

Name of meeting: Corporate Parenting Board
Date: 21 January 2019
Title of report: The future focus of the Corporate Parenting Board

Purpose of report

To facilitate a discussion relating to the future focus and work plan of the Corporate Parenting Board.

Key Decision - Is it likely to result in spending or saving £250k or more, or to have a significant effect on two or more electoral wards?	NA
Key Decision - Is it in the Council's Forward Plan (key decisions and private reports?)	NA
The Decision - Is it eligible for call in by Scrutiny?	NA
Date signed off by <u>Strategic Director</u> & name	Elaine McShane – 10.1.19
Is it also signed off by the Service Director for Finance IT and Transactional Services?	NA
Is it also signed off by the Service Director for Legal Governance and Commissioning Support?	NA
Cabinet member portfolio	Cllr V Kendrick (Children's Portfolio)

Electoral wards affected: All

Ward councillors consulted: No

Public or private: Public

(Have you considered GDPR?)

Yes GDPR has been considered. The information in this report does not identify any individuals.

1. **Summary**

The Children and Social Work Act 2017 states that when a child or young person comes into the care of the local authority, the authority becomes their corporate parent. This means that we should: act in the best interests, and promote the physical and mental health and wellbeing, of those children and young people, encourage them to express their views, wishes and feelings, and take them into account. At the same time promoting high aspirations and trying to secure the best outcomes for them make sure they have access to services make sure that they are safe, with stable home lives, relationships and education or work prepare them for adulthood and independent living.

Every councillor and officer within the council has a responsibility to act for those children and young people as a parent would for their own child. It is important to remember that, just as not all children are the same, looked-after children and care leavers are not one homogenous group. While it is true that some will have experienced trauma and disruption in their lives and need support to cope with those experiences, others will have adjusted well to being in care and will be flourishing. As corporate parents, councillors and officers need to recognise the uniqueness of the children in their care, and make sure each child is getting what they need in order to thrive. By focusing the work of the Corporate Parenting Board on outcomes for our children and young people, we will ensure a strong partnership across the council.

The Department for Education corporate parenting principles set out seven principles that local authorities must have regard to when exercising their functions in relation to looked after children and young people, as follows:

- to act in the best interests, and promote the physical and mental health and wellbeing, of those children and young people;
- to encourage those children and young people to express their views, wishes and feelings;
- to take into account the views, wishes and feelings of those children and young people;
 - to help those children and young people gain access to, and make the best use of, services provided by the local authority and its relevant partners;
 - to promote high aspirations, and seek to secure the best outcomes, for those children and young people;
 - for those children and young people to be safe, and for stability in their home lives, relationships and education or work; and
- to prepare those children and young people for adulthood and independent living.

Discussion is sought to agree the focus of the board to ensure that the council is achieving best practice in relation to its Corporate Parenting responsibilities, addressing the requirements of the seven key principles detailed above.

2. **Information required to take a decision**

No Decision is required.

3. **Implications for the Council**

3.1 **Working with People**

To expand Corporate Parenting awareness across the council

3.2 **Working with Partners**

To ensure all partners are aware of their responsibilities to children in care

3.3 Place Based Working

Not applicable

3.4 Improving Outcomes for Children

By focussing the work of the board on the seven key principles suggested by the Department for Education.

3.5 Reducing demand of services

Not applicable

3.6 Other (eg Legal/Financial or Human Resources)

Not applicable

4. Consultees and their opinions

Members of the Corporate Parenting Board.

5. Next steps

After consideration and agreement, the Board will update the forward plan of the Board.

6. Officer recommendations and reasons

That the forward plan of the Board should focus on the wider responsibility of the council as a corporate parent.

7. Cabinet portfolio holder's recommendations

Not applicable

8. Contact officer

Steve Comb Head of Corporate Parenting

9. Background Papers and History of Decisions

Not applicable

10. Service Director responsible

Elaine McShane, Service Director (Child Protection and Family Support)