. Communication:

- Reports that Personal Advisors (PAs) in the 16+ Team are not consistently returning calls or texts.
- Need for improved follow-through on promises and information sharing.

2. Responsiveness:

- Young people reported delays (e.g. five months) in receiving updates or actions following their input.
- In response, the meeting format has been amended to include a “You Said, We Did” section at the start of every meeting to ensure greater accountability and timely responses.

It was stated that overall, the visit highlighted substantial progress and a clear trajectory of improvement across children’s services. That the local authority remains committed to continuous improvement and to ensuring that the voices of children and care-experienced young people shape future practice.

The Panel noted the update presentation.

CORPORATE PARENTING STRATEGY SUBGROUPS - OVERVIEW

The Head of Service Corporate Parenting provided the Panel with the Corporate Parenting update. The Panel was advised that at the most recent focused visit from Ofsted, it was noted that the service needs to create and update the Council’s Corporate Parenting Strategy.

The Head of Service advised that as part of our improvement plan, with participation and co-production with our young people being a key priority for us moving forward, we plan to publish the updated Corporate Parenting Strategy by summer 2025. It is vital that our Corporate Parenting Strategy is focused around the voices and needs of our children and young people which enables it to be meaningful and encompass feedback from our children.

The Panel was informed that whilst the service is developing the new Corporate Parenting Strategy, the aim is not to remain static with regards to improving the offer for Havering Children in care and care leavers. Therefore, officers are proposing that that the following subgroups start or continue. The subgroups are based around the 6 priorities which the young people identified as part of the pledge expected from the service. It is noted that the Corporate Strategy requires updating and co-production from our young people.

The following priorities were highlighted within the previous Corporate Parenting Strategy:

- Priority 1 – Keeping our Children Safe
- Priority 2 – Hear young people
- Priority 3 – Caring home for all
- Priority 4 – Aspiration, education and opportunity
- Priority 5 – Understand our services
- Priority 6 – Excellent health outcomes

The Head of Service Corporate Parenting discussed updating the corporate parenting strategy with input from young people. There are plans to hold monthly participation subgroups and focus groups to gather feedback and update the strategy.

It is expected that subgroups are well attended by the relevant members so that officers can collectively consider the offer for care leavers, which is under review at the moment. The Panel was advised that the service need to ensure that Corporate Parenting partners can raise the profile of care experienced young people.

The Head of Service Corporate Parenting highlighted to Members that a gap in terms of Police representation will need to be addressed in order to think strategically how officers and partners can work together to ensure a better service for Havering young people.

Members were informed that officers are working on improving digital accessibility for the young people, the offer for the Youth Management Board and ensuring that the Cocoon meets the needs of our care experienced young people. The Corporate Parenting service is reviewing the structure within the recently transitioned 16+ service, previously called Leaving Care. It was also stated that officers have identified a need to have specialisms in the service, for instance dedicated Housing and Employment, Education and Training officers, who hold specialist knowledge of relevant areas but also the needs of care experienced young people to develop an offer further.

FOSTERING

The Panel was provided the annual report that outlines the activities conducted by the Fostering Independent Reviewing Officer (FIRO), presenting an analysis of the data collected and providing a targeted plan for the upcoming year.

The purpose of annual reviews is to:

- Review approvals of foster carers
- Evaluate the quality of care offered to our most vulnerable children.
- Learning from the professional network about the difference foster carers have made for our children.
- Identify training to enable foster carers to respond to the diverse needs of our children.

The following key targets of the report were highlighted:

- Increase in the use of midway reviews to check in with foster carers and provide support as needed.
- Enhanced collection of feedback from young people and partner agencies to improve fostering services.
- Improved supervision recording and compliance with DBS checks and medicals for foster carers.

The Panel was advised that over the course of the reporting period, the Fostering service has experienced some periods of change within the workforce, including transitions in the service manager and fostering manager positions. Recruitment efforts are underway to appoint a permanent fostering manager for the Supervising Social Workers.

The Panel noted the report.

PERFORMANCE EXCEPTION REPORT

The Head of Service Corporate Parenting (HSCP) advised the panel on the Quarter 4 Exceptions report (January to March 2025) regarding key performance indicators (KPIs) as reported at the end of March 2025 with some analysis to enable Members and partners to understand progress. The KPIs focused on, related to Children in Care, Care Leavers and key Fostering and Adoption performance areas.

The Panel noted that all KPIs are reviewed at a monthly performance meeting chaired by the Director for Children's Services and attended by senior managers from service manager up. Each service area is expected to review and comment on their previous month's performance, any emerging trends or issues and what the plan is to address these.

The HSCP stated that the current KPIs indicated a slight rise in the number of Children in Care on 31st March, up to 268 from 266 at the end of February 2025. There are 22 RAG rated KPIs relating to CIC. 5 (22.7%) are rated Green, 9 (40.9%) Amber, and 8 (36.4%) Red, including the 2 new health KPIs recently added to the monthly performance pack.

The Panel noted that the performance around CIC placement stability. At 31st March 72.4% of Havering CIC had been living in the same placement for at least 2 years exceeding the year-end target of 70%. At 11.7%, the service missed its year-end target of 11% in relation to CIC with three or more placements during the year, but did remain within our amber tolerance level. The percentage of CIC placed 20 miles plus from where they used to live continued to increase during quarter four ending the year at 19.3% and remaining RAG rated red.

The CIC health KPIs have continued to show steady improvement throughout this year with 8 (57.1%) currently rated Green or Amber and 6 (42.9%) rated Red. This is compared to the start of this period 2024/25 with 4 (33.3%) rated Green or Amber and 8 (66.7%) rated Red.

There has also been steady progress in the percentage of CIC with an up-to-date pathway plan in place. The percentage of CIC cases where supervision has taken place in the last 2 months has continued to improve from 76% at 31st December up to 88.4% at 31st March.

16+ (care leavers)

It was stated that the number of Care leavers currently in receipt of leaving care services has continued to increase since the start of this period from 333 during April 2024, up to 350 at 31st March 2025. Of the 11 RAG rated care leavers KPIs 6 (54.5%) were rated Green or Amber, and 5 (45.5%) Red. The service continues to see strong performance in relation to young people remaining looked after until their 18th birthday, Staying Put and Suitable accommodation, all comfortably within our year end targets.

There has been a steady increase in the number of 16-year-olds placed in Supported Accommodation since September, up from 2 (6.5%), to 8 (19.5%) at 31st March, which is being closely monitored.

The Education, Employment and Training (EET) KPIs have all ended the year below target, but we have seen this area continue to show overall improvement since the start of the year and we remain in line with London comparators.

The percentage of Care Leavers with an up-to-date pathway plan in place has continued to improve markedly throughout the year, up from 51.7% during April to 89.1% at 31st March.

The report highlighted the percentage of Leaving Care cases where supervision has taken place within the last 3 months. The service did see the percentage drop from 88.7% during December, down to 84% at 31st March.

Fostering and Adoption

The HSCP reported that since the start of the financial year, the service has seen a 12.2 % (22 children) improvement in the numbers of children ceasing to be CIC as the result of an Adoption order, or granting of a special guardianship order (SGO). There has been a small decrease in the number of CIC placed with LBH foster carers at yearend from 130 (48.9%) at 28 February, down to 127 (47.2%) at 31 March. The number of CIC living in Connected/Family care placements has also dropped slightly from 56 (21.1%) up to 55 (20.4%).

The Panel noted on the recruitment of in-house foster carer recruitment, the number of in-house foster carers has remained static during the year from seventy-four at 30 April 2024 to seventy-three at 31 March 2025. The number of new carers that were recruited during 2024/25 stood at seven as at 31 March, whilst the number of fostering households de-registered during the same period was eight.

The HSCP advised that the service has reported improvements in most areas of performance. However, performance in key areas such as visits, supervision, ensuring health needs of children in our care remain key areas of focus. The Panel was informed that the service has implemented weekly performance meetings in each service area to review and ensure that performance is being reviewed regularly. All the team managers and service managers within the corporate parenting service also attend monthly scrutiny meetings chaired by the Head of Service, which feeds into the monthly performance meeting chaired by the Director of Children's Services.

The HSCP advised Members that the service is implementing a new health data tracker and working closely with colleagues in health to improve our health reporting, as whilst this has been an area of development, most of these KPIs remain red and amber.

The Panel was advised that the Pathway Plan data for Children in Care is recorded from 16.3 years, as per statutory expectations. This is currently reported from 15.9 years which would be prior to when a Pathway Plan is required for our young people. This is likely to improve performance as this will be more accurate recording.

Supervision continues to be a key area of focus. The importance of effective and meaningful supervision for the children and the impact this has on ensuring that case work does not drift. The HSCP stated officers are considering what else might need to happen as a senior leadership group, moving forward to ensure that the service can begin to see consistent green performance in this area, following the recent Ofsted focused visit.

The Panel noted the performance report.