

Corporate Parenting Board

(3rd Meeting)

4th December 2024Part A (Non-Exempt)

All members were present.

Connétable R. Vibert of St. Peter, Minister for Children and Families
 Deputy R.J. Ward of St. Helier Central, Minister for Education and Lifelong Learning
 Deputy S.Y. Mézec of St. Helier South, Minister for Housing
 Deputy T.J.A. Binet of St. Saviour, Minister for Health and Social Services
 Deputy M.R. Le Hegarat of St. Helier North, Minister for Justice and Home Affairs
 Connétable K. Shenton-Stone of St. Martin, Representative of the Comité des Connétables

In attendance –

K. Posner, Interim Chief Officer, Children, Young People, Education and Skills Department.
 D. Marriott, Director, Children's Services, Children, Young People, Education and Skills Department.
 A. Heaven, Assistant Director, Policy, Cabinet Office.
 S. Butterworth, Interim Head of Service - Standards and Quality, Children, Young People, Education and Skills Department.
 E. Walker, Interim Associate Director, Children, Young People, Education and Skills Department.
 S. Phillips, Head of Informatics, Children, Young People, Education and Skills Department.
 N. Crick, Head of Service, Corporate Parenting, Health and Social Services Department.
 R. Smith, Chief Officer, States of Jersey Police.
 K. Lynch, Director and Board Member, Jersey Cares.
 C. Farley, Chief Executive Officer, Brightly.
 K.M. Larbalestier, Principal Secretariat Officer, Specialist Secretariat, States Greffe
 S. Nibbs, Senior Secretariat Officer, Specialist Secretariat, States Greffe.

Note: The Minutes of this meeting comprise Part A only

Minutes.	A1. The Minutes of the meeting of 25th September 2024, having previously been circulated, were taken as read and were confirmed.
Matters arising from previous Minutes.	A2. The Board noted an electronic mail message dated 7th November 2024, from Ms. L. Floris, Director and Board Member of Jersey Cares in connexion with content of the Minutes of the meeting of 25th September 2024.

The electronic mail message referred to claims that the Minutes failed to include comments regarding alleged ‘inaccuracies and material omissions’ in relation to the work of Jersey Cares in 2 reports which had been presented to the Board regarding the Children in Care Council and the Care Leavers’ offer consultation.

Having noted the contents of the message, the Board reaffirmed its satisfaction with the Minutes of the meeting of 25th September 2024, as circulated by the States Greffe on 22nd October 2024.

Corporate
Parenting Board
Implementation
Plan - progress
report.

A3. The Board, with reference to its Minute No. A3 of 1st August 2024, received an oral report from Mr. A. Heaven, Assistant Director, Policy, Cabinet Office, regarding the ongoing development of the Board Implementation Plan (BIP).

The Board recalled that its role was to provide guidance to corporate parents, to proactively engage with and support them to fulfil their roles and responsibilities and provide system leadership.

The 4 key themes of the Board’s focus were as follows –

- education and personal development
- health and wellbeing;
- inclusion and respect, and
- creating safe, loving and stable homes.

The Board noted that sub-groups had either been created, or were in the process of being created, in connexion with the 4 focus areas. 2 sub-groups had met during 2024, and it was noted that the Health and Wellbeing sub-group would meet on 9th January 2025. It was further noted that the Participation subgroup, ‘Included and Respected’, would meet prior to each Board meeting in 2025, in order to provide information and feedback for consideration by the Board.

In order to enhance the co-ordinated action plan for 2025, the Board endorsed the recommendation that the above-mentioned themes be discussed over the course of its next 4 meetings.

Quarterly
advocacy
overview report
and other
matters: Jersey
Cares.

A4. The Board, with reference to its Minute No. A5 of 25th September 2024, received a quarterly advocacy overview oral report from Ms. K. Lynch, Director and Board Member, Jersey Cares.

Ms. Lynch advised the Board that, during the previous quarter (Quarter 3), 2024, 13 young people had been supported by Jersey Cares, 2 of whom required advocacy. Jersey Cares had also assisted with 15 requests for off-Island visits. 25 young people were waiting to see an advocate, and such requests were prioritised through a triage system. The monthly target of 6 advocacy sessions per month was being met, both in Jersey and the UK.

The Board was further advised that 3 themes arose consistently from young people seeking advocacy services from Jersey Cares:

- the legal process and how this impacted upon interacting with their family and siblings;
- finding and having a place to call ‘home’. Ms. Lynch reported a gap in provision for those aged between 16 and 18 years of age;

- income, which was of concern to all age groups of young people who interacted with Jersey Cares.

The Board noted that the above themes would be explored by Jersey Cares at its quarterly contract review meeting.

It was confirmed that all children and young people who were eligible for advocacy services provided by Jersey Cares were being referred by Children's Services, in the correct manner.

Ms. Lynch advised that requests for advocacy had also been received from care leavers at HMP La Moye, and protocols were being developed for use by the prison to create an understanding of the impact of living in care. The Board was reminded that the provision of advocacy services was for care leavers under the age of 25 years and Ms. Lynch undertook to ascertain the ages of those within the prison system who had requested advocacy services, as Ms Marriott advised she was aware of very few care leavers in HMP La Moye of less than 25 years of age.

It was noted that an additional advocate had been recruited by Jersey Cares, and that a rolling recruitment programme was in place. On a related matter, it was noted that the Chief Operating Officer at Jersey Cares was due to leave the charity in December, and that she would be a loss to the Service.

Jersey Cares had been mobilising its annual "Community Kindness" programme and care leavers would receive Christmas gifts and hampers which had been donated by corporate partners. Creative activity sessions which had been organised had proved popular and the team would also be hosting dinners with young people at which feedback would be sought on services.

On a related matter, the Board noted that an organisation known as 'The Promise Scotland' had offered to assist with providing feedback to the Board from care experienced children and young people in Jersey. Connétable R. Vibert of St. Peter, Minister for Children and Families, Chair, advised that he had not been included in correspondence in relation to this matter. He had discussed this with Deputy I. J. Gorst of St Mary, St. Ouen and St. Peter, who was a Director and Board Member of Jersey Cares and advised that he did not wish to discuss the matter further in the meeting.

The Board thanked Ms. Lynch for the update and noted progress in connexion with the provision of advocacy.

Children in Care
Council –
update.

A5. The Board, with reference to its Minute No. A3 of 25th September 2024, received a report prepared by Ms. E. Walker, Associate Director of Engagement and Participation, Children, Young People, Education and Skills Department (CYPES), dated 25th November 2024, entitled: "Corporate Parenting subgroup: Included and Respected." The Board also received an oral update from Ms. S. Butterworth, Interim Head of Service - Standards and Quality, CYPES, in this regard.

The Board was advised that 5 young people had attended a participation event on 29th October 2024, which had considered, *inter alia*, creating a Children in Care Council. A further 5 children and young people had been consulted following the event, and one young person had shared views via electronic mail.

The report recognised that, in terms of participation by care experienced children and young people in the Children in Care Council, engagement would take time, and extensive work was underway in this regard. Furthermore, the Corporate Parenting subgroup known as ‘Included and Respected’, was developing a programme to support the creation of the Council, together with the development of a participation programme throughout 2025.

A range of topics raised by young people were noted as follows:

- current issues affecting children & young people;
- family time;
- care from professionals on how young people feel;
- budgeting/ finances;
- support for independent living; and,
- managing the transition to independent living from being in care.

Mrs. Walker reminded the Board that encouraging participation by children and young people who were care experienced was an ongoing process, and engagement had to be undertaken in an appropriate and sensitive manner. Mrs. Walker further advised the Board that a communications plan would be formulated to share feedback from an engagement event with stakeholders.

The Board viewed a short, animated film, leaflet and postcard which were designed to explain the role and duties of a corporate parent to children and young people. It was noted that these had been developed in conjunction with trauma informed professionals, and that the literature would be available in locations such as the Butterfly Café. St. Helier.

Ms. S. Butterworth informed the Board that the Bright Spots survey had been commissioned to seek responses from children and young people in care about the quality of their care experience. It was noted that the same survey was carried out across many local authorities in England, and therefore provided a helpful benchmark. It was noted that the development of the CICC would ensure that the collective voice of care experienced young people was heard consistently.

The Board was advised that a participation programme was in the process of being established for children and young people experiencing care, during 2025. A range of informal sporting and social ‘meet up’ events were being planned, to be hosted at both the Butterfly Café and St. James’ Centre. Young people would be invited to meet members of the senior leadership team from Children and Young People’s Services, through ‘Come Dine with Me’ events throughout the year and Ministers would meet young people should they wish as this plan developed. Ms. Butterworth advised that a celebration event to be known as, ‘A Chance to Shine’, would be held in September 2025 to celebrate the successes of young people in care.

In response to a question regarding measurement of the achievements of the CICC, Mrs. Walker advised that the focus would be on building relationships with young people over the next year and establishing the Council. Whilst building trust and relationships would take some time it was important to focus on the young people who had responded to the recent engagement event. It was recognised that some young people might wish to engage on an ad hoc basis. Professional experience suggested that it could take 2 years to establish a “fully functional” CICC, with the emphasis being on delivering on commitments.

It was clarified that the role of the CICC was not to provide advocacy, which was offered through Jersey Cares, but to identify what was and what was not working for children and young people in care, and to engage children and young people in shaping service developments going forward. The impact of the changes would be measured against an action plan, performance data and by the use of tools such as a further Bright Spots survey during 2025. The Board was cautioned against the use of “anecdotal data.”

Some discussion followed in relation to the prioritisation of funding for services, the impact of increasing demands and the need to ensure that there were sufficient homes for children who need to be looked after by the State. The need to ensure that expectations on all sides were made clear was also highlighted.

The Board noted the position.

Care Leaver’s
offer – update
report.

A6. The Board, with reference to its Minute No. A9 of 25th September 2024, received and noted a report entitled ‘Care Leavers Offer’ (the offer), prepared by Ms. D. Marriott, Director of Children’s Services, and presented by Mr. N. Crick, Head of Service, Corporate Parenting, Health and Social Services Department.

The report sought the Board’s endorsement of the proposal to increase the one-off financial offer to those leaving care from £2,500 per care leaver, to £3,500. It was noted that this sum was provided to care leavers for the purpose of “setting up home” and recipients received support with this from a personal adviser (PA). The details of the offer would also be contained in each young person’s pathway plan, which was a statutory document. It was noted that approximately 12 young people per annum who were in care, would attain 18 years of age, and be able to access the offer.

The increased sum proposed allowed for increases in the cost of living and brought the offer in line with the English benchmark, whilst allowing for the fact that a higher cost of living applied in Jersey. The Board was requested to support the plan for further work across partnerships to ensure greater consistency of approach around the offer.

It was recalled that the local offer reflected a statutory duty devolved to the Minister for Children and Families, who was required to publish details of the same. The offer would also identify key areas of support, including:

- housing and accommodation support;
- education, training and employment advice;
- health and wellbeing;
- financial matters;
- participation and engagement; and,
- relationships.

The Board was advised that the offer would be provided once to those of up to 25 years of age, and that the current offer had been in place for 4 years, without review.

It was further noted that the offer would be delivered and overseen by the Leaving Care Team (LCT), in partnership with Customer and Local Services

(CLS) (soon to be known as Employment, Social Security and Housing). The delivery of the offer would be further supported by Brightly, a local charity that supported children and young people in care, and care leavers, which provided additional ad hoc support to young people. Furthermore, the offer would be subject to annual review, in collaboration with care leavers and partner agencies.

The Board was mindful of the work of the Corporate Parenting Subgroup: Included and Respected (Minute No. A5, above, refers), which revealed the challenges being faced by care leavers with the offer.

It was noted that a draft Care Leavers Offer leaflet had been designed and shared at a recent engagement event. There had also been further consultation with Children's Social Care and partner agencies through meetings and individual discussions, to ensure all the information in the Care Leavers Offer was both correct and aligned. Most importantly, this would ensure that a single unified offer was provided to all care leavers.

The Board noted that the content and presentation of the finalised offer would be reviewed by young people prior to publication. It was understood that Brightly provided additional financial support for young people who were care experienced over and above the offer, and that this relied on donations received by the charity.

Deputy R. J. Ward of St. Helier Central, Minister for Education and Lifelong Learning, stated that young people leaving care were likely to require funding for a deposit payable on rental accommodation. It was noted that the Children and Young People's Directorate was working with colleagues at Andium Homes to improve the accommodation offer and pathway for young people who were leaving care, with the ideal scenario being the provision of supported accommodation as a precursor to independent living. Connétable R. Vibert of St. Peter, Minister for Children and Families, further confirmed that the payment of Parish Rates for care leavers was included in the support made by payments from CLS to those leaving care. It was noted that the cost of higher education, flights and driving lessons were funded separately.

Having considered the matter, the Board agreed to endorse the proposal to increase the Care Leaver's offer to £3,500 per annum, with effect from January 2025.

Corporate Parenting data dashboard – update.

A7. The Board, with reference to its Minute No. A4 of 25th September 2024, had regard to a PowerPoint presentation from Mr. A. Heaven, Assistant Director, Policy, Cabinet Office, and Ms. S. Phillips, Head of Informatics, Children, Young People, Education and Skills Department (CYPES), regarding the ongoing development of the Corporate Parenting dashboard, of which a prototype had been created.

It was recalled that analysts from both the States of Jersey Police and the Children, Young People, Education and Skills Department (CYPES), had been collaborating to identify a meaningful set of indicators for input into the dashboard. Data that had been proposed for inclusion within the dashboard included areas such as those children who were being cared for, outcomes in respect of their education or housing, and those who were listed as “missing”, or “exploited”.

The Board was advised that the dashboard set out ‘key indicators’ and that 64 children and young people were currently in care. The dashboard accounted

for 82 care leavers, of which 77 were deemed to be in suitable accommodation, with 5 living in unsuitable accommodation. It was noted that 65 care leavers lived in Jersey, with 8 being younger than 18 years of age. The dashboard showed the age ranges of children in care, but did not include groups in very small numbers (less than 5), in order to avoid identification of individuals. A graph detailing patterns of care between January 2022 and July 2024 was noted as part of the dashboard.

The Board reviewed the dashboard and noted that the Minister for Health and Social Services, and other Ministers had attended a workshop in November 2024, where the prototype had been demonstrated. Further data dashboard workshops would be held for Ministers. The Board requested that the slides containing the data dashboard information be circulated to Members.

The Board noted the position.

Children's
Social Care -
residential estate

A8. The Board received an oral report from Ms. D. Marriott, Director, Children and Young People's Services, in connexion with the impact of the loss of 3 properties which were due to be closed in the residential estate.

The Board noted that of 3 properties used for residential accommodation by CYPES, one was suffering from subsidence and there would be no option but to discontinue its use, a planning application for use as a residential home for another property had been refused, and the third property was having to be relinquished to support development work for the new healthcare facility at Westmount, St. Helier.

The Board recognised the importance of addressing the issues relating to the residential estate as a matter of urgency. It was confirmed that an emergency plan was being put in place to ensure resilience, but that additional capital expenditure would be required to achieve this.

Connétable R. Vibert of St. Peter, Minister for Children and Families, Chair, advised of discussions with the Environment Department in connexion with the unsuccessful change of use application.

Given the level of concern regarding the displacement of up to 12 children in care from the three homes, it was agreed that Connétable Vibert would raise the matter at a future meeting of the Council of Ministers.

The Board noted a report would be prepared for consideration at a future meeting on the reform programme for the provision of accommodation for children in care.

Collation of
agreed actions

A10. The Board noted the following actions arising from the meeting -

- The local care offer of £3,500 per young person leaving care would be implemented with effect from January 2025;
- A report would be prepared for consideration by the Council of Ministers regarding the urgent situation in relation to the investment needed to improve and extend the residential estate;
- Jersey Cares would confirm the number of care leavers resident at HMP La Moye, who were below the age of 25 years that they were supporting.

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3rd Meeting
04.12.2024

Date of next
meeting

A11. It was noted that the next meeting of the Board would be held on 17th
February 2024.