AGENDA

1. Apologies for Absence

2. Declaration of Members' Interests

   In accordance with the Council’s Constitution, Members are asked to declare
   any interest they may have in any matter which is to be considered at this
   meeting.

3. Minutes - 18 September 2013 (Pages 3 - 8)

4. Action Plan for recommendations relevant to the Authority made by the
   Committee's Scrutiny Report on school councils (Pages 9 - 12)

5. Members' Corporate Parenting Group (Pages 13 - 44)

6. Children and Families Bill- Special Educational Needs: plans for
   implementation (Pages 45 - 64)

   A presentation will also be delivered.
7. **Education Strategy Review and Attainment Update (Pages 65 - 68)**

   A presentation will also be delivered.

8. **Date of Next Meeting**

   Wednesday 15 January 2013 at 6.00 pm
   Committee room 2, Town Hall, Barking

9. **Any other public items which the Chair decides are urgent**

10. **To consider whether it would be appropriate to pass a resolution to exclude the public and press from the remainder of the meeting due to the nature of the business to be transacted.**

    **Private Business**

    The public and press have a legal right to attend Council meetings such as the Children’s Services Select Committee, except where business is confidential or certain other sensitive information is to be discussed. The list below shows why items are in the private part of the agenda, with reference to the relevant legislation (the relevant paragraph of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972 as amended). **There are no such items at the time of preparing this agenda.**

11. **Any other confidential or exempt items which the Chair decides are urgent**
Barking and Dagenham’s Vision

Encourage growth and unlock the potential of Barking and Dagenham and its residents.

Priorities

To achieve the vision for Barking and Dagenham there are five priorities that underpin its delivery:

1. **Ensure every child is valued so that they can succeed**
   - Ensure children and young people are safe, healthy and well educated
   - Improve support and fully integrate services for vulnerable children, young people and families
   - Challenge child poverty and narrow the gap in attainment and aspiration

2. **Reduce crime and the fear of crime**
   - Tackle crime priorities set via engagement and the annual strategic assessment
   - Build community cohesion
   - Increase confidence in the community safety services provided

3. **Improve health and wellbeing through all stages of life**
   - Improving care and support for local people including acute services
   - Protecting and safeguarding local people from ill health and disease
   - Preventing future disease and ill health

4. **Create thriving communities by maintaining and investing in new and high quality homes**
   - Invest in Council housing to meet need
   - Widen the housing choice
   - Invest in new and innovative ways to deliver affordable housing

5. **Maximise growth opportunities and increase the household income of borough residents**
   - Attract Investment
   - Build business
   - Create a higher skilled workforce
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14. **Declaration of Members’ Interests**

There were no declarations of interest.

15. **Minutes - 24 July 2013**

The minutes of the meeting held on 24 July 2013 were confirmed as correct.

16. **Attainment data- Key Stages 1, 2, 4 and 5: Initial Commentary**

The Divisional Director of Education (DDE) outlined the key points of the Report, which provided an initial commentary on attainment, as not all national data was available, as follows:

**Early Years Foundation Stage- 2013**

It was not possible to observe a trend as the method of assessment completely changed in 2013 so comparisons with previous years were not valid. On the headline indicator of a ‘good level of development’, the Borough’s overall outcome is 46 percent. This is six percentage points below national figures. Although the full implications of the 2013 results will not be clear until a complete picture of 2013 results across all other schools is published, analysis around the lower figure for Personal, Social and Emotional Development is already underway.

**Key Stage 1- 2013**

Results rose in reading, writing and mathematics at both Level 2B+ and Level 3+. However, Level 2B+ results nationally rose more than in the borough. As a result, the Borough overall has slipped to one percent below the national average in each of reading and writing at Level 2B+.

**Key Stage 2- 2013**

Not all national 2013 results are yet available. On the new combined measure of Level 4+ in reading, writing and mathematics, the Local Authority consolidated last year’s rise to 73 percent; two percentage points below the 2012 national figure of 75 percent. It is expected that the final figure will be 74 percent after adjustments have been made. The gap between the Borough’s and the national figure for
higher levels, a key focus for the Local Authority, has closed to within two percent in writing and three percent in mathematics, but remains seven percentage points below in reading. Attaining higher levels in all three subjects and improving outcomes in reading remains the focus for Key Stage 2.

**Key Stage 4- GCSE 2013**

National 2013 results are not yet available. On the headline measure of 5 A*-C including English and mathematics overall, the Local Authority's results improved to about 60 percent, continuing the trajectory of improvement for the fifth year. In separate English and mathematics, A*-C results rose in English to 74 percent but results fell in maths to 66 percent. The implications for this will not be clear until national results are known in more detail. Higher grades for English have improved to 15 percent and in maths this has been maintained at 14 percent. However, these are still both below the 2012 national levels. Improving outcomes at these higher grades is still a key priority for Key Stage 4.

**Key Stage 5 post 16- 2013**

Not all national 2013 results are available. On the headline measures of average points score (APS) and APS per entry, results improved so that the average grade overall is above a C. A-level pass rates across grade groups improved. A*-E at 99.5 percent is now above the national figure of 98.1 percent, which means almost all the Borough's A-level students are gaining a pass grade. Pass rates at the higher grades, A*-C and A*-A, have improved but there is more to do, particularly at the highest grades which are still well below those nationally.

Overall, the DDE felt that there was a solid set of results this year but there were areas which needed looking at carefully, such as the Foundation Stage.

In response to questions from Members, the DDE stated that results of Key Stage 1 generally fluctuated less than the other key stages and when it did fluctuate it was usually related to changes in the method of assessment. In relation to this year, she could not say exactly why there had been a drop; however, the method of assessment was changed. More would be clear when all the national data was available.

With regards to children who spoke English as a second language, the Borough did see an increase in the number of these children over recent years. Evidence suggested that these children may take some time but could end up doing very well by the end of primary school.

17. Impact of the "Children and Families Bill" on the Adoption Service

The Group Manager for Looked After Children Placements (GMLACP) and the Team Manager for Adoption (TMA), asked members for their comments and questions on the Report, which outlined the impacts of the reforms already made to adoption practice and the further potential impacts of the Children and Families Bill.

In response to members' questions and comments the GMLACP and TMA stated that:
The attempt of the reforms to promote "fostering for adoption" was not as straightforward as it may seem. People fostered children for different reasons to why people adopted children. Adopters often wanted to adopt a child due to infertiltiy and wanted the 'perfect baby' to raise, whereas foster carers were motivated by their willingness to help a child develop and move on.

There was a gap between what people aspired for when looking for a child to adopt and the children available for adoption; children in care had differing levels of care needs, may be a part of a sibling group and came from different ethnic and cultural backgrounds.

Local authorities are now expected not to delay the adoption process in the search for a perfect ethnic match. Attracting people from across different backgrounds to adopt children was a big challenge nationally.

There was a dip in performance with regards to placing children within one year of the 'Adoption Decision' (National Indicator 61); last year performance was at 78 percent whilst this year it was 66.7 percent. This year there was a significant increase in the number of cases transferring to the Adoption Team following the granting of a Placement Order. Furthermore, the cohort of children needing placements included more sibling groups which was a challenge as it was much more difficult to find adopters for these children. Some cases did throw the figures out; the example of a 20 month year old child with a high level of special needs who was adopted after two years was given. If it became law that care proceedings must be completed by six weeks this may help improve the Team's performance figures.

The new structure of the Team would consist of existing posts as well as new ones which would be funded by the Adoption Grant. It was not known however, how long this funding would last.

Cases where foster carers adopted the children they looked after were few in number. However, there were cases which involved foster carers who were given a special guardianship order, which gave them parental responsibility for the child but did not end the legal relationship between the child and his or her birth parents.

At the moment the Team's cohort comprised of 55 children (roughly double the figure 18 months ago) with the youngest child being one year of age and the oldest, 10.

For children under the age of 12, usually, the aim was to find adopters; however, after the age of 12, it was normally the case that adoption would not be achievable and the child would remain in the long term foster care of a carer who had a special guardianship order.

The disruption rate of adoptions was three percent in this Borough compared to the national average of 20 percent. Where an adoption is disrupted, the child would go back to care.

There are also changes in legislation regarding a reduction in the time taken to complete the assessment of prospective adopters to four months, when previously an assessment would be undertaken in approximately eight months. The change did present challenges as it would give adopters less time to think about the decision to adopt and the Service would need to adjust its processes. On the other hand it was recognised that the changes were based on the experiences of adopters and the interests of the children. Assessments were usually completed quicker when the authority used its own adopters compared to when it 'bought in' adopters from
elsewhere. To achieve this time target it is important that services continue to work in an integrated way to ensure duties are met.

In response to a request from Members the GMLACP agreed to look into the evidence for people's motivations for fostering and adoption in the Borough.

18. **Briefing on Cyber-bullying**

The Corporate Director for Children Services (CDCS) joined the meeting.

The Advisory Teacher (AT), Primary, ICT, outlined the Report as follows:

- Cyber-bullying is bullying, but in a different form. It could be defined as repetitive behaviour intended to harm another person.
- As the use of technology in everyday life increases, cyber-bullying appears to be becoming more prevalent.
- It was not exclusive to teenagers or young people and victims could often be adults.
- The challenge with this type of bullying was that it was difficult to get away from it as people tended to keep their phones or other 'smart' devices on all the time, which meant that the opportunities to receive or view abusive messages was increased.
- The other complexity was that there was a variety in the forms of media that could be used to cyber-bully someone such as texting, sending or circulating messages, pictures or videos through social media websites or via mobile phones, which could be spread maliciously very quickly, causing a lot of damage to the victim.
- A survey undertaken earlier this year for 'knowthenew.org.uk', showed that two-thirds of teens have experienced trolling, *when a person, a 'troll', posts a deliberately provocative message on the internet with the purpose of causing argument or upsetting people* or cyberbullying, but that only 17 percent would turn to their parents, and only one percent would turn to their teachers for support as their first reaction.
- Social media websites were getting better in terms of creating a safer environment for their users. This included placing a 'report abuse' icon on their websites. The website, 'ASK FM', after an incident in which a 14 year old girl was found hanged after suffering cyberbullying in Leicestershire, had put in measures such as viewing all reports within 24 hours and adding bullying and harassment as a matter to report.
- In Barking and Dagenham there had not been a huge number of cyberbullying reports reaching the Local Safeguarding Children Board (LSCB) from schools, but it is nevertheless an issue that is being taken seriously.
- It was recognised that cyber-bullying may often take place outside of school; however, the repercussions of these incidents could take place within school. All schools including primary and secondary have an e-safety policy in place. Schools are provided with a policy template which they can modify if needed. The policy in each school is reviewed annually and approved by governors. The annual Section 11 audit confirms the policies are in place. In addition schools are signposted to websites about dealing with cyber-bullying effectively.
- Aspects on dealing with cyber-bullying were in the curriculum for
Information Communication Technology and Personal, Social and Health Education. The best approach to take in teaching was a 'little and often' approach so that students were frequently informed about what to do if faced with cyber-bullying.

- The Arc Theatre Group had undertaken work with young people on 'sexting' and had obtained further funding to work with more year groups. The feedback received from the young people who took part was extremely positive with many stating it was easier to discuss many of the issues with people who were not their teachers.
- Members of the Committee could attend one of the Arc Theatre’s sessions at schools to observe their work and how it impacted on young people.
- Schools did raise the issue of cyberbullying with parents via information on their websites and parents' evenings.
- As a result of doing this Report, she had formed closer links with the Local Children's Safeguarding Board. She would be working with the Chair of the Board to ensure information was shared with the Board's members during 'cyber-bullying week' to ensure partners were working in an integrated way.

Members raised concerns that schools were not requested to report cyber-bullying incidents to the Safeguarding Lead for Education which meant that there was no way for the local authority to know whether there were any schools which had a significantly high number of cyber-bullying incidents, which would indicate that they may need support with developing better policies and procedures. The CDCS stated that the same could be said of a number of other issues such as general bullying or accidents. Schools did keep their own records and exercised their professional judgment when deciding what should and should not be reported to the local authority. She proposed that a survey of schools could be done to obtain a general picture of the incidence of cyber-bullying in schools, which was agreed by the Committee.

Members were keen that children were confident in knowing what to do when faced with cyber-bullying of any degree. Officers assured members that all schools had a policy which included teaching children about how to respond to cyber-bullying.

Officers commented that sometimes the language used by young people in social media websites could be viewed by adults as derogatory whereas to the young person it was appropriate amongst their peers and youth culture.

In response to a question, the CDCS stated that the guidance around hate crime stated that cyber-bullying relating to race should be reported; however, its standing was not as strong as before. The most common type of abuse was homophobic, which authorities knew was happening but it was not being reported.

Members queried whether the Arc Theatre could do specific work with Year Six pupils and their parents to equip them with the knowledge about exactly what to do if faced with cyber-bullying at secondary school. Members felt this would create a good atmosphere for children and their parents to prepare for these issues together, as once in secondary school, young people often found it difficult to talk to their parents about many issues include bullying. The AT stated that she would feed these comments back to the Arc Theatre Group.
19. **Action Plan for recommendations relevant to the Authority made by the Committee's Scrutiny Report on school councils**

The Committee noted the Action Plan.

20. **Date of Next Meeting**

It was noted that the next meeting would be on 13 November 2013 at 6.00pm in committee room 2, Town Hall, Barking.
### CSSC's Scrutiny Review 2013: Supporting & Strengthening School Councils

**Action Plan for recommendations relating to the Council**

*Note: recommendations 1-15 of the Report were for schools to implement directly*

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<th>RECOMMENDATIONS</th>
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<td><strong>16</strong> Integrated Youth Services explore practical ways to link the work of the Badyf to the 5 – 12 Children’s Forum.</td>
<td>Discussion with 5-12 Children’s Forum explore what they would like</td>
<td>December 2013</td>
<td>Erik Stein</td>
<td>5-12 Children's Forum on 19th November to include presentation on the work of BAD Youth Forum. All primary phase School Councils invited. Headline Engagement Report (produced every six months, and presented to Children’s Trust) captures key issues arising from 5-12 Children’s Forum.</td>
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<td>March 2014</td>
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<td>5-12 Forum ideas implemented, or explanations given why they cannot be</td>
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<td>Erik Stein</td>
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<td><strong>17</strong> Ward councillors to ensure that each school council in their ward receives an offer from them annually to attend a school council meeting in the academic year.</td>
<td>Director of Children’s Services writes annually to Ward councillors to ask them to ensure that this is done.</td>
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<td>Letters to all Headteachers and Councillors with relevant attachments around school details and surgery times sent out in October 2013.</td>
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<td>year along with information about their surgery times and an invitation to raise any items it would like with them</td>
<td>Director of Children's Services to notify schools of ward councillors, and surgery times. Ward councillors each to receive a list of schools in the ward and request to contact the schools to offer a schools council visit (cc to Headteachers)</td>
<td>September 2013</td>
<td>Helen Jenner</td>
<td>Discussions with CS GM Integrated Services indicate that due to continued budget restrictions CS have no plans to re instate primary school visits to the BTH Council Chamber nor organise Citizenship Days for secondary schools. All Heads of Borough primary schools were written to in January 2013 explaining the position making the offer to contact DS direct to explore the options for continuing with Council Chamber visits and local democracy presentations. Both Primary and Secondary Schools will be written to by DS on the basis that if enough support is shown then visit(s) and</td>
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<td>19</td>
<td>Children's Services regularly produce a list of upcoming student voice activities which is published on the 'Youth 4 Us' website</td>
<td>Youth 4 Us website relaunched</td>
<td>September 2013&lt;br&gt; New terms activities uploaded</td>
<td>September 2013&lt;br&gt; Erik Stein/Kevin Donovan</td>
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<td>20</td>
<td>Children's Services ensure this Report and its recommendations are disseminated to schools in the Borough and seek an initial formal response to it from each so that the Committee can estimate the potential impact of this Review.</td>
<td>Report Disseminated to Headteachers&lt;br&gt; Briefings for Chairs of Governors&lt;br&gt; Report Disseminated to Governing Bodies</td>
<td>September 2013&lt;br&gt; September 2013&lt;br&gt; October 2013</td>
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<td>21 Children Services monitor the progress of the recommendations and feed this back to the Committee approximately six months after the Report has been disseminated to schools, and at the same time, seek feedback from the BADYF on their perceptions of how schools have responded to this Report, and provide this information to the Committee.</td>
<td>BADYF surveyed for perceptions on schools councils</td>
<td>Feb 2014</td>
<td>Erik Stein</td>
<td>School council summit taking place on 25th November at Jo Richardson to look at recommendations and share good practice.</td>
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<td>Update report provided for Select Committee</td>
<td>5 March 2014</td>
<td>Anne Pepper</td>
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<td>Further review of schools councils undertaken by School Improvement Team</td>
<td>April 2014</td>
<td>Anne Pepper</td>
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## Title: Report on Progress of Members Corporate Parenting Group

### Report of the
**Cabinet Member for Children’s Services Councillor White and**
**Chair of the Members Corporate Parenting Group Councillor Letchford**

<table>
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<th>Open Report</th>
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| **Report Author:** Councillor Graham Letchford | **Contact Details:**
| | Tel: 0208 227 2116 |
| | E-mail: graham.letchford@lb bd.gov.uk |

**Accountable Divisional Director:** Kamini Rambellas  
**Divisional Director (interim) Complex Needs and Social Care**  
**Accountable Director:** Helen Jenner  
**Corporate Director Children’s Services**

### Summary:

This report provides an update on the Corporate Parenting arrangements in Barking and Dagenham; particularly in relation to progress and outcomes of the board. In addition, the report aims to strengthen the role and responsibilities of corporate parents. Excellent Corporate Parenting requires ownership and leadership at a senior level, including elected members.

### Recommendation(s)

The Children’s Services Select Committee is recommended:

(i) To note the roles and responsibilities of all councillors as corporate parents to children looked after and care leavers.
(ii) To note progress being achieved by the Corporate Parenting Board.
(iii) To invite all councillors to identify those areas falling within their remit, and that of other councillors, to be reviewed in order to support the work of the MPCG.
(iv) To endorse the pledge promises to looked after children and young people and invite all councillors to sign accordingly.

### Reason

Being an excellent Corporate Parent is in keeping with the Council’s policy commitment to ‘Better Health and Wellbeing’.
1. **Introduction and Background**

1.1 The primary purpose of the Members Corporate Parenting Group (MCPG) is to enable elected members, officers and partners to fulfil their legal responsibilities to the borough’s looked after children and care leavers aged from 0-25 in accordance with proposals set out in Care Matters: Time for Change (DfES 2007). The board maintains a comprehensive overview of the progress of children who are looked after and for care leavers, scrutinising the quality, effectiveness and performance of the services that support them.

1.2 Central to the role of the MCPG is the exercising of its responsibility and accountability for the well-being and future prospects of children looked after and care leavers and ensuring that this vulnerable group have opportunities to shape and influence the services which they receive.

1.3 The role of ‘Corporate Parent’ is a collective responsibility of the Council, therefore all Councillors have a basic level of responsibility for Children in Care.

2. **Addressing our Corporate Parenting responsibilities**

2.1 The responsibility of local authorities to exercise their responsibilities was first set out in September 1998 when Frank Dobson (then Secretary of State to Health) wrote to all councillors in England and Wales about the role and responsibilities of councillors in relation to looked after children. The essence of this letter was that the council has a legal and moral duty to provide the support to looked after children that any good reasonable parent would give their child.

2.2 Since that time Barking and Dagenham has exercised its Corporate Parenting responsibilities in a variety of ways. The inspection of safeguarding and looked after children services undertaken by Ofsted in June 2012 found that Corporate Parenting arrangements were not well embedded and recommended that ‘Corporate Parenting arrangements are strengthened to ensure that they properly reflect the Council’s responsibilities to children looked after’. We have now further strengthened the Corporate Parenting arrangements to ensure strong elected member representation including the Lead Member, through the Members Corporate Parenting Group. The key principle objectives of the group are set out in the terms of reference which were most recently reviewed in August 2013 (Appendix 1). In summary the key principal objectives are:

2.2.1 To maintain a clear strategic overview of the statutory services available for children and young people ensuring that all parties take collective responsibility for promoting and ensuring positive outcomes.

2.2.2 To monitor change and drive forward improvement through regular scrutiny and the Child in Care (CIC) outcomes dataset.

2.2.3 To promote the meaning and understanding of Corporate Parenting and advocate for practical expressions across all services, among Councillors, officers, partner agencies and amongst children and young people in care.
2.2.4 The work of the MPCG is governed by the Corporate Parenting Strategy (April 2011-2014) which was updated in the April 2013 Annual Report (Appendix 2).

3. Improving outcomes

3.1 The MPCG scrutinises a range of outcome data at every meeting which includes information regarding health and education outcomes as well as a range of data about outcomes for young people leaving care.

3.2 Councillors have raised concern in relation to the timeliness of health assessments and children's services and health worked in partnership to address this. Health Assessments are now a standing item on the Corporate Parenting agenda. Progress re timeliness and quality are discussed at every meeting and officers are required to report on progress and performance challenges.

3.3. It has been agreed that all looked after children attending school in LBBD will have a Streetbase and Splash card (see paragraph 4.4). We have worked with the team to raise awareness of these cards and incorporate use of them into health assessments. Children receive 2000 points for their health assessment which can be exchanged for rewards or Argos vouchers. We are now looking into the possibility for all extending this to our LAC are placed out of area and/or not attending a LBBD school.

3.4 Young people reported they had to repeat information to professionals regarding their health. MCPG commissioned the creation of the Health Passport which is now in print and being distributed to all young people aged 15 and above.

3.5 In relation to educational outcomes we continue to have concerns about our high numbers of young people who are not in employment education or training (NEET) and have a dedicated NEET post as part of the L2L team.

3.6 Personal education plan completion continues to be scrutinised and is supported by the Virtual Headteacher and his staff. PEPs have been updated to ensure that they record how effectively the Pupil Premium has been allocated to support the young person in school and to evaluate how effective that support has been. To support children at the earliest age a new PEP has been introduced for the Early Years Foundation Stage for children in Reception.

3.7 The educational attainment of our LA children and young people continues to be one of our greatest challenges. The Pupil Premium which is currently £900 and has been used by schools to offer additional tuition. In April 2014 the Pupil Premium will rise substantially to £1800. When looking at the data it is important to note that often year groups are quite small, sometimes no more than twenty. For 2012/13 performance at Key Stages 2, 59% achieved a L4 in Reading, 64% in Writing and 82% in mathematics. As a result of sometimes low starting points it is valuable to look at the progress children make between Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2. In Reading 82% made at least two levels of progress between KS1 and KS2, 82% in Writing and 86% in mathematics. These figures indicate that we are closing the gap between the performance of looked after children and all children.
3.8 Performance at Key Stage 4 was low. Out of the 27 students, only 2 [7.4%] achieved 5 A* - C with English and maths, both taught in borough schools. This was an extremely vulnerable year group and it had been very challenging to keep many of the students in full time education. 16 young people were educated in mainstream secondary schools, 8 within Barking and Dagenham. While 30% had a statement of educational need only 6 students had achieved a L4 in English and maths at KS2. Many of these young people students had high rates of fixed term exclusions, incidences of absconding and poor attendance. As with the KS2 outcomes the cohort will be based on those who have been in care from April 1st 2013 to 31st March 2014.

3.9 Key Stage 4 performance was very good in 2011 and our five highest performers have now achieved post-16 results which have enabled them to study degree courses at Sheffield, Greenwich and Anglia Ruskin universities.

3.10 We currently support 95 young people in further education and 32 in attending university. The report young people at university receive includes:

3.10.1 A leaving care accommodation bursary of £500. This is paid from the leaving care service to assist in the payment of a rent deposit for accommodation or vacation accommodation.

3.10.2 Graduation equipment payment of up to £150 for graduation ceremony costs including the hiring of the gown and photos of the graduation event.

3.10.3 Higher Education Bursary. This is a government incentive to assist all care leavers to go onto higher education. The payment is a total of £2000 and is paid over the duration of the course.

3.10.4 Student Loan/Bursary. We support young people in ensuring they make appropriate student loan and bursary applications to ensure they receive the maximum amount, this normally totals £9000.00.

4. Listening to the voices of children and young people

4.1 Skittlz is the long standing and well established Children in Care Council in Barking and Dagenham, with different age groups of young people meeting regularly with both officers and elected members.

4.1.1 Skittlz meetings take place every 1-3 weeks and two member of Skittlz regularly attend MCPG.

4.1.2 The Pledge has been developed by Skittlez and has been sent out to all young people in Care in Barking and Dagenham.

4.13 Skittlz attend the Participation Champions Meetings with a range of officers every two months.

4.1.4 Skittlz members attended the ‘Listen Up Event’ which gave young people a chance to share regional projects and celebrate their achievements improving the care system across England and Wales.
4.1.5 Skittlz members attended the BAD Youth Forum’s full forum meeting at Barking Town Hall.

4.1.6 A Skittlz member attended the AMPLIFY residential as our representative on the Children’s Commissioner’s Advisory Panel.

4.1.7 Skittlz members have been working on their presentation for a pre-Assembly meeting in December for Council Members.

4.1.8 Skittlz members have worked on essential placement details that all CIC should know about the Carers they are staying with.

4.1.9 A Care leaver has recently attended a Children’s Trust meeting to deliver a presentation on her care experiences.

4.1.10 A Care Leaver attended a multi disciplinary conference in Waltham Forest themed on the voice of the child and spoke about his experiences and how being engaged in our service has improved outcomes for him.

4.2 Attendance of young people MCPG has been key to ensuring that the voices of children and young people are able to influence service provision and development. To facilitate this, members Skittlez are always invited to attend and supported by the Participation Officer in order to ensure they feel confident in making a full contribution to the discussion.

4.3 Young people have raised a range of issues with MPCG, and wherever possible solutions have been sought, often in partnership with other council departments and agencies.

4.4 Young people said they had insufficient access to Leisure Services - MCPG asked a range of senior managers with responsibility for Corporate Parenting to attend. Work was undertaken with Public Health to ensure grants supported healthy Leisure activities and also arranged for LAC to have access to Splash cards and Streetbase cards.

4.5 Young people said their schools sometimes labelled them or treated them differently. The Corporate Director of Children’s Services wrote to all schools emphasising the importance of ensuring LAC were not being labelled and that schools ensured the same high expectations LAC and that individual cases and support needs were addressed.

4.6 The issue of the disproportionately negative impact on the income support and benefits for young care leavers when taking up apprenticeships was raised by Learn 2 Live and has been taken up in writing by the Corporate Director of Children’s Services with the Department of Work and Pensions.

4.7 Young people reported they had to repeat information to professionals regarding their health. MCPG commissioned the creation of the Health Passport which is now in print and will be given to young people from age 15. This was devised in collaboration with Skittlez group feedback and funded through corporate parenting resources.
4.8 Young people raised issues in relation to how they experienced the services they received from their social workers and Skittlz worked with officers to address these were addressed through the development of the pledge: Promises to our Children in Care (Appendix 3) which has 5 key commitments:

4.8.1. Make sure you get best care

4.8.2 Look after you and treat you well

4.8.3 Help you to be healthy

4.8.4 Best Education

4.8.5 To be successful

4.9 This pledge was agreed by MCPG in April 2013. We now need to analyse the impact this has had and to develop a Pledge appropriate to the specific needs of our care leavers.

4.10 We have also recognised the need to ensure we are engaging with looked after children and young people who are either not engaged with Skittlz or who are placed outside the borough. To address this we have:

4.10.1 Held two ‘Out of Borough’ days (Essex and Colchester), further days planned.

4.10.2 Run several 7-11 and 12-16 LAC Youth Group consultation activities including involvement in Takeover Day, the Who Cares? Trust survey, Amplify consultation and annual residential trips which the children and young people have helped to plan.

4.10.3 Developed Careweb.tv and youth4Us microsites that actively seek the views of young people;

4.10.4 Undertaken development of electronic review consultation forms for LAC through Careweb.

5. Conclusion

5.1 The Corporate Parenting arrangements in the London Borough of Barking and Dagenham have undergone significant improvement in recent years. Elected members and officers meet regularly with young people and service changes are made as a consequence of these meetings. Outcomes data in relation to looked after children and young people and care leavers are routinely scrutinised and robustly challenged. There remains however much to be done to further improve the outcomes and life chances for children in our care and this requires a whole council approach and ownership.

6. Financial Implications

6.1 The Corporate Parenting budget is included within the total Children’s Social Care budget and is funded from within the general fund.
6. Legal Implications

7.1 Implications completed by: Lindsey Marks Principal Solicitor for Children’s Safeguarding.

7.2 The role of the MPCG in discharging the Local Authority’s legal responsibilities to the borough’s looked after children and care leavers will become even more pertinent following the enactment of the Children and Families Bill 2013 in this current parliamentary year [As at 23.10.2013, the Bill had reached the House of Lords Committee stage and 2 more stages remain]. Central to the Bill is the improvement of life chances for all looked after children through a) promotion of educational achievement of children looked after by local authorities; and b) the reformation of the family justice public care proceedings system tackling delays and setting these within a 26 weeks timeframe.

7.3 Care Matters: Time for Change clarified that health, housing and education services ‘should help social services look after children in care’. The Bill extends the scope and rigour of corporate parenting which the Local Authority shall be asked to undertake and inevitably shall involve officers involved in the above agencies.

8. Background Papers Used in the Preparation of the Report:

8.1 Care Matters: Time for Change

8.2 The Inspection of Safeguarding and Looked After Children Services in London Borough of Barking and Dagenham: Ofsted July 2012

9. List of appendices:

9.1 Appendix 1: Terms of Reference for Members Corporate Parenting Group


9.3 Appendix 3: Promises to our Children in Care
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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;
Appendix 1

Members Corporate Parenting Group

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:
Appendix 1

Members Corporate Parenting Group

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;
v) 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 complied 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, LBBD & 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:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Group</th>
<th>Liaison Lead</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>CIC Outcomes Group</td>
<td>Chris Martin</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Children’s Rights Officers and Advocates (CROA)</td>
<td>Kevin Donovan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Skittles (LBBD Children in Care Council)</td>
<td>Skittles Young People Representatives</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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].

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name of Chair:</th>
<th>Cllr Letchford</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Signature:</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Name of Vice-Chair:</td>
<td>Chris Martin</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Children’s Services
Corporate Parenting Strategy

April 2011 – April 2014

April 2013 annual update report.

Prepared By

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Document Owner(s)</th>
<th>Role</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Chris Martin</td>
<td>Divisional Director</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Helen Jenner</td>
<td>Corporate Director</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Foreword

Corporate Parenting Strategy Aims
Barking and Dagenham Council’s Corporate Parenting Strategy for Looked After Children demonstrates our commitment to ensuring that the life chances of every child and young person in our care are improved in line with their peers through the provision of effective support that addresses disadvantage and enables them to reach their full potential.

The overall aim of this strategy is to reinforce the corporate responsibility of the whole council, and our partner agencies, through commitment to a range of initiatives which reflect national and local policies and best practice.

Corporate Parenting
Corporate Parenting is the term used to refer to the collective responsibility of the Council to provide the best possible care and protection for children and young people who are ‘looked after’, that is, those who are in the public care.

Effective corporate parenting in Barking and Dagenham, demands commitment from all council employees and elected members and an authority wide approach.

This responsibility for Local Authorities was first laid out in the Children Act 1989 and recent Government guidance for Councillors “If this were my child” reiterated the leading role of Councillors in ensuring that their Council acts as an effective corporate parent for every child in care, actively supporting standards of care and seeking high quality outcomes that every good parent would want for their child.

We are fortunate that we have partners, in other agencies, across the Borough who share our commitment to Corporate Parenting and take their role, through the Children’s Trust extremely seriously, and we receive regular reports to the Board.

We are passionate that this must be a priority for everyone, ensuring the best possible outcomes for children for whom we act as parents

Helen Jenner
Corporate Director for Children’s Services
Corporate Parenting

The responsibility of local authorities in improving outcomes and actively promoting the life chances of children they look after has become known as ‘corporate parenting’ in recognition that the task must be shared by the whole local authority and partner agencies. The role of the corporate parent is to act as the best possible parent for each child they look after and to advocate on his/her behalf to secure the best possible outcomes.

1 INTRODUCTION

Most children and young people live successful and happy lives within their families and have little need for external support other than that provided universally by services such as health or education. However, for some, targeted and specialised support is required to help address particular problems and maintain the family as a unit. Such support will vary and may come from Schools, Integrated Family Services or Health Services but, whatever form it takes, services will always be based on a full assessment of child or young person’s needs within the family, will be planned and coordinated, and delivered to agreed outcomes to ensure their best interests are met.

For a small number of young people, such interventions are insufficient to ensure their safety and well-being. In these cases, either with the agreement of the parent/s or through care proceedings, the Council needs to assume responsibility for these children. Children in this situation come into care and the Authority takes on the role of Corporate Parent. Corporate Parenting is the term used to describe the duties of the Local Authority and its partners to children and young people in care. Its central principle is that the Local Authority and its partners should parent children in care the same way any parent parents their own children.

In essence it means:

1. Accepting responsibility for all children in the Council’s care

2. Making their needs a priority

3. Seeking the same outcomes any good parent would want for their own child.

The Children Act 1989 defines a child as being aged 0 - 18 years, but the Children (Leaving Care) Act 2000 extends a Local Authority’s responsibilities to care leavers up to the age of 21, or 25 if they are in full-time education.

When a Local Authority looks after a child or young person, it has a legal responsibility to share the duties and responsibilities of the child’s parent. Where a child or young person is subject to a Care Order, this responsibility is conferred upon the Local Authority by a Court. Although it is best practice not to make any decision in relation to the child or young person in isolation from considering the wishes and feelings of the parent, the Local Authority does have the power to do so. These powers include giving consent for children or young people to undergo medical interventions.

Unlike children or young people subject to Care Orders, children and young people in care under Section 20 of the Children Act 1989 are looked after...
under a partnership arrangement with the parent. The Local Authority does not share parental responsibility with the parent and cannot consent to any planned medical treatment except in exceptional circumstances. Parents should be consulted about all aspects of a child’s care, but there are numerous occasions when the Local Authority acts in the best interests of a child, in the absence of a parent. An arrangement under Section 20 may be discharged at any time by a parent and the child or young person must be returned home.

Irrespective of how a child or young person comes into our care, it is always more beneficial to the child or young person that the Local Authority works in partnership with the parent whenever it is possible.

In order to fulfill our role as a responsible Corporate Parent, this Strategy sets out Barking & Dagenham’s commitment and determination to deliver improved outcomes for our children and young people in care. We want their childhoods to be safe, secure, healthy, productive and enjoyable as well as providing stable foundations for the rest of their lives.

We are determined:

- to give every child and young person in care a stable, high quality placement
- to get them a place in a good school and help them get the most out of it
- to support them in continued training, employment or education past the age of 16
- to secure support for all aspects of their lives outside school
- to better support them to make a positive transition into adult life
- to focus their needs through strong accountability.

The Strategy aims to focus the role of the Corporate Parent by outlining key activities that support the Corporate Parenting role.

The 2011 – 14 strategy will also be reviewed on an annual basis by the Members Corporate Parenting Group and progress will be reported in the form of an annual update report, as enclosed herein.
2 THE NATIONAL CONTEXT

As of March 2012 there were 67,050 children in care in England and it is well documented that they underachieve educationally and are highly represented in social exclusion factors such as teenage pregnancy, unemployment, youth offending, poor mental health, drug and alcohol abuse and homelessness.

Evidence suggests that children who come into care require support, stability and opportunities so that they can overcome these barriers and maximise their life chances.

The Government also acknowledges that nationally there is a gap between outcomes for children in care and those of all children.

In 2008, for example:

- Only 66% of young people left care with 1 or more GCSE compared with 99% in the non care population
- Only 14% left care with 5 A*-C grades compared to 65% of all young people
- Their health is poorer than that of other children. 45% of children and young people in care were assessed as having a mental health disorder compared to around 10% of all children
- 9% of children in care aged 10 and over have been cautioned or convicted of an offence, compared to 4.3% of all children
- 30% of care leavers aged 19 were not in education, employment or training compared to 8.1% of all 19 year olds.

To address this, the government launched a Green Paper, Care Matters, which was followed by a White Paper, Care Matters: Time for Change.
3. THE LOCAL CONTEXT

Update for March 2013

There were 420 children and young people in the care of Barking and Dagenham (78 per 10,000 population under 18), compared to 427 (79 per 10,000 population under 18) in March 2012.

- 38% with the agreement of parents (Section 20) compared to 39% last year.
- 61% through Court Orders (Interim, Full Care Orders, Placement Orders) compared to 60% last year.
- 1% remanded into LA Care.
- 82% children in care are placed with foster or adoptive families compared to 81% last year.
- 5% are placed within residential settings compared to 7% last year.

The majority of the rest of the children in care are placed in semi-independent accommodation with a few placed with their birth families as part of a reunification process.

Where children and young people are unable to return to their birth family, adoption and special guardianship orders are considered, as these offer a secure, permanent and stable alternative. In 2012/2013, 15% of children left care through adoption or special guardianship compared to 17% in 2011/12, and 12% in 2010/11.

Over the past few years, Barking & Dagenham Children’s Services have invested significant effort into raising the aspirations of both children and young people in care and their allocated workers.
The results of our efforts can be seen in the following outcomes for children in care:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Outcome</th>
<th>04/05</th>
<th>05/06</th>
<th>06/07</th>
<th>07/08</th>
<th>08/09</th>
<th>09/10</th>
<th>10/11</th>
<th>11/12</th>
<th>12/13</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Health of children in care for a year or more</td>
<td>90.8%</td>
<td>97.3%</td>
<td>98.1%</td>
<td>98.6%</td>
<td>93.0%</td>
<td>90.1%</td>
<td>91.0%</td>
<td>94.2%</td>
<td>71.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Looked After Children achieving 5 A*-C GCSEs (or equivalent) at Key Stage 4 (including English and Maths)</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>10.0%</td>
<td>9.4%</td>
<td>12.5%</td>
<td>21.4%</td>
<td>20.0%</td>
<td>7.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Employment, Education &amp; Training of Care Leavers (NI48)</td>
<td>55.0%</td>
<td>38.8%</td>
<td>51.0%</td>
<td>58.3%</td>
<td>49.2%</td>
<td>48.6%</td>
<td>49.0%</td>
<td>40.4%</td>
<td>56.4%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The number of young people who were previously in care and are now studying at university as of November 2012 is 22, however despite this inspirational improvement there is still work to be done to eliminate the gap between the achievements of children in care in comparison to their peers, who still achieve much better educational outcomes. It is the responsibility of all professionals working with children and young people in care to make sure that they are given the highest priority, and to give them the help and support that they need to maximise their life chances.

Although the statutory responsibilities for children in care are primarily discharged by Children’s Services and the Complex Needs and Social Care division, Corporate Parenting is the responsibility of all Council departments and partner agencies.
The success of Corporate Parenting depends on ownership and leadership at a senior level, including elected members who have a specific role to play in ensuring that the outcomes and life chances of looked after children and young people are maximised.

**THE ROLE OF CORPORATE PARENTS IN BARKING AND DAGENHAM:**

As Corporate Parents, we need to continually ask:

- If this were my child, would it be good enough for them?
- If I were that child, would it be good enough for me?
- How could I make it ever better?
- How will I know that they have done well and are happy and successful?

Corporate Parenting is a borough-wide issue which involves not only Senior Managers and elected members, but also all staff in agencies who have contact with or are working together with children and young people. Staff in all agencies have a duty to ensure that they play their part as effective Corporate Parents. We must demand the highest standards for all our children in care, ensuring that systems and services are in place which reflects their needs, abilities, cultural heritage and life experiences.

### 3 GOVERNANCE & DELIVERY OF SPECIALIST SERVICES FOR CHILDREN IN CARE

Reports to the Children’s Trust, the Children’s Select Committee and the Local Safeguarding Children Board from Corporate Parents ensure that outcomes for Looked After Children are closely monitored.

The Children In Care (CIC) Outcomes Group acts as a strategic hub in collating and analysing performance information across developmental domains for children in care. Representation on the CIC Outcomes Group is from Social Care, Health and Education and it is chaired by the Director of Children’s Services.

The Skittlz Group is Barking and Dagenham’s Child in Care Council. The group comprises representatives from each age group who have a regular dialogue with Senior Managers to ensure that the views of children and young people are being heard. The group actively seeks to gather and promote the views of other children and young people in the care of Barking and Dagenham Children’s Services.
The Participation & Champions group is a new sub group to the Members Corporate Parenting Group. This group consists of looked after young people via Skittlz (CiC Council) and a group of social workers including Independent Reviewing Officers and the Divisional Director for Complex Needs and Social Care. This group initially came together to enable young people to share directly their insights with a group of social workers. Further discussion at this initial workshop discussed whether there would be value in a regular meeting of Skittlz representatives and operation staff so that young people’s experiences could be shared and changes to practice and procedure could be debated and simply implemented where possible. The group has begun to meet on a bi monthly basis and initial tasks include agreeing membership and terms of reference. The group also has the potential to be ‘tasked’ by the MCPG to explore specific themes as a group of both young people and professionals and report findings / make recommendations back to the MCPG itself.
Appendix 2

Key Achievements 2012/13

- Continued improvement in the unauthorised absence from school performance over the past 3 years to the extent that Barking and Dagenham is ranked 2\textsuperscript{nd} nationally.
- Children Looked After who have been excluded from school (fixed term) is now below the national average (11.7\% nationally) and Barking and Dagenham ranked 8\textsuperscript{th} nationally.
- Over 85\% of young people aged 16 plus have up to date pathway plans that have been reviewed in the past 6 months, an improvement of over 35\% when compared with the performance 2 years ago.
- Reduction in the number of young people cared for in residential institutions from 33 at the beginning of the year to 23 at the end March 2013.
- Increase in the number of young people cared for by local foster carers; 251 at March 2012 to 266 in March 2013.
- 81\% of children in care are currently placed in foster care or placed for adoption - a 2\% increase on the previous year.
- Specialist fostering scheme PITSTOP has expanded from 5 to 9 placements in the past year.
- Placement stability for Children Looked After has been maintained has improved – both long term and short term
- The Emotional and behavioural health of looked after children has improved with the average score falling from 18.4 in 11/12 to 13.5 in 12/13. This is in line with national averages.
- The percentage of Care Leavers in suitable Accommodation continues to improve, rising from 87\% in 11/12 to 92\% in 12/13.
- Young people in care council (Skittlz) meets bi monthly with Divisional Director and a group of social workers across the directorate to discuss and debate concerns and to take action improve services offered to children in care. This has for example, resulted in young people piloting the use of digital media to ensure meaningful contributions to their reviews. The work of this group will be regularly reported to the Members Corporate Parenting Group.
- A group of young people in care have begun to contribute to the Complex Needs and Social care division’s review and re-shaping of a future social work service.
- Skittlz continue to attend and contribute to Member’s Corporate Parenting Group, supported by the Rights and Participation Team.
- The Participation Champions group has been established as a sub group of the MCPG. This is a group consisting of front line social workers and Skittlz representatives, to enable young people to express their views to social workers and to make simple adjustments to practice where possible.
- ‘Young People’s Take Over Day’ is undertaken every November with young people who are / have been looked after shadow key staff from Children’s Services. The directorate remains committed to acting upon the feedback received by young people as a consequence of their time with managers.
## Children In Care Dataset - Children's Complex Needs and Social Care

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Description of Indicator</th>
<th>End of Year 2011/12 Performance</th>
<th>End of Year 2012/13 Performance</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Number of Children in Care</td>
<td>427 n/a</td>
<td>420 n/a</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Children in Care Rate per 10,000</td>
<td>86 n/a</td>
<td>78 n/a</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Children who have had 3 or more placements</td>
<td>54/427 12.6%</td>
<td>39/240 9.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Children aged under 16 who have been in care for at least 2.5 years and in the same placement for 2 years</td>
<td>64/97 66.0%</td>
<td>86/115 74.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Children in care reviews completed within timescales</td>
<td>349/406 86.0%</td>
<td>320/390 82.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Children in Care participating in their review</td>
<td>323/327 98.8%</td>
<td>308/314 98.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Emotional and behavioural health of looked after children</td>
<td>179/3300 18.4</td>
<td>185/2496 13.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Placed for Adoption Timing</td>
<td>14/22 63.6%</td>
<td>14/21 66.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Children In Care with up to date 3 monthly visits</td>
<td>190/212 89.6%</td>
<td>188/228 82.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Children In Care with up to date 6 weekly visits</td>
<td>162/218 74.3%</td>
<td>138/187 73.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Children In Care with an up to date PEP</td>
<td>190/255 74.5%</td>
<td>190/254 74.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>All Children In Care with up to date health checks</td>
<td>357/427 83.6%</td>
<td>265/420 63.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Children in Care for a year or more up to date health checks</td>
<td>261/277 94.2%</td>
<td>195/274 71.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Care Leavers with an up to date Pathway Plan</td>
<td>203/226 89.8%</td>
<td>203/230 88.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Care leavers age 19 in employment, education or training</td>
<td>19/47 40.4%</td>
<td>22/39 56.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Care Leavers in Suitable Accommodation</td>
<td>41/47 87.2%</td>
<td>36/39 92.3%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
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Promises to our children in care

Everyone at The council wants to do their best to support young people who are in our care. Our promises to you will help us to make sure that all children and young people in care are looked after well. Our promises include a number of things we will do that will help make sure that your time in care is a positive experience.

To make sure you get the best care we promise to:

- give you your own social worker and tell you who you can contact when they are not available;
- involve the children in care council (Skittlz) in reviewing how well we are keeping our promises to you;
- make sure that adults, such as carers and workers, get the right training to understand the issues that affect children in care;
- talk to you about when you and your family can see or contact each other and support travel arrangements: if you can’t see or contact your family we will tell you why;
- keep brothers and sisters together, wherever possible;
- make sure you meet with an Independent Reviewing Officer (IRO) before your review so you can share your thoughts about your care;
- share the good things that you have done in your review and discuss issues you feel are important;
- support you to make a complaint if you need to;
- provide a Children’s Rights Service and an independent advocate to speak for you if you want them to.
To look after you and treat you well, we promise to:

- make sure your social worker doesn't change unless there is a good reason for it;
- make sure your social worker stays in touch and visits you regularly to see how you are;
- write a care plan which is all about you and your needs and which is looked at regularly;
- listen to you, be honest and take notice of what you want;
- talk to you about why decisions are made and explain this clearly in a way you can understand;
- make sure you are in a placement that is suitable for you.

To help you be healthy we promise to:

- make sure you have regular health, dental and eye check-ups;
- make sure you have opportunities to do fun things and get to know other children in care;
- provide allowances for you to do activities and access our Leisure Centres for free if you are a care leaver.

To get the best education we promise to:

- make sure that you have a place at a good nursery or school that will help you to do your best;
- work with your school and designated teacher to help you do your best by having a personal education plan;
- help you to get on the courses you want to study;
- celebrate your achievements and successes.

To be successful in life we promise to:

- make sure that you are asked about important decisions which affect your life;
- make sure that when you move from one service to another or leave our care that there is a plan in place that is suitable for you;
- provide you with support to live independently when you're ready;
- make sure you leave care with your savings;
- help you learn to manage money well;
- help you get ready for the world of work, find a job or training placement.

Please do not hesitate to contact the Children’s Rights and Participation Team should you have any questions or queries

020 8227 5051
## Title: Children and Families Bill

### Report of the Corporate Director of Children's Services

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Open Report</th>
<th>For Information</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Report Author: Helen Jenner</td>
<td>Contact Details: Tel: 020 227 5800 <a href="mailto:Helen.jenner@lbdd.gov.uk">Helen.jenner@lbdd.gov.uk</a></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Accountable Divisional Director: Jane Hargreaves, Education

### Accountable Director: Helen Jenner, Children’s Services

### Summary:

The Children and Families Bill was introduced into the House of Commons on 4 February 2013 and (according to the ‘long title’) aims to:

- Make provision about children, families, and people with special educational needs; to make provision about the right to request flexible working; and for connected purposes.

The Children’s Select Committee considered the implications of the Green Paper which informed the Bill in its work in 2011/12. The considerations of the Select Committee will feed into how the Local Authority addresses the new recommendations. The report of the Select Committee is included as Appendix A.

The Bill covers the work of children’s services (for adoptions, family justice, special educational needs, childcare and the Children’s Commissioner), local government legal teams (for adoptions and family proceedings) and HR teams (shared parental leave, paternal time off work for ante-natal care, and reform of law on requesting flexible working).

### Recommendation

The Committee is recommended to note the report.

### Reason

This report is related to the Council's priority to ensure every child is values so they can succeed.

1. **Introduction and Background**
   
   1.1 There are eight parts to the Bill:
   
   - Part 1: Adoption and children looked after by local authorities
   - Part 2: Family Justice
1.2 Although all 8 parts have some relevance to the Health and Wellbeing Board it is Part 3, Special Educational needs that is of particular relevance.

This report provides further detail on the plans to ensure the recommendations of part 3 the Bill are implemented by September 2014, including work to date and consultations plans for the Local Offer.

1.3 The Bill retains current definitions of special educational needs and special educational provision extends them, to include young persons in education or training under the age of 25: “a child or young person has special educational needs if he or she has a learning difficulty or disability which calls for special educational provision to be made for him or her” or has ‘a significantly greater difficulty in learning than the majority of others of the same age’; the “disability” has to prevent or hinder the child or young person from making use of facilities of a kind generally provided for others of the same age. The Government has resisted calls to include all children with disabilities in the legal remit of the Bill.

2. Proposal and Issues

The Bill requires the implementation of the following proposals.

There is a new proposed SEN Code of Practice which sets out the approach to meeting the needs of children and young people with SEN

2.1 Role of local authority

A local authority must use its powers to identify all children and young people in its area who have or may have special educational needs and is “responsible” for them when the authority has identified them or they have been brought to the authority’s attention.

Local authorities and their partner Clinical Commissioning Groups (CCGs) have a new duty to commission services jointly for children and young people with SEN, both those with and without Education Health and Care (EHC) plans, and to make arrangements for education, health and care provision (where this improves their well-being), agreeing personal budgets, the advice about how provision is to be accessed, how complaints about the provision will be addressed, and how disputes between commissioners will be resolved.

‘Children, young people and their families should be at heart of this process.’

To do this, the local authority must work with: children and young people with SEN, their parents and carers, maintained schools and nurseries, academies, post-16 institutions, non-maintained special schools, children’s centres in its area and early years education providers.

A local authority must keep under review the local special educational provision and consider the extent that it is meeting the needs of the children and young people for
whom it is responsible. The local authority must work with schools and other education providers to keep this provision under review.

Local authorities also have a duty to keep under review the special educational provision and social care provision in their areas for children and young people who have SEN and the provision made for children and young people from their areas that are educated out of the area. The local authority will do this by working with the partners to their joint commissioning arrangements.

Local authorities must involve parents, children and young people in developing and reviewing the local offer and should cooperate with those providing services and education.

Local authorities also have a duty to ensure that there is suitable education and training for young people in their areas, including for those children and young people who are unable to attend school, for example, due to health needs.

2.2 The Local Offer

A local authority must publish a “local offer” of services it expects to be available for children and young people with special educational needs. The offer must include EHC provision, arrangements for requesting, identifying and assessing children and young people’s SEN; other education and training, including Apprenticeships, support to help children and young people move between phases in education, and prepare for adulthood as well as travel support. As at present, the local authority can secure provision in a school or college outside England and Wales. The process of developing the local offer is intended to help local authorities to improve provision. The local offer should not simply be a directory of existing services.

2.3 Education, health and care plans

Statements and learning difficulty assessments will be replaced with a new birth to 25 Education, Health and Care Plan, which co-ordinates the support for children and young people in a way that focuses on desired outcomes including, as they get older, preparation for adulthood. Families and young people with an Education, Health and Care Plan will be offered a personal budget, extending choice and control over their support.

Education, Health and Care Plans will have a wider age remit than statements, and will include very young children (0-2) and ‘young people’ (over school age to 25 providing they are in further education or training).

The statutory assessment process will remain but must be co-ordinated across education, health and care to ensure a cohesive experience for children, parents and young people. Where the local authority believes that a young person’s needs are such that provision may need to be set out in a plan, then the local authority must secure an EHC needs assessment. EHC plans are integrated support plans for children and young people with SEN from 0 to 25. They are focused on achieving outcomes and helping children and young people make a positive transition to adulthood, including into paid employment and independent living. They will be produced in partnership with parents, children and young people and will be based on a coordinated approach to the delivery of services across education,
health and care. Children, young people and their parents must be involved and consulted throughout the assessment and planning process. As with statements, the EHC Plan must “specify” the special educational and other provision needed by the child or young person.

The local authority, as at present, must secure provision in a mainstream institution unless this is incompatible with the wishes of the parents or the provision of efficient education for others. Also, as at present, the local authority remains responsible for securing the educational provision but there is no equivalent duty on social care and health providers to comply with requirements in the plan (although Government amendments have been laid to change this). Maintained schools and academies named in EHC plans have a duty to admit where the institution is named in a young person’s plan.

2.4 Personal budgets
There is currently a pilot being undertaken, but the Bill extends this to all who have an EHC plan. When asked by the parent or young person, the local authority must make available a “personal budget” to allow the parent or young person to be involved in securing provision.

2.5 Appeals
Parents wanting to appeal against an EHC plan will first have the opportunity to take part in mediation before appealing to the First Tier Tribunal. However, participation in mediation will not be a requirement of appealing to the Tribunal (although Local Authorities will be expected to demonstrate that they have tried to take this approach). There are new voluntary arrangements for resolving disputes between local authorities, schools and colleges, and parents. Provision is made for children themselves to make appeals to the Tribunal.

2.6 Duties on schools and colleges
Institutions must use their “best endeavours” to secure special educational provision for children who have special educational needs. Schools, but not FE colleges, must appoint an SEN co-ordinator. Parents must be informed if special educational provision is being made for their child. Schools must prepare an SEN information report.

2.7 Code of Practice
A new SEN Code of Practice will be issued, it will cover FE institutions. The Code will be approved using the negative instrument procedure, and not the affirmative procedure with the current Code. As previously announced, and confirmed by the draft Code published on 15 March, the existing arrangements for School Action and School Action plus will be abolished.

2.8 Integration
The Children and Families Bill has integration at its heart and a key theme for the project is ensuring integrated approaches that make pathways for children with SEN/LDD more straightforward, specifically aiming to reduce a key complaint of families that they have to repeat their life story and circumstances repeatedly for each agency, with multiple assessment being completed, but in some carers views “very little ever changes”.

Page 48
3. Consultation- Implementing the Bill in Barking and Dagenham (including Consultation proposals)

3.1 A Project Programme Board has been established with multi-agency representation. Work has already been completed, across agencies to put together a draft Local Offer for consultation. The consultation will run until December 2013.

3.2 It is proposed that a Project Update is presented to the Children's Select Committee in June 2014, to ensure we remain on track for implementation in September 2014.

List of appendices:

Appendix A- Children's Services Select Committee Report - Scrutiny review into Special Educational Needs provision in Barking and Dagenham.
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Children’s Services Select Committee

Scrutiny review into Special Educational Needs provision in Barking and Dagenham.

Lead Member’s Foreword

As a local Councillor, I am often asked questions about schools and the education system by parents trying to do the best for their children. They tell me they often face a confusing, bureaucratic system where they often do not know where to go for help. With so many choices within mainstream schooling it can be a daunting prospect trying to secure the best education for your child.

Now imagine trying to navigate this system if your child had Special Educational Needs.

My fellow Members spoke about their personal experiences of the SEN system and the difficulties they have had to face in obtaining help and support. They also spoke about their concerns about the lack of information available for their role as School Governors.

The Coalition Government is proposing major changes to the way that children with SEN are educated so the Select Committee felt that a scrutiny review of this area would help the service area to implement the proposals and so improve, where possible, the services received by children with SEN.

As Lead Member for the Children Services Select Committee, I would like to say thank you to Members, who participated in the Select Committee providing valuable opinions and recommendations, which have been used in this report.

Due to Member’s interest in SEN, they chose to explore a number of topics in the short period that Select Committees are provided, all of which they completed. I would also like to say a thank you to the Council staff for their support and advice in many areas of this review.

Councillor Laila Butt
Lead Member of the Children’s Services Select Committee
1. Introduction:

1.1 Background
On 9 March 2011, The Coalition Government announced the publication of a Green Paper entitled “Support and aspiration: A new approach to special educational needs and disability – A Consultation” which outlined a proposed overhaul of how children with special needs and disabilities are treated in the English school system.

1.2 National Context and definitions
Disabled children and young people, and children and young people with Special Educational Needs (SEN) are covered by a range of statutory provisions, e.g. the Equality Act 2010, or have SEN as defined in the Education Act 1996.

School-aged children are defined as having SEN if they have a significantly greater difficulty in learning than the majority of children of their age which calls for additional or different educational provision to be made for them\(^1\).

A child with SEN may need extra help in a range of areas including:

- Reading, writing or mathematics
- Communication skills
- Making friends or relating to adults
- Behavioural issues and organisational skills
- Some kind of sensory or physical need which may affect them in school.

There are currently approximately 1.7million children and young people nationally identified as having SEN.

There are three levels of intervention for pupils with SEN in England:

- School Action – where the teacher or the school Special Educational Needs Coordinator (SENCO) decides to provide something for the child additional to or different from the school’s usual differentiated approach to help children learn. In January 2011, 10.9% of the school population were identified at School Action level, approximately 889,540 pupils.

- School Action Plus – where the school consults specialists and requests help from external services. In January 2011, 6.2% of the school population were at School Action Plus level, approximately 550,155 pupils.

- Statement – where the child requires support beyond that which the school can provide and the local authority arranges appropriate provision. In January

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\(^1\) Definitions of SEN from the SEN Code of Practice http://www.education.gov.uk/publications/OrderingDownload/DFES%2000581%202000MIG2228.pdf
2011, 2.8% of the school population or approximately 224,210 pupils had a statement of SEN².

There is a parallel system for children aged under 5, with Early Years Action, similar to School Action, and Early Years Action Plus, similar to School Action Plus, as well as statements of SEN.

1.3 Local context

In Barking and Dagenham
There are approximately 35,075 pupils in Barking and Dagenham. There are approximately 7,274 children and young people identified as having SEN which is 20.7%. This compares to the London average of 21.4% and the national average of 20.6%.

There are 807 pupils (2.3%) with a statement of SEN; 2,078 pupils (5.9%) are at School Action Plus and 4,389 pupils (12.5%) are at School Action³.

2. Membership
The Children’s Services Select Committee (CSSC) consisted of nine councillors and two co-opted church representatives and two co-opted parent governor representatives:

- Councillor L Butt  Lead Member
- Councillor G Letchford  Deputy Lead Member
- Councillor R Douglas
- Councillor A S Jamu
- Councillor E Kangethe
- Councillor T Perry
- Councillor B Poulton
- Councillor H S Rai
- Councillor A Salam
- Reverend R Gayler  Church Representative - Church of England
- Mrs G Spencer   Church Representative - Roman Catholic
- Mr I Ncube  Parent Governor - Secondary
- Mrs G Yousef  Parent Governor - Primary

The Scrutiny Champion for the Select Committee was Helen Jenner, Corporate Director of Children’s Services, and the Select Committee was supported by Matthew Whiddett, Scrutiny Manager.

2.1 Methodology
The terms of reference for the review are set out in Appendix 1.

Evidence was gathered in three formal Select Committee meetings held between 6 September 2011 and 10 January 2012. The Select Committee received presentations and reports from a range of stakeholders, including the Disabled Association of Barking and Dagenham (DABD uk), Alex Rowley a former pupil with SEN, Simon Weaver Head Teacher of Dagenham Park Church of England School, and council officers from the various teams involved in current SEN provision in the borough – Educational Psychology, Special Educational Needs and Inclusion Services and Early Years Inclusion Services.

The Select Committee also visited two schools in the borough:

- Trinity School, a special school in Barking and Dagenham serving the special educational needs of over 250 disabled children and young people aged 3-19.
- Five Elms Primary School which caters for children between the ages of 3-11 years and has an Additional Resource Provision (ARP) for deaf children.

The final report was agreed by the Children’s Services Select Committee on 21 February 2012, before being presented to Cabinet on 20 March 2012 for comment, and Assembly on 28 March 2012 for agreement.
2. Findings and recommendations

The Green Paper "Support and aspiration: A new approach to special educational needs and disability" seeks to address perceived concerns in the current SEN system including:

- Parents having to battle to get the support their child needs.
- SEN statements not joining up education, health and care support.
- Children falling between the gaps in services or having to undergo multiple assessments.
- Multiple layers of paperwork and bureaucracy adding delays to getting support, therapy and vital equipment.
- A confusing and adversarial assessment process with a perceived conflict of interests for the local authority who assesses need as well as provides the care.
- Too many children being over identified with SEN.

The Government is proposing to:

- Include parents in the assessment process and introduce a legal right, by 2014 to give them control of funding for the support their child needs.
- Replace statements with a single assessment process and a combined education, health and care plan.
- Ensure assessment and plans run from birth to 25 years old.
- Replace School Action and School Action Plus systems with a simpler school-based category.
- Overhaul teachers training on SEN provision.
- Allowing voluntary groups to coordinate packages of support and thus reduce the reliance on the local authority.
- Give parents a greater choice of school and the power to set up special free schools.

The Green Paper is split into five themes:

- Early identification and assessment
- Giving parents control
- Learning and achieving
• Preparing for adulthood

• Services working together for families.

This report will follow the above themes.

2.1 Early identification and assessment
The Government is proposing to:

• Help professionals identify problems as they emerge, with a robust system of early checks for children involving education, health and social care.

• Put in place a reformed assessment process for children with complex needs, with a single multi-agency approach and “Education, Health and Care Plan” for 0 to 25 years old, focusing on outcomes, giving parents the same statutory protection as the current statement of SEN.

• Speed up the process for families, by reducing the time limit for statutory assessments.

The Select Committee heard evidence of delays in assessment of SEN from Alex Rowley who presented his experiences of the system in October 2011. There was also anecdotal evidence from the two schools visited to support a need to improve early assessments and make them more cross agency and quicker.

The Select Committee broadly welcomed these principles but raised a concern that if assessments were done more quickly, they may suffer from a reduction in quality.

Recommendation 1:
The Select Committee recommends the implementation of a reformed, robust assessment process with clear timescales to help professionals identify any needs for children at as early a stage as possible. As the process will start in the early years it will need regular, effective review.

2.2 Giving Parents control
The Government is proposing to:

• Make services more transparent for families with local services publishing a “local offer” of what is available.

• Strengthening the choice and control given to parents, with the option of personalised budgets by 2014 for all families with children with a statement of SEN.

• Support families through the system, with trained workers to help parents navigate services.

• Ensure parents have a real choice of a range of schools.
Appendix A

- Ensure that parents and local authorities always attempt mediation before making an appeal to the Tribunal.

The Select Committee debated how the Council could advertise what services were available. With the current financial restraints, large print runs of leaflets would be too expensive so the Select Committee agreed that a web-based promotion of the “local offer” would be most appropriate with local advice agencies supporting with signposting to the website.

**Recommendation 2:**
The Select Committee recommends that clear details of available provision for SEN is published on the Council’s Website for parents to view.

The Select Committee heard from three Head Teachers and the Corporate Director of Children’s Services about the current provision of SEN services in the borough and the different approaches found in schools. The choice of services in the borough is restricted by financial considerations regarding the value for money of providing expensive services for few children. Members expressed concerns with how difficult is for parents to get information about what services are provided and the lack of choices in the borough.

**Recommendation 3:**
The Select Committee recommends that parents are made aware of all affordable options for their child’s care as early as possible in the assessment process.

The Corporate Director of Children’s Services explained that more choice of services could result from the introduction of personalised budgets as families would be able to purchase more flexible packages of care from different providers.

The Select Committee debated the potential benefits and difficulties of personalised budgets. The greatest potential benefit was that parents could purchase more flexible packages of care from multiple providers and so ensure their child received the best possible, tailored, care package.

The greatest potential difficulty was seen to be the possibility for misspending the personalised budget. Members were informed that the personalised budgets introduced in Adult Social Care had not resulted in any such misspending and so there should not be a great risk of it happening with children’s personalised budgets.

The Select Committee suggested that parents would benefit from expert guidance on the personalised budgets and how they could be spent to purchase the best possible care for the child. The Multi Agency Locality Teams (MALT) were suggested as a possible source of guidance and potential monitoring of the budgets.

**Recommendation 4:**
The Select Committee recommends that the introduction of personalised budgets is supported by a framework of professional advice to ensure the best use of resources for each child.
The Select Committee discussed the current appeals process for parents that disagreed with the assessments for their children with SEN. Currently parents take the local authority to the First Tier Tribunal (SEN and Disability) for an independent review of the decision. However this is a judiciary process and therefore expensive to the public purse. The Select Committee felt that a multi-stage appeals process along the lines of the current Corporate Complaints procedure would help mediation of the disagreement in a non-judicial environment.

Recommendation 5:
The Select Committee recommends that Children’s Services develop a multi-staged appeals process to facilitate mediation before going to Tribunal based around the current assessment process.

2.3 Learning and achieving
The Government is proposing to:

- Address over identification of SEN with a new single early years setting and school based SEN category to replace School Action and School Action Plus.
- Focus accountability on the progress of the lowest attainers and introducing a new measure into school performance tables.
- Better equip teachers and support staff to address SEN and poor behaviour through training and continued professional development.
- Give schools more autonomy to innovate and transform SEN provision and allow special schools to become Academies.

The Select Committee heard anecdotal examples of where children had been incorrectly diagnosed as having SEN and debated whether this over-diagnosis could possibly be linked to either any financial incentive from Central Government funding or poor training for staff carrying out assessments. The Select Committee were especially concerned with the future prospects and potential bullying of any child who was incorrectly labelled as having SEN.

The Select Committee were informed that great progress had been made in the borough to reduce the gap between average attainment and the lowest levels of attainment and that the borough was better than the national average at this. The Select Committee agreed that this new measure would be valuable as they felt that average measures did not take into account the needs of the lowest attainer’s who were disproportionally children with SEN.

The Select Committee discussed the benefits of additional training for staff to help identify children with SEN and also to provide better quality care, whether this be in a special school with dedicated resources or a mainstream school with a special unit. The Select Committee heard anecdotal examples of where a child with SEN had been placed in a mainstream school which was ill equipped to deal with them and thus the child caused disruption in classes for the other children.
The Select Committee was informed that one way of making sure that children with SEN received better education was to ensure that schools developed their School Improvement plans to focus on SEN provision as well as curriculum issues. There would also be a benefit if these plans were developed by schools across their current Locality Cluster Groups, as this would help to identify where services were available and could be potentially shared.

**Recommendation 6:**

| The Select Committee recommends that schools are encouraged, through their Locality Cluster Groups to develop linked School Improvement Plans for SEN issues as well as curriculum issues. |

The Select Committee also debated the merits of special schools being allowed to become Academies and felt that overall this was not a good idea as these schools would be removed from local authority influence and could in theory select their pupils based on other categories than actual need; for example ability to financially contribute towards the school.

### 2.4 Preparing for adulthood

The Government is proposing to:

- Increase the range and quality of learning opportunities.
- Provide effective help for young people to move into employment.
- Improve joint working across paediatric and adult health services, with GP’s providing annual health checks for disabled young people over 16.
- Help young people to live independently by working across government to reflect this in the forthcoming disability strategy.

The Select Committee heard detailed evidence from Alex Rowley about the problems he had in transition post 16 years. He felt that he initially received poor levels of support from Connexions and the council’s Transitions Team until Parents of Autistic Children (PACT) got involved and developed an excellent transitional plan for him. He described the transitional phase as the hardest part of his educational experience but that it finally led him to find a course of further education and a travel training assessment which linked him to an adult social worker for the first time.

Alex stated in his presentation “Remember that a disability doesn’t disappear on the individual’s eighteenth birthday”. The Select Committee found this statement very powerful.

The Select Committee looked at issues surrounding the transitional phase including how young people Post 16 with SEN are more than twice as likely to be not in education, employment or training (NEET) as those without. They highlighted the budget cuts made in services to young people especially services helping young people to find employment or further training.
As part of the budget cuts for 2012/13, the transitional process will be reviewed to ensure it is as efficient and cost effective as possible and provides the best possible support for children with SEN making the transition to adulthood.

**Recommendation 7:**
The Select Committee recommends that transitional plans are developed to ensure that SEN pupils are not disproportionally affected by the loss of the Connexions Service.

The Select Committee were pleased to hear from the Corporate Director of Children’s Services that there was parliamentary cross party cooperation to produce the forthcoming Disability Strategy and that they would be interested to see the strategy when it was produced.

### 2.5 Services working together for families

The Government is proposing to:

- Set out a strong role for local authorities as champions of families and vulnerable children.
- Encourage greater collaboration between local authorities and between services in local areas.
- Explore a national framework for funding specialist provision that improves consistency across areas and allows continued local flexibility.

The Select Committee heard from the Corporate Director of Children’s Services about services being shared across the East London Solutions area. Education Psychology, pupil transport and safeguarding training are all being considered for cross-borough working.

The Select Committee debated how a national framework with associated costs for specialist provision would work and highlighted the issue that the cost of a service could not be standardised across the country as the same amount of money would provide different levels of service across the country.

The Select Committee welcomed these proposals and asked that an action plan for implementation be brought back to the Select Committee as well as the Children’s Trust in six months time.

**Recommendation 8:**
The Select Committee recommends that a progress report be presented to both the Children’s Trust and the Children’s Services Select Committee in six months.
3. Conclusions
The Select Committee acknowledges the many examples of good practice in SEN provision that it witnessed.

The visits to Trinity School and Five Elms Primary School showed highly dedicated staff delivering the best possible provision within two entirely different environments, a special school and an Additional Resource Provision (ARP) unit.

The presentations from Council Officers involved in the assessment and support of children with SEN showed a desire to deliver the best service possible.

The presentation from Dagenham Park Church of England School highlighted the lengths that school staff are prepared to go to make sure children with SEN benefit from their schooling as much as possible.

The presentation from DABD uk showed how hard the voluntary sector is working to help with SEN provision by supplying respite help and breaks for children and their families.

Finally, the presentation by Alex Rowley showed just what can be achieved for a young person with SEN and showed what a person with SEN can achieve if given the correct care and support.

The Select Committee recognises that in this time of budget cuts, all services must provide value for money services, but is concerned that services that disproportionately affect young people with SEN are being cut, for example the Connexions service.

The Select Committee broadly welcomes the Green Paper’s proposals to improve SEN provision and will monitor the success of Children’s Services in the implementation of the proposals.
Children's Services Select Committee

Terms of Reference

Scrutiny review into Special Educational Needs provision in Barking and Dagenham.

- To investigate current SEN provision in the borough.
- To investigate current policy and strategic direction.
- To investigate the effects on current provision of the Green Paper.
- To investigate how current provision can be adapted to the new proposals to deliver a VfM excellent service.
- To involve the community in the scrutiny process, providing them with opportunities to give evidence and inform the review.
- To consider any related equalities and diversity implications.
- To ensure that any evidence collected is used appropriately.
- To produce a final report with findings and recommendations for future policy and/or practice.
Recommendations

**Recommendation 1:**
The Select Committee recommends the implementation of a reformed, robust assessment process with clear timescales to help professionals identify any needs for children at as early a stage as possible. As the process will start in the early years it will need regular, effective review.

**Recommendation 2:**
The Select Committee recommends that clear details of available provision for SEN is published on the Council’s Website for parents to view.

**Recommendation 3:**
The Select Committee recommends that parents are made aware of all affordable options for their child’s care as early as possible in the assessment process.

**Recommendation 4:**
The Select Committee recommends that the introduction of personalised budgets is supported by a framework of professional advice to ensure the best use of resources for each child.

**Recommendation 5:**
The Select Committee recommends that Children’s Services develop a multi-staged appeals process to facilitate mediation before going to Tribunal based around the current assessment process.

**Recommendation 6:**
The Select Committee recommends that schools are encouraged, through their Locality Cluster Groups to develop linked School Improvement Plans for SEN issues as well as curriculum issues.

**Recommendation 7:**
The Select Committee recommends that transitional plans are developed to ensure that SEN pupils are not disproportionally affected by the loss of the Connexions Service.

**Recommendation 8:**
The Select Committee recommends that a progress report be presented to both the Children’s Trust and the Children’s Services Select Committee in six months.
4. Background papers

- Support and aspiration: A new approach to special educational needs and disability - A consultation, Department for Education: March 2011.


- Department for Education: Special Educational Needs in England: January 2011

- Children’s Services Select Committee (2011/12) agenda papers and minutes.
Title: Barking and Dagenham 2013 Commentary – EYFS, Key Stages 1, 2, 4 and 5

Report of the Divisional Director, Education

Open Report

Report Author: Jane Hargreaves

For Information

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Accountable Divisional Director:
Jane Hargreaves, Divisional Director, Education

Accountable Director:
Helen Jenner, Corporate Director of Children’s Services

Summary:
This briefing provides an updated analysis of the 2013 attainment data across the key stages.

Recommendation
The Committee is asked to note the report.

Reason
This Briefing has relevance to the Council’s priority to:

- Ensure every child is valued so that they can succeed.

1. Early Years Foundation Stage 2013

(For ease percentages have been rounded to the nearest whole number, the gap to national is shown in brackets)

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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>”Good level of development”</td>
<td>51 (-5)</td>
<td>55 (-4)</td>
<td>61 (-3)</td>
<td>46 (-6)</td>
<td>52</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Personal social &amp; emotional development (PSED)</td>
<td>75 (-2)</td>
<td>80 (+1)</td>
<td>82 (=)</td>
<td>72 (-4)</td>
<td>76</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Communication, language and literacy (CLLD)</td>
<td>54 (-5)</td>
<td>57 (-5)</td>
<td>62 (-2)</td>
<td>65 (-7)</td>
<td>72</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Literacy</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>54 (-7)</td>
<td>61</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

There is no trend as the method of assessment completely changed in 2013 so comparisons with previous years are not valid. On the headline indicator of a ‘good level of development’, B&D overall is 46%, this is 6 percentage points below national figures. B&D
was also below the national in the new PSED, Communication and Language and Literacy measures. On the previous definition of a good level of development, the local authority had closed the gap over subsequent years to within 3% of the national figures on this headline measure, previously the LA was in line with national on PSED and had closed the gap to 2% below for CLLD. Analysis around these lower figures is already underway.

2. Key Stage 1 2013

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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Reading</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>L2B+</td>
<td>71 (-1)</td>
<td>72 (-2)</td>
<td>76 (=)</td>
<td>78 (-1)</td>
<td>79</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>L3+</td>
<td>22 (-4)</td>
<td>22 (-4)</td>
<td>23 (-4)</td>
<td>25 (-4)</td>
<td>29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Writing</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>L2B+</td>
<td>60 (=)</td>
<td>61 (=)</td>
<td>64 (=)</td>
<td>66 (-1)</td>
<td>67</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>L3+</td>
<td>12 (-1)</td>
<td>12 (-2)</td>
<td>12 (-2)</td>
<td>13 (-2)</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>maths</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>L2B+</td>
<td>72 (-1)</td>
<td>74 (=)</td>
<td>76 (=)</td>
<td>78 (=)</td>
<td>78</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>L3+</td>
<td>18 (-2)</td>
<td>18 (-2)</td>
<td>19 (-3)</td>
<td>22 (-1)</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Results rose in reading, writing and mathematics at both L2B+ and L3+. However L2B+ results nationally rose more than in B&D. As a result, B&D overall has slipped to 1% below national in each of reading and writing at Level 2B+, in 2012 both of these measures were in line with the national figures. Mathematics is maintaining its position in line with national at L2B+ for the third year running. At the higher levels, a key focus for the Local Authority, the gap has now closed to within 1% for mathematics. The gap remains at 2% in writing, but is still 4 percentage points below national levels in reading. Attaining higher levels especially in reading remains the focus for key stage 1.

3. Key Stage 2 2013

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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Reading</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>L4+</td>
<td>81 (-2)</td>
<td>82 (-2)</td>
<td>85 (-2)</td>
<td>83 (-3)</td>
<td>86</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>L5+</td>
<td>42 (-8)</td>
<td>35 (-7)</td>
<td>42 (-6)</td>
<td>36 (-9)</td>
<td>45</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Writing</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>L4+</td>
<td>72 (+1)</td>
<td>72 (-3)</td>
<td>80 (-1)</td>
<td>81 (-2)</td>
<td>83</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>L5+</td>
<td>19 (-2)</td>
<td>18 (-2)</td>
<td>25 (-3)</td>
<td>28 (-2)</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>maths</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>L4+</td>
<td>76 (-3)</td>
<td>78 (-2)</td>
<td>83 (-1)</td>
<td>84 (-1)</td>
<td>85</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>L5+</td>
<td>30 (-4)</td>
<td>31 (-4)</td>
<td>35 (-4)</td>
<td>38 (-3)</td>
<td>41</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Combined L4+RE, WR &amp; MA (floor 60)</td>
<td>62 (-2)</td>
<td>63 (-4)</td>
<td>73 (-2)</td>
<td>73 (-3)</td>
<td>76</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>'Good Level 4'</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>not known</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grammar, punctuation &amp; spelling (SPaG)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>L4+</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>71 (-3)</td>
<td>74</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>L5+</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>45 (-3)</td>
<td>48</td>
</tr>
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</table>

On the new combined measure of L4+ in reading, writing and mathematics, the LA consolidated last year's rise to 73%, this is 3 percentage points below the 2013 national figure of 76%. It is expected that the final figure will be 75% after disapplications have been made. On the recent headline measure of a ‘good level 4’, the overall LA figure is 61. A number of schools have a large gap between the ‘good level 4’ and the combined L4+, showing that too many pupils are not achieving a secure Level 4. Outcomes for the new grammar, punctuation and spelling test have been reported separately this year and are 3 percentage points below national. Overall B&D is about 3 percentage points below national in reading and 2 in writing at L4+ and remains 1 below in mathematics. The gap to reaching higher levels, a key focus for the Local Authority, has closed to within 2% in writing and 3% in mathematics, but remains 9 percentage points below in reading. Attaining higher levels in all three subjects and improving outcomes in reading remains the foci for key stage 2.
4. Key Stage 4 GCSE 2013

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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>5A*-C EN &amp; MA (floor 40)</td>
<td>52 (-2)</td>
<td>57 (-2)</td>
<td>59 (&lt;1)</td>
<td>59 (=)</td>
<td>59</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>English A*-C</td>
<td>64 (-2)</td>
<td>69 (+1)</td>
<td>69 (+2)</td>
<td>74 (+13)</td>
<td>61</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A*-A</td>
<td>10 (-7)</td>
<td>10 (-8)</td>
<td>11 (-6)</td>
<td>15 (=)</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>maths A*-C</td>
<td>58 (-2)</td>
<td>64 (+1)</td>
<td>68 (+2)</td>
<td>66 (-1)</td>
<td>67</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A*-A</td>
<td>13 (-6)</td>
<td>16 (-4)</td>
<td>14 (-5)</td>
<td>14 (-5)</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EBacc (all subjects)</td>
<td>4 (-12)</td>
<td>5 (-13)</td>
<td>5 (-13)</td>
<td>14 (-9)</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5A*-C (Level 2 at 16)</td>
<td>77 (+2)</td>
<td>81 (+2)</td>
<td>83 (+1)</td>
<td>82 (+1)</td>
<td>81</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5A*-G EN &amp; MA</td>
<td>94 (+5)</td>
<td>93 (+1)</td>
<td>93 (+1)</td>
<td>92 (+2)</td>
<td>90</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5A*-G (Level 1 at 16)</td>
<td>96 (+3)</td>
<td>96 (+2)</td>
<td>95 (+1)</td>
<td>94 (=)</td>
<td>94</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

On the headline measure of 5A*-C including English and mathematics overall LA results improved to 59.3%, above the national average of 58.6% for the first time, continuing the trajectory of improvement for the fifth year. In separate English and mathematics, A*-C results rose in English to 74%, well above the national of 61%, but results fell in maths to 66%. The national press is reporting a fall in a number of headline measures with more pupils sitting iGCSE in English and more early and multiple enquires in mathematics. These features are reflected locally. Higher grades for English have improved to 15%, bringing them into line with national results, while being maintained at 14% in maths. However, improving outcomes at these higher grades is still a key priority for Key stage 4. EBacc outcomes have improved this year to 14% but there is still more to do on ensuring this measure is close to the national average in every B&D school. Results reflecting the lower grades 5A*-G incl English and mathematics fell overall, this raises the issue of checking that the quality of provision for these pupils ensures they achieve well.

5. Key Stage 5 post 16 2013

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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>APS per pupil</td>
<td>664.6</td>
<td>682.7</td>
<td>655.7</td>
<td>600.0</td>
<td>709.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>APS per entry</td>
<td>212.1</td>
<td>214.8</td>
<td>203.2</td>
<td>208.6</td>
<td>212.7</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The APS figures include Barking and Dagenham College and are those that will be published. They show a fall in the per pupil point score, although schools improved to 722.0 on this measure. On the headline measure of APS per entry, results improved so that the average grade overall is a C. A level pass rates at A*-E, A*-C and A*-A, all improved. A*-E at 99.5% is now above the national figure of 98.7%. So almost all B&D A level students are gaining a pass grade. Pass rates at the higher grades A*-C and A*-A have both improved more than those nationally, but there is more to do, particularly at the highest grades which are still well below those nationally.

6. Further Information and links:

1 Average Point Score (APS) grade C=210 points, each grade is worth +30 points, so A*=300 points, A=270, B=240,C=210, D=180 and E=150 points. Other qualifications such a BTec have equivalent points awarded for pass, merit and distinction.
Assessment and Reporting arrangements 2013. Early Years Foundation Stage, Key Stages 1 and 2. This explains how the test and/or teachers assessment data are combined to give each result. 
http://www.education.gov.uk/schools/teachingandlearning/assessment

School performance Tables 2013 Statement of Intent. This explains the measures that will be included in the official DfE tables published later in the Autumn term.  


Separate guidance is being published separately for EYFS and Key Stage 1. It is clear that there will be a stronger emphasise on the progress children make within these key stages.

Ofqual statement 1 August 2013 http://ofqual.gov.uk/standards/summer-exams-2013/

Joint Council for Qualifications (JCQ) Media Centre link http://www.jcq.org.uk/media-centre/news-releases