

Minutes

7 September 2023 | 10.00am - 12.00pm

Present

Irene Levine	CoramIAC	IL
Denise McLean	Independent	DM
Steve O'Loughlin	Independent	SOL

In attendance

James Bury	CoramBAAF	JB
Georgina Coope	CoramBAAF	GC
Jo Francis	CoramBAAF	JF
Ann Horne	CoramBAAF	AH
Liam Hoskins	CoramBAAF	LH

Apologies

Ellen Broome	CoramBAAF	EB
Bernadette Caines	Independent	BC
Sariya Cheruvallil-Contractor	Coventry University	SCC
Paulette Forbes	Sheffield Metropolitan	PF
Amreen Riaz	Adoption Matters	AR
John Simmonds	CoramBAAF	JS

1. Welcome and introductions

- 1.1 IL welcomed members to the meeting and apologies were given.
- 1.2 Minutes from the last meeting were accepted as an accurate representation of discussions. Regarding genetic testing, CoramBAAF have received no further updates.

Action: JB to contact Ellie Johnson (CoramBAAF Health Consultant) before the next Advisory Committee meeting to confirm current status. IL and EB to add this to the next agenda.

- 1.3 SCC's Learning from Research webinar on intersectional identities was very well received by CoramBAAF members. A [recording](#) of this event is available to view on their website.

Action: EB and IL to add SCC to next agenda to discuss research findings.

2. CoramBAAF Events Update

- 2.1 LH updated members on CoramBAAF's Equality, Diversity and Inclusion events plan. BMEPAC are assisting the events team with three upcoming webinars, scheduled for early 2024:
- SCC will return for a follow up webinar to talk through their intersectional identities research results.
 - LH and SOL will continue to plan the webinar on black boys and girls care experiences. Emma Fincham, CoramBAAF Fostering Consultant, has confirmed some speakers for this event.
- 2.2 **Action: LH to continue communications with BMEPAC to finalise these events. DM to contact CFAB directly to find out more.**

3. CoramBAAF Kinship Update and Form K Presentation

- 3.1 AH presented an overview of CoramBAAF's Kinship Care Advisory Committee including:
- The history of Kinship Care Advisory Committee
 - The diversity of Kinship Care Advisory Committee members
 - Crossover with CoramBAAF's Kinship Care Practice Forum
 - Language and terminology
 - Links with the Kinship Care Alliance and other organisations
- 3.2 Clare Seth, CoramBAAF Kinship Consultant, sits on the KCA Racial Equality Subgroup. [Families in Harmony](#) also sit on this group and specialise in supporting Black African and Black Caribbean kinship carers.
- 3.3 Kinship have funded a research project on the experiences of kinship carers from black, Asian and minority ethnic communities. This is supported by the KPMG Foundation and is being undertaken by Rees Centre at the University of Oxford and Kinship. Data shows these families are more likely to exhibit informal kinship arrangements, which reduces their likelihood of receiving support.
- 3.4 [CFAB](#) are undertaking a Cultural Family Life Library project and running a pilot focussing on families of Romanian and Jamaican heritage. Pilot resources are set to be published this month.
- Action: CoramBAAF to share CFAB pilot materials with this group when available.**
- 3.5 Kinship Care Week is taking place between Monday 2nd and Sunday 8th October 2023.
- 3.6 **Action: CoramBAAF to look into linking BMEPAC members with their Kinship Care Advisory Committee.**
- 3.7 CoramBAAF are looking to increase their number of kinship focussed events. They previously ran an event with [Families in Harmony](#) called 'An introduction to working with black kinship families.' Another collaborative event is planned for next year to look at supporting black and minoritised kinship families, as well as carers looking after mixed heritage children.
- 3.8 AH and CS are in the process of writing a good practice guide on supporting kinship families. They have worked closely with [Families in Harmony](#) to create a draft chapter on supporting the needs of black kinship families. CoramBAAF are conscious of black families needing to be considered throughout the book, as well as within their dedicated chapter. A first draft should be available by Christmas, but CoramBAAF need to wait for the kinship national strategy to be published first.
- 3.9 Members discussed the reintroduction of PLO. AH summarised CoramBAAF's position on this and what it means for social work practitioners and families. Members also discussed informal carers,

disruptions and the lack of data surrounding them. The official publication of the national kinship strategy is expected before Christmas.

Action: AH to share Sharon's reflective blog with the group.

- 3.10 CoramBAAF have collaborated with Family Rights Group, CFAB and Coram CLC to create a [frequently asked questions](#) document (funded by Save the Children) on supporting Ukrainian children in the UK. This document covers the legal frameworks around unaccompanied Ukrainian children and their identity needs.
- 3.11 *Form K Presentation*- CoramBAAF are in the process of updating their Form C (now Form K). AH explained the purpose of this review and summarised the process so far. AH answered members' questions about the new Form K.

Action: CoramBAAF to involve BMEPAC with the Form K consultation process

- 3.12 CoramBAAF are updating their cultural competence training materials. AH invited members to review these materials and provide feedback. Reviewed content is due to be sent to the trainer by early October, but continuous feedback would be welcome beyond this timescale.

Action: Members to contact AH and JB if interested in seeing these cultural competency training materials.

4. CoramBAAF Publications Update

- 4.1 JF and JB updated the group on their quest to publish more materials on working with and supporting black and minority ethnic children in care. The subject may be too broad and overwhelming to cover in one good practice guide, so publications are considering narrowing down their focus to very specific key issues. JF asked members' advice on what these topics could be and the format they should take. JB also asked for recommendations of organisations or individuals who CoramBAAF could work with on this.
- 4.2 Members suggested starting with existing good practice guides from different local authorities to see what topics they cover and how they need updating. With permission, new CoramBAAF resources could contain links to other resources that already provide valuable information. JF suggested this may be best produced as a web page or online hub rather than a book and members agreed.
- 4.3 Members were very supportive of this project and expressed interest in actively participating in a consultation process.

Action: CoramBAAF to set up a separate focus group meeting to move this concept forward.

- 4.4 Key practice issues identified by members were:

- Pre-placement planning
- Cultural competency
- Out of date publications
- Mental health
- Refugee children
- Transracial placements
- Neurodiversity support
- Identity formation
- Bereavement support

- Direct life story work and supporting BME children in placement

Action: SOL to circulate anonymised bereavement document to members.

5. Intercountry Adoption Centre (IAC) Update

- 5.1 IL confirmed IAC has become part of the Coram group and will be operating as [CoramIAC](#) from now on. The [Outbound Permanence Service](#) has moved to CoramBAAF's Advice Line team and CoramIAC will continue to focus on training, support and recruitment of intercountry adopters.
- 5.2 CoramIAC retain their own management, trustees and Ofsted registration, but Coram has taken over the financial and HR aspects of the organisation. IL confirmed this change has significantly benefitted the organisation and can share more information with members if desired.

6. Any Other Business

- 6.1 Members agreed to hold the next meeting via Zoom.

Action: GC to look into holding the following meeting in person on 22 February 2024.

Action: EB and IL to add Advisory Committee feedback to the December agenda, specifying which groups BMEPAC are linked to and who that link person is.

Date of next meeting: 7 December 2023