



**Terms of Reference for  
Members Corporate Parenting Group  
(MCPG)**

**Agreed and adopted on**

**Version  
3.0: 19.08.2013**

## 1.0 Purpose of the Group

---

- 1.1 The purpose of the group is to oversee the extent to which the different groups and services that exist across Barking and Dagenham for children in care are tailored toward and committed to meeting their Corporate Parenting responsibilities
- 1.2 The group recognises the importance of ensuring that all children in care are given every opportunity to fulfil their potential and to succeed in life against each of the 5 outcomes set out within the Every Child Matters (ECM) Framework.

We recognise that lack of opportunities for children and young people in care can have serious and long term effects which will continue to impact throughout their lives and into adulthood.

We recognise that supporting children and young people in care is corporate responsibility that can only be achieved through multi-agency partnership working across a wide range of agencies at both universal and targeted levels.

We recognise that when we talk about positive outcomes for children and young people in care, we must consider and meet the needs of the carers and family supporting these children and that a family centred approach is essential to delivering change.

- 1.3 The key principal objectives of the group are to:
- 1.3.1 To maintain a clear strategic overview of the statutory services that are available for children and young people in care across the borough and ensure that all parties take collective responsibility for promoting and ensuring positive outcomes for this group of children and young people.
  - 1.3.2 Monitor change, and drive forward continuous improvement through regular scrutiny and questioning of the CIC outcomes dataset.
  - 1.3.3 To promote the meaning of and understanding of Corporate Parenting and advocate for practical expressions of this across all services, amongst Councillors, Officers, partner agencies and amongst children and young people in care.
- 1.4 The key policies / initiatives / agendas that drive the work of the group include:
- 1. Every Child Matters
  - 2. The London Borough of Barking & Dagenham Children and Young People's Plan
  - 3. The Barking & Dagenham Pledge to Children and Young People in Care.
  - 4. The Children in Care outcomes dataset
  - 5. Corporate Parenting Strategy
- 1.5 The Members Corporate Parenting Group (MCPG) will be supported by a smaller officer led group (the Child in Care (CIC) Outcomes Group) which will focus on

performance management and links across departments to virtually join up our service and approach for children and young people in care.

## **2.0 Group Membership – Terms and Conditions**

---

- 2.1 The Terms of Reference for MCPG will be reviewed in every year in March to ensure they are still valid and fit for purpose. Any amendments must be agreed at the following meeting.
- 2.2 The membership will consist of representatives from the following services and organisations as voting members:
- Lead Councillor for Children in Care (Cllr Letchford)
  - Portfolio lead for Children (Cllr White)
  - Divisional Director for Complex Needs & Social Care (Chris Martin)
  - Two children and young people representatives from 'Skittlz' – Barking & Dagenham's Children in Care Council.
  - A participation worker who will support the involvement of children and young people at the meetings (Kevin Donovan)
  - B&D Virtual Headteacher (Ian Starling)
  - B&D Looked After Children Nurse (Paula Gregory)
  - CMT rep (Helen Jenner)
  - B&D CCG commissioner (Sue Newton)
  - B&D Leisure Services rep (Andy Knight)
  - B&D Looked After Children Service manager (Jo Tarbutt)
  - Co-opted elected members (Cllrs Douglas & Kangethe)

### Non-Voting Members

- Other co-opted members as agreed by the Group – i.e. Minute Taker, Member of performance staff who will report the CIC Outcomes Dataset
  - Observers
- 2.3 The Chair will be the Lead Member and Vice Chair will be Divisional Director Safeguarding and Rights.
- 2.4 The Chairs responsibilities specifically include:
- i) Ensuring members of the group are aware of their responsibilities and boundaries of authority;
  - ii) Ensuring members of the group abide by the rules as set out in the Terms of Reference;

- iii) Ensuring appropriate behaviour and initiating any remedial action as a result;
  - iv) Managing the meeting;
  - v) Attendance register is signed by all in attendance.
- 2.5 The Vice-Chairs responsibilities specifically include:
- i) Support the Chair in 2.5 above;
  - ii) Deputise for the Chair in meetings when the Chair is not available.
- 2.6 The Membership for the MCPG will be reviewed in every year in March to ensure they are valid and fit for purpose. Any amendments must be agreed at the following meeting.
- 2.7 Members can put forward suggestions for co-opted members or for individuals to attend for specific work areas through the chair/vice chair.
- 2.8 Members of the groups should have sufficient authority to represent their service / organisation.
- 2.9 The meeting agenda and minutes must clearly state who is an official member of the group; who is Chair and Vice-Chair and who is present in a support or advisory capacity.
- 2.10 All members will be expected to abide by the following:
- i) Attend meetings on a regular basis or attend a minimum two of three meetings;
  - ii) Read the circulated papers;
  - iii) Take an active part and use expertise and knowledge;
  - iv) Be willing to learn more about issues and the work of others;
  - v) Be prepared to follow through on actions and decisions;
  - vi) Know the constraints and priorities of the agency / group represented;
  - vii) Listen to the views of others and respect each others professional differences;
  - viii) Share good practice;
  - ix) To promote equality of opportunity and the diversity with children and young people in the borough.
  - x) To speak and present in a way that is accessible to young people and to take the time to check that young people in attendance understand the discussion and have full understanding of the things that the group is being asked to vote for / discuss.
- 2.11 A member or named substitute of the group shall cease to hold office if:
- i) A member notifies the group of an intention to resign;

- ii) A member or substitute fails to attend two consecutive meetings without explanation or discussion with the Chair. The group must give notice of termination in writing to the member and relevant organisation asking for an appropriate representative to be nominated;
- iii) A member fails to comply with their obligations as set out in the Terms of Reference;
- iv) A member ceases to be a member or office holder of a Statutory Agency or other relevant organisation;
- iv) The relevant organisation / service notifies the group of the removal of the member or named substitute.

### **3.0 Group Meetings**

---

- 3.1 The group will meet bi-monthly. However, ad-hoc meetings can be held as and when deemed necessary, for example at key decision points.
- 3.2 Meetings date will be set for the year at the first meeting of the financial year.
- 3.3 In order for the meetings to be considered viable there must be a quorum of three present and one of these must include the Chair or Vice-Chair, a Skittlz Member or other Councillor.
- 3.4 Responsibility for booking venues and refreshments will be undertaken by Barking and Dagenham Complex Needs & Social Care division
- 3.5 Meetings will last no longer than 2hrs unless otherwise stated, and start and finish on time.
- 3.6 Circulation of information including briefing papers and the agenda will be distributed in advance of the meeting by one week.
- 3.7 Confidential items will be dealt with in a closed session and such items will be marked confidential on the agenda. No member shall divulge or allow to be divulged any confidential information relating to discussions or reports in the group meetings.
- 3.8 The MCPG must comply with relevant legislation, such as the Freedom of Information Act 2000.
- 3.9 Minutes will be recorded by MCPG and all papers must be kept by the MCPG.
- 3.10 Minutes will be agreed and signed off at the following meetings.
- 3.11 All decisions and actions are to be recorded within the minutes.

- 3.12 Copies of minutes and agenda will be available via email from MCPG.
- 3.13 Apologies should be sent to the chair by email.
- 3.14 If any member of the group is unable to attend a particular meeting, such member should appoint a designated representative from their team to attend in their place.
- 3.15 A substitute shall be treated in all respects as a member for the group on that occasion, subject to notice for the appointment being given to the chair in advance of the commencement of the meeting.
- 3.16 All members; substitutes; advisers and observers present at meetings, must sign the attendance register as a true record of their attendance.
- 3.17 Members must disclose any interest and withdraw from the meeting and not vote on any matter where: (i) there is a conflict between their interests and the interests of a collaborating body; (ii) they have a pecuniary interest in a matter.
- 3.18 A register of interests must be compiled and updated annually.

#### **4.0 Accountability and Reporting**

---

- 4.1 The group does not have statutory decision making powers or responsibilities. Recommendations made by the group will be referred to the Children's Trust Board who can then further recommend to statutory decision making bodies for approval where appropriate.
- 4.2 The group is not owned or controlled by any single organisation / department; all those involved retain their own independence whilst working collaboratively on delivering the key tasks and achieving the key goals.
- 4.3 The group is required to report annually to the Children's Trust Board and the LSCB on its work and performance related the Every Child Matters (ECM) agenda; the Children and Young People's Plan (CYPP); and any other relevant areas or statutory reporting.
- 4.5 From time to time it may be necessary to set-up various working task groups to focus on specific pieces of work.
- 4.6 Members are expected to provide feedback to their relevant services / departments.
- 4.7 Decision making and recommendations will be agreed through a consensus rather than formal voting. However, members can formally request a vote and decision making or recommendations will then be agreed on the basis of a majority vote. In the event of a tied vote the Chair will hold the final decision.

- 4.8 In order for decisions to be valid, there must be a quorum of members including the Chair and representatives from the following services / organisations: Councillors, LBBB & young people representatives from the Children in Care Council.
- 4.9 Only designated members of the group are allowed to make decisions and vote. Support officers and advisors do not hold voting rights. However, if directed by the Chair can offer further advice and guidance on a particular topic.
- 4.10 The group will ensure working relationships with the following key groups:

<b>Group</b>	<b>Liaison Lead</b>
CIC Outcomes Group	Chris Martin
Children's Rights Officers and Advocates (CROA)	Kevin Donovan
Skittles (LBBB Children in Care Council)	Skittles Young People Representatives.

Other groups will be added as required.

## **5.0 Conflict and Dispute Resolution**

---

- 5.1 In the event of a dispute that has arisen within the group, the underlying principle is that it should be handled first, without the need for formal procedures. Discussion between partners should take place at the earliest stage to help ensure disputes are resolved speedily.
- 5.2 If members are unable to agree a resolution informally the decision will be postponed, whilst further information or advice is sought from members organisations to allow for further consideration and a decision to be made.
- 5.3 In exceptional circumstances a matter may be referred to the Director of Children's Services and Chief Executives of partner organisations and a decision will be reached by them.

These Terms of reference were completed on [Date] and agreed on [Date].

<b>Name of Chair:</b>	Clr Letchford
<b>Signature:</b>	
<b>Name of Vice-Chair:</b>	Chris Martin

<b>Signature:</b>	
-------------------	--

- End of Terms of Reference-