ISLINGTON

CHILDREN'S SERVICES SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

9 March 2021

SECOND DESPATCH

Please find enclosed the following items:

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Questions Submitted To The Executive Member

1. The recent report from the Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman - Careless: Helping to Improve Council Services to Children in Care sets out a number of areas of poor practice by councils in dealing with looked after and care experienced children and young people. They identified complaints in a number of areas such as failure to consult or inform children and young people about key events affecting them, care planning, placement stability, contact arrangements, children leaving care and accommodation for 16/17 year olds.

   Alongside this, the Secretary of State has just announced that it will be illegal from September for councils to put children under the age of 16 into accommodation that was not regulated by Ofsted.
   This does not protect 17 yr. olds.

   Can the Executive Member confirm that Islington Council has not been guilty of any of the poor practice as described in the Ombudsman's report and that it does not use unregulated homes for its 16 and 17 year olds?

2. In recent reports, both to the Children's Services Scrutiny Committee and to Policy and Performance, we have heard about the rise in domestic violence cases against women and their children during the pandemic.

   Can the Executive Member give us an update on the figures for the past half term of lockdown and a breakdown of the different communities affected?

3. During the Covid-19 pandemic lockdowns has Islington seen an increase in children and young people joining gangs and a corresponding increase in the juvenile crime rate?

4. Does Islington Council monitor under-16 year old pregnancies? If so, has there been an increase in these rates during the Covid-19 pandemic?

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