

Lancashire County Council

Corporate Parenting Board

Minutes of the Meeting held on Wednesday, 22 January, 2025 at 6.00pm in
Savoy Suite 2 - The Exchange, County Hall, Preston, PR1 8XJ

Present: Members

County Councillor Stephen Clarke	- Lancashire County Council
County Councillor Loraine Cox	- Lancashire County Council
County Councillor Sue Hind	- Lancashire County Council
County Councillor Ron Woollam	- Lancashire County Council
County Councillor Stewart Jones	- Lancashire County Council
County Councillor Julie Gibson	- Lancashire County Council (via Teams)
David Russo	- Fostering Forum
Jake	- LINX/CLF Representative
Mohammad	- LINX/CLF Representative
Mary	- LINX/CLF Representative

Co-opted members

Andreas Feldhaar	- Permanence Service, LCC
Vanessa Nice	- Education Improvement, LCC
Helen Owen	- Permanence Service, LCC
Suliman Hussain	- Child and Family Wellbeing Service, LCC
Louise Humphreys	- Department for Work and Pensions
Helen Rimmer	- NHS Lancashire and South Cumbria Integrated Care Board
Lisa Farrell	- Lancs 0-19, HCRG
Bev Maymond	- Fostering Provider
Caroline Waldron	- NHS Lancashire and South Cumbria Integrated Care Board (via Teams)
Danielle Winkley	- Safeguarding, Inspection and Audit Service, LCC

Other Attendees

Ripley Buswell	- Children and Family Wellbeing Service, LCC
Jen Robertshaw	- Children's Social Care, LCC
Liz Tarling	- Democratic Services, LCC
Kelvin Sarsfield	- NHS Lancashire and South Cumbria Integrated Care Board
Sam Gorton	- Democratic Services, LCC

1. Introductions and Apologies

All were welcomed to the meeting and apologies were received from County Councillor Andrea Kay, Kathy Ashworth, Jill Riley, Jo Swords, Amanda Barbour, Tonya Harrison, Julie McShane and Moya McKinney.

The Board welcomed the following new members:

- Vanessa Nice, Virtual School Headteacher, Education Improvement, Lancashire County Council has replaced Audrey Swann who has retired from the Authority.
- Lisa Farrell who has temporarily replaced Jenny Ryder, Lancashire 0-19 HCRG
- Helen Rimmer, NHS Lancashire and South Cumbria Integrated Care Board

Replacement for this meeting were as follows:

- Suliman Hussain for Adam Riley, Child and Family Wellbeing Service, Lancashire County Council
- Helen Owen for Gina Power, Permanence Service, Lancashire County Council

County Councillor Julie Gibson, Lancashire County Council and Caroline Waldron, NHS Lancashire and South Cumbria Integrated Care Board joined the meeting via Teams.

Kelvin Sarsfield, NHS Lancashire and South Cumbria Integrated Care Board observed the meeting.

2. Notes of the Meeting and Matters Arising from 20 November 2024

Resolved: That the minutes were agreed as an accurate record.

There were no matters arising from the minutes.

Prior to the meeting, a resume of the questions and answers raised at the meeting in November 2024 had been circulated.

3. Icebreaker

Young people from Lancashire Children in Care Council (LINX) and Care Leavers Forum (CLF) led the Board through an icebreaker activity.

4. Participation Team Update

Young people from Lancashire's Children in Care Council (LINX) and the Care Leavers Forum (CLF) updated the Board on what they had been involved with since the last meeting of the Board in November 2024.

A comms review regarding requests for young people

The Care Leavers Forum (CLF) and Children in Care Council (LINX) reminded the Board that they were happy to be consulted when it comes to topics that affect them. In the past three/four months, the young people reported that they have received over 20 requests for involvement which included interviewing Independent Reviewing Officers, planning and delivering at a virtual school event, development days and staff members attending group sessions.

Young people reported that whilst it is important to have their voices heard, they had seen a rise in ad-hoc requests and the complexity of some projects that were being asked of them to be involved with, and this is leaving them with no time to create their own projects or socialise and chat with their friends.

The Comms Review is being looked at by the Participation, Engagement and Co-Production (PEC) Group and Clare Smith and Lisa Harvey-Nebil are helping young people to make sure that the requests being made of them are meaningful and will have an impact. Staff members from Children's Social Care will be asked to complete a request form, stating why young people's involvement is needed, the timeframe and the impact. The request will then be reviewed by the Participation Team who will clarify and discuss with staff what exactly it is they are requesting of young people before the final stage, which is to present the request to the young people to see if they wish to be involved and go ahead with the request. Once agreed, the Participation Team will meet with the requestor(s) to plan how and when meetings take place and make further arrangements.

The Board noted that requests for the Children in Care Council (LINX) and the Care Leavers Forum (CLF) are overseen by the Participation, Engagement and Co-Production (PEC) Group within the Permanence Service, Lancashire County Council monthly, to keep a track of the type of requests being asked of young people and to challenge and maintain quality in this area.

Young people hoped that the review will help them with the number of requests being asked of them and to also give them chance to properly plan and execute their ideas instead of rushing, finishing and then moving onto the next project.

PROUD Awards 2025

The Board noted that the PROUD Awards will be taking place at Preston North End Football Club on 30 January 2025 and that some members of the Children in Care Council (LINX) and the Care Leavers Forum (CLF) had been nominated, with some progressing further as finalists and had been invited to the event.

Following on from last year's success when young people compered the event, they have been asked to do it again this year and are currently in the process of writing a script and are looking forward to the event. As well as hosting, young people will also be presenting prizes alongside the High Sheriff of Lancashire, County Councillors and Senior members of staff from Lancashire County Council.

Christmas Dinner

The Care Leavers Forum all enjoyed a Christmas dinner get together following a year of participation and having their voices heard across different services and partnerships. The Board also noted that members of the Children in Care Council also enjoyed a get together too. Both groups felt that this was a nice way to end the year.

Resolved: That the young people were thanked for their presentation.

5. Benchmarking Managers Event Update

Jane Hylton, Permanence Service, Lancashire County Council County provided the Board with an update from the National Leaving Care Benchmarking Form Managers Event that was held in December 2025.

The presentation attached to the minutes, provided further information on the:

- National Care Leavers Benchmarking Forum and Young People's Benchmarking Forum
- A Fair Offer for All
- Department for Education Update
- Young People Benchmarking Forum – A Fair Offer to All – Key Asks
 - Cost of living
 - Mental Health/Health
 - Communities of support
 - Safe and affordable homes
 - Support after 21 and 25

The Board were reminded of the Department for Education's seven Corporate Parenting principles that local authorities must have regard to when exercising their functions in relation to looked after children and young people, as follows:

- (i) To act in the best interests, and promote the physical and mental health and wellbeing, of those children and young people.
- (ii) To encourage those children and young people to express their views, wishes and feelings.
- (iii) To take into account the views, wishes and feelings of those children and young people.
- (iv) To help those children and young people gain access to, and make the best use of, services provided by the local authority and its relevant partners.
- (v) To promote high aspirations, and seek to secure the best outcomes, for those children and young people.
- (vi) For those children and young people to be safe, and for stability in their home lives, relationships and education or work.
- (vii) To prepare those children and young people for adulthood and independent living.

The Department for Education are looking at extending these to the wider public sector with an aim to create a culture change in recognition of unique responsibilities the state has towards Care Experience children and young people.

Following the presentation, the Board discussed various national and local asks on their tables.

In terms of health, Caroline Waldron, NHS Lancashire and South Cumbria Integrated Care Board informed the Board that from a health perspective they welcomed the Department for Education vision and what that is going to look like in the future for partners. Health are aware of it, and it is included in the Integrated Care Board's Children in Care and Care Leaver Strategy 2024-2026 outlining how they intend to deliver against the statutory requirements and corporate parenting duties set out in the strategy. It also includes the exploration of Health's offer for care experienced young people, including looking at access to prescriptions. In terms of some of the offers that are in place from Health, this includes Enhanced Children in Care Nurses who engage and support in the Hubs. In terms of what Corporate Parenting means from a health perspective, the Integrated Care Board received a presentation from Caroline Waldron and a young person from the Care Leavers Forum who talked about health as a corporate parent and what the Integrated Care Board should be considering as part of their day to day roles. The Board noted that positive feedback had been received following the presentation.

Resolved: That the Board noted the update from the National Leaving Care Benchmarking Forum.

6. Overview of Audit Findings

Laura Gardner, Quality Assurance, Inspection and Safeguarding, Lancashire County Council presented to the Board the Audit Activity, Quarter 3 (October 2024 – December 2024).

The Board noted the findings/outcomes from the report, which were highlighted, and further details presented as follows on:

- Children in Our Care – Learning Spaces Quarter 3 2024
 - Learning spaces completed
 - Combined overall grades
 - Combined overall impact and outcomes
 - Combined overall grades and overall impact
- Key Strengths for Children in Our Care
 - Assessment Quality
 - Plan Quality
 - Multi-Agency Working
 - Child's Voice and Understanding
- Key Learning/Further Development for Children in Our Care
 - Assessments
 - Inclusion of Parents

- Supervision and Management Oversight
- Child's Voice and Direct Work
- Leaving Care Learning Spaces Quarter 3 2024
 - Learning Spaces Completed
 - Combined Overall Grades
 - Combined Overall Impact and Outcomes
 - Combined Overall Grades and Overall Impact
- Key Strengths for Leaving Care
 - Assessment Quality
 - Plan Quality
 - Outcomes
 - Supervision and Management Oversight
- Key Learning/Further Development for Leaving Care
 - Assessments
 - Plans
 - Decision Making and Management Oversight
 - Outcomes

Following the presentation, the Board noted that Children's Services review recordings in terms of supervision every month and all team managers and the Head of Service has access to this. The audit reviews provide a wider understanding about footprint in terms of management oversight and decision making when it comes to supervision and also wider decisions that might need to be made for children. With regards to the audits, Social Workers have commented that they feel very supported by their managers.

In terms of celebrating success and boosting moral, this is something that the Service does around sharing outstanding work with Heads of Service, which then results in direct communication with that member of staff. The Principal Social Worker also celebrates success following positive feedback from the workforce as well as the Corporate shout out page for all staff and local shout outs too.

As part of the learning spaces audit, part of the audit does seek feedback from the young person as well as families and carers and is sought for every audit, is shared, and developed internally.

Resolved: That the Board discussed and commented on the audit findings.

7. Care Leaver Offer

Andreas Feldhaar, Permanence Service, Lancashire County Council provided an update on further developing the Care Leaver offer ([Scrutiny Report](#), Local Offer and Care Leaver Covenant).

In terms of the report that was presented at Children, Families and Skills Scrutiny Committee on 18 December 2024, the following key highlights from that report, which detailed what had happened over the last two years and next steps were presented to members of the Corporate Parenting Board. The Board also noted that the Education, Employment and Training report that was also presented at

the same Scrutiny meeting, would be brought before this Board at its' meeting in March 2025.

The Board received the following highlights from the Scrutiny report:

Background information

2018	2023
Extending services up to 25 Statutory duty to publish a Local Offer for Care Leavers: Health and wellbeing Relationships Education, Employment and Training Accommodation Participation in Society	Ofsted Evaluation Criteria Experience and Progress of Care Leavers: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Making good decisions for care leavers • Support into adulthood • Education, Employment and Training • Helping and protecting • Health and Emotional Wellbeing • Relationships and participation • Local Offer for care leavers

The link to the current Care Leavers Local Offer is as follows:
<https://www.lancashire.gov.uk/youthzone/care-leavers-local-offer/>.

Improvements 2023 and 2024

- Increased number of care leavers in Staying Put.
- Expansion of Lancashire's House Project.
- New commissioning and increased offer of core supported accommodation.
- Joint Housing Protocol established with our 12 District Councils.
- Integrated Care Board Children in Care and Care Leaver strategy.
- Health Summaries for care leavers.
- Lifelong Links service available to care leavers.
- Improved participation offer for care leavers.
- Leaving Care Social Worker support for unaccompanied asylum seeking children (UASC) 16 to 17 or care leavers who are pregnant young parents.
- Joint protocol with Lancashire's prisons to support care leavers in prison.
- Joint protocol with Lancashire's Department for Work and Pensions Job Centres Plus to support care leavers into employment.
- Care Leavers Covenant.
- Significant Event Notifications for senior leadership safeguarding oversight up to 25.
- Setting Up Home Allowance (SUHA) increased.

The Board also noted that there was:

- A strong Local Offer of support for Care Leavers.

- Place based support established in Leaving Care Hubs (Lancaster, Burnley and Preston).
- Our pathway to excellence plan.

Next Steps 2025

- Implement the Leaving Well model.
- Improve joint working with Transitions Service and Adult Social Care.
- Launch a joint Transitional Safeguarding Protocol with our partners.
- Work with District Councils to improve access to priority banding for care leavers and agree joint decision-making on intentionality.
- Develop a Staying Close approach for young people in residential children's homes.
- Explore financial assistance from the Integrated Care Board towards repeat prescriptions.
- Improve access to emotional wellbeing and mental health services.
- Review the impact of our new participation offer 'Get Involved'.
- Improved accessibilities of web-based Local Offer.
- Improved accessibility of Local Offer via a Care Leaver app.
- Improved workforce learning and development plans to align to the improved service offer.

Following the presentation, it was commented that the two most important things for care leavers is having a home and being in employment and continued work with the District Councils to improve access to priority banding for care leavers was welcomed and that protocols were in place both for housing and employment and that these be reviewed regularly and in consultation with young people.

Resolved: That the Board received and discussed further developments of the Care Leaver offer, including the report presented to Children, Families and Skills Scrutiny Committee in December 2024, the Local Offer and the Care Leaver Covenant.

8. PROUD 2025 Update

Andreas Feldhaar, Permanence Service, Lancashire County Council reminded the Board that the PROUD 2025 Celebration Event for children in our care and care leavers would take place at the end of January 2025. The event is led by young people.

There have been over 270 nominations and following the shortlisting process, 53 finalists have been invited to the event at Preston North End Football Club where the winners will be announced. Awards will be presented by the High Sheriff of Lancashire along with County Councillors, the Director of Children's Social Care together with young people. There will also be presentations and performances from young people on the night.

Resolved: That the Board noted the update.

9. Any Other Business

Following on from Item 7 – Lifelong Links at the November 2024 meeting the Board were shown a video that has now been finalised, Mollie's Story - [Lancs LLL - Mollie's Story \(final version\).mp4](#).

Resolved: That the Board welcomed the video and commented on how it raised the profile of the work that the Service is doing on Lifelong Links and commended Mollie for sharing her story.

10. Date and Time of Next Meeting

Wednesday, 12 March 2025, at 6.00pm in Savoy Suite 2, The Exchange, County Hall, Preston, PR1 8RJ.