

BOURNEMOUTH, CHRISTCHURCH AND POOLE COUNCIL
CORPORATE PARENTING BOARD

Minutes of the Meeting held on 16 June 2025 at 5.00 pm

Present:-

Cllr R Burton – Chairman

Present:	Cllr S Mackrow, Cllr S Carr Brown (for Cllr A Moriarty) Cathi Hadley, Juliette Blake, Louise Harris-Smith, Nicola Cannings Insight Representative, Insight Representative, Unite Representative Unite Representative	Councillor Represetnative Councillor Representative Corporate Director of Chidlren's Services Director of Children's Social Care Designated Nurse for LAC Education Representative
Officers in attendance:	Stefanie Gehrig Clark Shan Searle Laura Jones Tammy Lawrence (online) Rachel Lachlan (online) Leah May (online) Jo Fry Terry Husher Jane Pullan Helen Wallis Aleksandra Zabielska	Data and Intelligence Team Lead Manager for CiC and CEYP Team Manager – CiC and CP Independent Reviewing Officers LAC Doctor Headteacher, Virtual School Lead for Participation Youth Participation Worker Youth Participation Worker Preparing for Adulthood Team Statutory Services Manager

1. Apologies

Apologies were received from Cllrs C Adams and A Moriarty.

2. Substitute Members

Cllr S Carr-Brown substituted for Cllr A Moriarty

3. Election of Vice-Chair for the 2025/26 Municipal Year

With agreement of the Board this item was deferred to the next meeting.

4. Declarations of Interests

There were none on this occasion.

5. Confirmation of Minutes

The minutes of the meeting held on 17 March 2025 were approved as a correct record.

6. Corporate Parenting Board Terms of Reference

The Children's Social Care representative presented a report, a copy of which had been circulated to each Member and a copy of which appears as Appendix 'A' to these Minutes in the Minute Book. The updated Terms of Reference for the Corporate Parenting Board were discussed. Key points included:

- The new version aimed to be clearer about who should attend and how the Board could be more inclusive.
- There was a strong emphasis on inviting the right people, including Councillors not on the Board and officers from relevant services.
- It was agreed that the phrase "their own children" should be changed to "their children" to reflect that all children in care were the responsibility of corporate parents.
- The importance of flexibility in publishing agendas was discussed. It was agreed that agendas should be published 10 working days in advance wherever possible, but flexibility is needed to allow for timely and relevant discussions.
- The Board agreed that future meetings should generally be held in the HMS Phoebe Committee Room.
- Young people requested a glossary of terms to help them understand professional language used in meetings.

RESOLVED that the Terms of Reference be updated as suggested and referred to the Constitution Review Working Group for inclusion with the Constitution

7. Learning from Bright Spots and Next Steps

The Children's Rights and Engagement Manager presented a report, a copy of which had been circulated to each Member and a copy of which appears as Appendix 'B' to these Minutes in the Minute Book. The Board considered the following issues:

✿ Bright Spots Survey

The Bright Spots Survey is a national tool used to understand the experiences of children in care and care-experienced young people. It was commissioned by BCP Council through Coram Voice, and the results were gathered over several months. The survey focused on what young people feel about their lives, relationships, support, and future. It provided a basis from which BCP Council as corporate parents could identify what was going well, and what could be improved for young people. Young people shared personal stories gathered from CEYP and CIC, highlighting both positive and difficult experiences

✓ What Went Well - Areas where BCP performed better than the national average:

- Trusted Adults: Many young people said they had someone they could talk to about things that mattered to them.

- Access to Nature and Outdoor Spaces: Children and young people appreciated having access to parks, beaches, and green spaces.
- Digital Access: Older care-experienced young people reported good access to smartphones and the internet.
- Positive Relationships: When young people knew who their social worker or PA was, they often described those relationships positively.
- Pets: Having a pet was mentioned as a source of comfort and emotional support, especially for younger children.

Areas for Improvement - These were the key challenges identified by young people:

□ Mental Health & Wellbeing

- Young people reported feeling anxious, lonely, or unhappy.
- Some said they didn't feel listened to or supported when they were struggling.
- Need for more consistent, accessible mental health support.

🏠 Finance

- financial struggles, including, debt, lack of budgeting support, the failure of benefits to cover rent, food, and travel
- Some said they were better off not working due to how benefits were structured.

□💞□ Relationships

- Frequent changes in social workers or PAs, which made it hard to build trust.
- Feeling like a burden when asking for help, especially if they were told their worker had a high caseload.
- Concerns about being excluded from normal childhood experiences, like sleepovers or school trips.

🏠 Future Planning

- Feeling of being unprepared, especially around housing, education and employment, and life skills, like budgeting, cooking, or understanding council tax
- Some didn't know what an EHCP (Education, Health and Care Plan) was, even though they felt they should have had one.

From follow-up conversations, young people identified four key areas they wanted to see improved:

- Mental Health & Wellbeing – More support, earlier intervention, and trusted relationships.
- Finance – Better financial education, more support with budgeting, and fairer benefits.
- Relationships – Consistent workers, better communication, and more empathy.
- Future Planning – Clearer pathways into adulthood, including housing, education, and employment.

Attendees split into small groups to brainstorm ideas for an action plan. Key suggestions for each area included:

- **Organising more social activities and trips** to help young people feel included and have fun.
- **Extending clothing allowances to age 25** to support job interviews and professional development.
- **Improving how workers build relationships**, including more informal meetups and shared interests.
- **Making life skills training more personalised**, not just a checklist and **Raising awareness of Education, Health and Care Plans (EHCPs)** among young people and professionals.

Action: An action plan was being developed based on these findings, with input from young people and professionals. It will focus on the four priority areas and be brought back to the Corporate Parenting Board for review.

8. How does the PfA Team support YP and what are the links to CSC?

The Children's Social Care Head of Service presented a report, a copy of which had been circulated to each Member and a copy of which appears as Appendix 'C' to these Minutes in the Minute Book. The Board were informed that the Preparing for Adulthood Team supports young people aged 14–25 with an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP) in BCP. They begin transition screening at age 14/15 (Year 10) to assess eligibility under the Care Act 2014 and plan for adult social care needs. From 2024/25, they aim to start discussions earlier, at age 13/14 (Year 9). Eligible young people receive ongoing support until age 25 or until transition is complete. The team offers guidance on housing, health, education, employment, legal rights, and more. They do not fund services for under-18s or support individuals without significant, non-circumstantial disabilities.

Some of the issues raised by the Board included:

- Not all young people with additional needs had EHCPs, which could create gaps in support.
- Young people asked how they could access support if they didn't have an EHCP. It was clarified that you can still be referred for an EHCP after age 16, and you can self-refer to adult services if you need help.

Action: Improve communication about how to access EHCPs and adult services, including through PAs and drop-ins at 333.

Action: Ensure the Bright Spots findings are shared with the PfA strategy group to influence future planning.

9. Forward Plan

The board discussed how to make future meetings more engaging and accessible. Suggestions included:

- Replacing long reports with shorter, more visual summaries.
- Using questions and themes to guide discussions instead of formal papers.
- Ensuring follow-up on key issues like housing and education.

Action: Review the items on the forward plan to focus on impact, accessibility, and young people's voices.

The meeting ended with thanks to all attendees, especially the young people who shared their experiences so openly, which was recognised as essential to shaping better services and support.

10. CiC/CEYP Data and Analysis

This report was circulated to the Board for information. With no questions having been received in advance of the meeting the report was noted.

11. Future Meeting Dates

The next meeting was scheduled for Monday 29 September.

The meeting ended at Time Not Specified

CHAIRMAN