

BOURNEMOUTH, CHRISTCHURCH AND POOLE COUNCIL
CORPORATE PARENTING BOARD

Minutes of the Meeting held on 29 September 2025 at 5.00 pm

Present:-

Cllr R Burton – Chairman

Cllr C Adams – Vice-Chairman

Present:	Cllr S Mackrow, Juliette Blake, Shan Searle, Louise Maple, Nicola Cannings Janet Kendall Damian Watt Insight Representative, Insight Representative, Unite Representative and Unite Representative	Councillor Representative Children's Social Care Corporate Parenting Health Representnative Education Representtive Foster Care Representative Foster Care Representative
Also in attendance:	Cllr C Adams (online) Cllr A-M Moriarty (online)	
Officers in attendance:	Nicola Campbell Jo Fry Rachel Gravett Terry Husher Lisa Linscott Rubina Payne Jane Pullins	Head of Safeguarding, Partnerships and Quality Children's Rights and Participation Manager Director Children's Commissioning, Resources and Quality Participation and Engagement Officer Director of Education and Skills Head of Fostering, Kinship and Supported Lodgings Participation and Engagmenet Officer

12. Apologies

Apologies were received from Cathi Hadley.

13. Substitute Members

There were no substitute members.

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

The Chair asked for nominations for the position of Vice-Chair for the C2025-26 Municipal year. Cllr C Adams was proposed and seconded. There being no further nominations it was

RESOVLED that Cllr C Adams be appointed Vice-Chair for the remainder of the 2025-26 Municipal Year.

15. Declarations of Interests

There were no declarations of interest made on this occasion. The Chair explained for the purpose of those new to the Board that this was in case anyone had another role or appointment which may have a relevance to an item on the agenda.

16. Confirmation of Minutes

The minutes of the last meeting held on 16 June were approved as a correct record.

17. Young Person Introductions

The Insight and Unite representatives introduced an activity to the Board to remind members of the importance of language and how it changes, develops and meanings change.

Everyone present completed a communication activity in pairs and considered the outcomes. The purpose was to remind everyone to “keep it simple”, when it comes to language use.

18. Urgent Item - Prioritising of Pledges

This was agreed to be added as an urgent item as it was important to begin the process as soon as possible and it would not be possible to wait until the next scheduled meeting. The Board were asked to focus on identifying and agreeing upon priority actions to improve support for children in care and care experienced young people. Board members were asked to review previous pledges and determine which areas should be prioritised for implementation. The aim was to agree on practical steps that could enhance well-being, provide better access to opportunities, and ensure young people are equipped with essential resources. Members were also asked to consider how these priorities could be delivered, including potential collaboration with internal departments and external partners. It was agreed that the following three areas should be prioritised:

- **Access to Activities (Discount Cards)**

It was agreed that access to activities for all age ranges should be prioritized. The importance of starting early to support well-being and confidence was emphasized. The concept of discount cards for activities was suggested as a practical solution.

- **Workplace Work Experience**

The need for work experience opportunities within the Council was highlighted as a clear priority. It was clarified that this should not be limited to apprenticeships but should include flexible opportunities such as mentoring schemes or short-term placements. The significance of this for young people transitioning from care was

strongly noted. It was proposed that the new Chief Executive should be informed and involved to champion this initiative.

- **Phones and Laptops for Young People**

The provision of phones and laptops was identified as a priority because these items are essential for securing employment and managing daily life. Concerns were raised about the feasibility of repurposing old laptops, as many returned devices are damaged. It was suggested that financial models, such as the leaving care bursary, could be adjusted to include funding for laptops.

Additionally, the possibility of seeking external corporate support or discounts was discussed as a potential solution.

It was agreed that the Chief Executive should be sighted on this and brought in to future development and updates be brought back to the next meeting of the Corporate Parenting Board.

Agreed: Nem. Con

The meeting adjourned at 5:55pm and resume at 18:05pm.

19. Fostering Annual Report 2024/2025

The Head of Service for Fostering, Kinship and Supported Lodgings 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 Fostering Services Regulations 2011 and National Minimum Standards require all Fostering Services to provide an annual report of their activities and set out the aims and objectives of the service and the facilities they provide. The report provided a short overview of service progression and areas for development going forward.

The Board discussed the Fostering Annual Report for 2024–25. Highlights from the discussion included:

- **Recruitment and Retention:** 51 new fostering households were approved, with a significant increase in kinship carers. However, mainstream carer recruitment has declined, partly due to challenges with the Southwest Fostering Hub. There had been a significant decline in initial enquiries.
- **In-House Sufficiency:** 48% of children in care are placed with in-house carers, which was above national and regional averages.
- **Support for Older Children:** 57% of children placed with in-house carers are aged 11+, they were supported through therapeutic models and resilience groups.
- **Innovative Programmes:** The “It Takes a Family” scheme successfully supported transitions from residential care, and the Mockingbird programme expanded to a second constellation.
- **Training and Development:** Training compliance reached 85%, with 93% completion of the mandatory standards workbook.
- **Celebration and Recognition:** The Board heard about the success of the Fostering Awards and the “Fostering’s Got Talent” event, which showcased children’s creativity. The event was described as

magical and inclusive. It was suggested that young people also be given the opportunity to nominate foster carers for awards.

The Board discussed the need to improve visibility of fostering opportunities and ensure carers feel valued and supported.

20. Forward Plan

The Forward Plan was reviewed. No immediate changes were proposed, but officers were invited to submit suggestions via email. The Board felt it should continue focusing on accessibility, impact, and young people's voice in future agenda planning.

21. Children in Care/Care Experienced Young People Data and Analysis Report

This report was circulated for information. There were no questions of comments submitted in advance of the meeting and the report was therefore noted but not discussed.

22. Children's Services Compliments and Complaints Annual Report 2024-25

This report was circulated for information. There were no questions of comments submitted in advance of the meeting and the report was therefore noted but not discussed.

23. Future Meeting Dates

The Board was advised that the date of the next meeting was 15 December 2025.

Care Experience Star Awards - Members were reminded that the Care Experience Star Awards were on **7 November 2025**. Anyone who has not received an invitation should contact the Chair.

Language That Cares Campaign

The Board was updated on the upcoming "Language That Cares" campaign. Young people would help deliver training to professionals, including councillors and health workers, to improve how language was used when talking about children in care.

24. Independent Reviewing Service (IRS) Annual Report 24/25 and summary

The Board received the annual IRS 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 IRO annual report set out information in respect of BCPs Children in Care and the performance of the IRO Service. The report includes our response to the question asked by members of the board, regarding the Bright Spots report. A highlight summary was also made available to the Board. The Key highlights included:

- **Timeliness and Participation:** 97% of child in care reviews were held within statutory timescales, and 98% of children participated in their care planning.
- **Restorative Practice:** The IRS team continues to embed restorative approaches, ensuring children's voices are central to meetings and decisions.
- **Transition Planning:** The Board noted improvements in planning for young people approaching adulthood, including the use of a checklist to ensure readiness for independence.
- **Feedback Mechanisms:** A new QR code system was introduced to collect feedback from children. It was suggested that different incentives for feedback could be used but it was most important that the feedback was listened to.
- **Dispute Resolution:** The team is working to improve the timeliness and impact of escalations when care plans are delayed or not meeting needs.
- **Escalation Due to Delay with Care Planning** – It was noted that if action was not taken by the time of the next review then an escalation process could be started and the IRO's would raise a cause for concern. Most common issue was the paperwork for the meetings.
- **Mockingbird Model** – It was used to support carers particularly with retention but this hadn't been an issue for BCP.

The Board praised the IRS team for their commitment and highlighted the importance of maintaining consistency and relational practice.

The meeting ended at 6.59 pm

CHAIRMAN