

**Wiltshire Council**

**Full Council**

**18 July 2023**

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**Annual Report of the Corporate Parenting Panel  
July 2022 to March 2023**

**Executive Summary**

This report forms the annual update to Council from the Corporate Parenting Panel (CPP) in accordance with the Council's Constitution.

The role of Wiltshire's Corporate Parenting Panel is to secure Councillor involvement and commitment throughout the Council to deliver better outcomes for children and young people who are looked after or care experienced. All Councillors are reminded that they have responsibilities as a corporate parent for children and young people who are Looked After in Wiltshire.

The report gives an overview on the panel's work programme, the scrutiny of performance, the Corporate Parenting Strategy, details and data within the key service areas. Furthermore, it provides information following Ofsted's focused visit on Care Leavers in January 2022, the Panel's impact and ambition, and planned next steps to further strengthen Corporate Parenting in Wiltshire.

This report covers the period from Q2 2022-23 to Q4 2022-23. Going forward the annual report will be scheduled for the July meetings of Council to allow for full year reporting thereafter.

This report was reviewed by the Children' Select Committee Standing Task Group on 26 June 2023 and by the CPP on 27 June 2023.

An acronym list is included at the end of this report.

**Proposals**

- 1) To receive and note the Annual Report and the work of the Corporate Parenting Panel to date, its functions and impact of its work and to ratify the improvements required to further strengthen Corporate Parenting in Wiltshire.
- 2) To receive and note the Annual Report of the Child and Youth Voice Team from April 2022 to March 2023, attached as Appendix 1 to this report.

## **Reasons for Proposals**

All Councillors have responsibilities as a “corporate parent” for children and young people who are Looked After in Wiltshire. This includes responsibility for ensuring that the voices of children and young people continue to be heard and understood by Members, Officers and all Corporate Parents, whilst ensuring these opinions are fully reflected in practice improvement.

**Netty Lee**

**Head of Children in Care and Young People**

**Jen Salter**

**Director of Families and Children’s Services**

**Lucy Townsend**

**Corporate Director – People/Director of Children’s Services**

**Wiltshire Council**

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**Annual Report of the Corporate Parenting Panel  
July 2022 to March 2023**

**Purpose of Report**

1. This report forms the annual update to Council from the Corporate Parenting Panel (CPP) in accordance with the Council's Constitution.
2. The report captures the work of the Corporate Parenting Panel to ensure the best outcomes are achieved for children looked after and care experienced adults. The report outlines the key principles and priorities for the Council as Corporate Parents, including a review of the performance data and activity aligned with this. The meetings relate to the strategic objectives as agreed by children and young people and elected members. This year has seen the growth and development of the Child and Youth Voice team, ensuring the voices of young people are heard and transparent in all the work we do; and that this informs future service delivery.
3. The government introduced clear corporate parenting principles that require all departments within a local authority including staff, elected members and partner agencies to recognise their role as a corporate parent and encourage them to look at the support and services they provide. The principles are:
  - To act in the best interest and promote the physical, mental health and wellbeing of children and young people looked after;
  - To encourage children and young people looked after to express their views, wishes and feelings;
  - To consider the views, wishes and feelings of children and young people looked after;
  - To help children and young people looked after to gain access to, and make the best use of, the services provided by the local authority and its relevant partners;
  - To promote high aspirations and seek to secure the best outcomes for children and young people looked after;
  - To ensure children and young people looked after are safe and have stability in their home lives, relationships, education and/or work place;
  - To prepare children and young people looked after for adulthood and independent living.

**Background**

4. The role of Wiltshire's Corporate Parenting Panel is to deliver better outcomes for children and young people who are looked after or care experienced. All Councillors have responsibilities as a corporate parent for children and young people who are Looked After in Wiltshire.

5. Wiltshire Corporate Parents are responsible for 461 children in care (end of Q4 2023) and 327 care experienced young people (75 aged 17-18, 187 aged 19-21 and 56 aged 22–25). Of those children in our care, 22% are voluntarily accommodated (children who came into care with parental agreement), with the remaining children subject to an interim or full Care Order which means legally we have overriding parental responsibility.
6. Since 2014, the number and rate of children in care in Wiltshire has steadily increased up until 2020/21, when it started to reduce. This mirrors the increasing trends seen in the national and statistical neighbour data however the latter group have seen a sharper increase over this period. The 2020/21 Wiltshire rate of 39 per 10,000 children aged 0-17 years remains significantly below the latest published rates (2019/20) for our statistical neighbours (57 per 10,000) and the National average (67 per 10,000). This is positive and a result of our strong prevention work enabling children and young people to safely remain within their birth families.
7. Councillors Mary Champion, Ernie Clark, Peter Hutton, (Chair), Simon Jacobs, Laura Mayes, Dominic Muns (Vice Chair), Stewart Palmen, and Sam Pearce-Kearney formed the membership of the Panel during the period July 2022 to March 2023.
8. The Lead Officer was Netty Lee (Head of Children in Care and Young People’s Service).

### **Work Programme**

9. The Corporate Parenting Panel has discussed a broad range of topics whilst considering young people’s views. A Children in Care Council (CiCC) representative has been invited to attend each Panel meeting and, whilst not able to attend all, they have provided invaluable direction and opinion.
10. The table below shows the following reports and information the Panel has received during the reporting period and how they link to the CPP priorities:

#### Reports/updates received by Corporate Parenting Panel

CPP Priorities	Data Domains (Linked to the 8 areas of the CPP data scorecard)	CPP Meeting 27.9.22	CPP Meeting 15.11.22	CPP Meeting 17.1.23	CPP Meeting 21.3.23
<i>A loving home where I have good relationships, respect and the opportunity to see my family</i>	<i>Stability and permanence/ Fostering</i>	Report 2 and report 4	Report 2, report 11 and report 12	Report 2, report 4 and report 18	Report 21
<i>To have links with my local</i>	<i>Stability and Permanence</i>				

<i>community where I am trusted, respected and accepted. This means I can access the local community and I am not left out</i>					
<i>Support for as long as I need it</i>	<i>Timely and consistent support/Care Leavers</i>	Report 1 and report 5	Report 1, report 5, report 10 and report 14	Report 5, report 10 and report 15	Report 1, report 5, report 10, report 22 and report 23
<i>To feel and be safe</i>	<i>Safety and Security/ Timely and consistent support</i>		Report 13		
<i>Support with my mental health especially at school, at a time and a place that suits me and not services</i>	<i>Timely and consistent support</i>			Report 16	
<i>Support to be healthy and this includes opportunities to be involved in new activities</i>	<i>Health and Wellbeing</i>	Report 6	Report 9	Report 17	Report 20
<i>Support to be the best I can</i>	<i>Education</i>	Report 7		Meeting focus Report 11 and report 18	
<i>To be heard – my voice is not the only way I am heard, it may come out as my behaviour</i>	<i>Child's Voice</i>	Report 3 and Report 8	Report 3	Report 3	Report 3

**KEY**

- Report 1 CPP Data Scorecard
- Report 2 Update on Children in Care Placement Budget
- Report 3 Child and Youth Voice Update
- Report 4 Map/update of CLA placed at more than 20 miles from home

Report 5	Update on Canons House and Aspire House
Report 6	Update on the Integrated Care Board
Report 7	Examinations Results Update from the Virtual School
Report 8	Data Spotlight – Push and Pull Factors from Missing Episodes in 2021-22
Report 9	Update on Covid vaccinations for Children and Young People
Report 10	Update on Council’s Provision for Care Experienced Young People
Report 11	Adoption Service 2021-22 Year End Report
Report 12	Fostering Excellence Year 2 Update April 2021 – March 2022
Report 13	Update on progress following the Child Safeguarding Practice Review: Long term sexual abuse of children
Report 14	Overview of Staying Close Project
Report 15	Findings report from the Care Experienced Young Peoples Week – Oct 2022
Report 16	Annual Report on the Health of Children Looked After 2021-22
Report 17	Update on Immunisations
Report 18	National Review into Safeguarding Children with Disabilities and Complex Health Needs in Residential Settings – Outcome of Review
Report 19	Annual Report of the Virtual School for 2021-22
Report 20	Update on Progress of the Integrated Care Board
Report 21	Annual Fostering Report – April 2021 – March 2022
Report 22	Update on the identified priorities of the Independent Visitor Scheme
Report 23	Overview of Transitional Safeguarding

## Scrutiny of Performance

11. There are two aspects to the scrutiny function of the Panel; the receipt of reports relating to the identified priorities (the resulting analysis and discussion) and the scrutiny of performance data.
12. A new performance report was developed in late 2020 which aims to provide a consolidated view of data about our children, their achievements and the quality of the parenting they receive from us.

### a) The CPP Scorecard

The scorecard aims to provide a balanced view of performance across the range of responsibilities and priorities Wiltshire has as a corporate parent. It provides a single view of indicators broken down into 8 domains (Health & Wellbeing, Safety & Security, Stability & Permanence, Timely & Consistent Support, Education, Fostering, Care Experienced Young People and Child’s Voice).

It has been developed upon the following principles;

- Report the latest data available for each indicator at the time of the corporate parenting panel.
- Report data that needs to be reported, not that which is ‘easy to report’ and has always been reported.
- Report data that can be compared with expected performance levels, previous time periods and where possible with other similar local authorities.
- Provide the data in a format which balances accessibility with completeness.

At each meeting, an exception report is presented by the Head of Service for those indicators which are outside the expected range or below the required target level and successes are acknowledged.

b) Data spotlight

This section provides an area where a more detailed view of data can be presented on a specific area of our corporate parenting responsibilities, the theme of which is agreed at the previous meeting.

## **The Corporate Parenting Strategy**

13. The Corporate Parenting Strategy was last reviewed in 2020 and approved by Full Council in October 2020. This has been revised and is to be shared with Corporate Parenting Panel on the 27 June 2023. It will then be sent to our Children in Care Council for consultation and will be presented to Full Council for approval at their meeting on 17 October 2023.

14. The fundamental aims of the Corporate Parenting strategy are to ensure that Councillors:

- Understand their roles and responsibilities as Corporate Parents
- Scrutinise and challenge how the Council performs in delivering its services as a Corporate Parent
- Engage effectively, with energy, consistency, and confidence with children and young people so that their voice is heard and has influence
- Support and enable children and young people to challenge where services need to improve
- Maintain a comprehensive overview of the progress of children who are looked after and care experienced, scrutinising the quality, effectiveness and performance of the services that support them.

15. **The Priorities:** The Strategy, has eight strategic priorities. Each member of the Panel has a lead role for a strategic priority ensuring oversight and critical challenge. The revised priorities and the Councillor/Officer lead are detailed below:

- i. A loving home where I have good relationships, respect and the opportunity to see my family. *Cllr Mary Champion – Support Officer – Michele Llewellyn*
- ii. To have links with my local community where I am trusted, respected and accepted. This means I can access the local community and I am not left out. *Cllr Laura Mayes - Support Officer – Rhys Schell*
- iii. To feel and be safe. *Cllr Peter Hutton – Support Officer – Sara James – changing to new Service Manager Performance and Outcomes tba 2023*
- iv. Support with my mental health especially at school, at a time and a place that suits me and not services. *Cllr Stewart Palmes – Support Officer -- Fiona Lloyd-Bostock has recently joined us following recruitment*

- v. Support to be healthy and this includes opportunities to be involved in new activities. *Cllr Ernie Clark – Support Officer – Sally Johnson*
- vi. Support to be the best I can. *Cllr Dominic Muns – Support Officer – Kathryn Davis*
- vii. Support for as long as I need it. *Cllr Simon Jacobs – Support Officer – Roxanne Falla changing to Leanne Dicks May 2023*
- viii. To be heard – my voice is not the only way I am heard, it may come out as my behaviour. *Cllr Sam Pearce-Kearney – Support Officer – Jay Williams*

## Performance

16. Performance reporting continues to be developed on the principle of reporting data that covers the full range of our corporate parenting responsibilities, over and above the standard measures which are reported nationally. Where local authority data can be benchmarked against other local authorities, our performance is reported against a range of comparators including Wiltshire’s statistical neighbours, the regional and national averages, and those authorities who have received an ‘Outstanding’ Ofsted assessment.

17. Annually, the indicators themselves, together with their expected ranges and targets are reviewed in consultation with Heads of Service and Corporate Parenting Panel Data Scorecard which has been in place since November 2021. Below is a breakdown of each performance indicator for 2022-23:

Area	Indicator	type	MONTHS						QUARTERS				YEARS		EXPECTED RANGE & TARGETS		COMPARATORS 2020-21					
			106274		106274		106274		106274		106274		106064	106274	Lower	Higher	106064	106064	106064	106064	106064	
			22-23	22-23	22-23	22-23	22-23	22-23	22-23	22-23	22-23	22-23	20-21	2021-22	exp. range	exp. range	20-21	20-21	20-21	20-21	20-21	
			Oct-22	Nov-22	Dec-22	Jan-23	Feb-23	Mar-23	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	FY	FY (pccw)			Wilts	Eng	SW Region	SN	O/S LAs	
CLA No./RATE	No. CLA	snapshot	453	464	467	465	464	461	429	445	467	461	424	427	407	469						
CLA No./RATE	Rate CLA per 10,000	rate	42.6	43.7	43.9	43.8	43.7	43.4	40.4	41.9	43.9	43.4	40.4	40.2	38.3	44.1	39	67	56	59.1	55.889	
CLA STARTS	No. CLA starts	number	31	9	15	12	13	1	43	36	55	26	131	143								
CLA STARTS	Children who started to be looked after – rate per 10,000	rate	35	10	17	14	15	1	16	14	21	10	12	12	12	18	12	24	21	20.5	24.333	
CLA CEASE	No. CLA Ceased	number	9	10	8	16	12	11	32	29	27	39	174	139								
CLA CEASE	Children who ceased to be looked after – rate per 10,000	rate	10	11	9	18	14	12	12	11	10	15	16	14	13	17	16	23	21	18.6	26.5	
UASC	No. UASC	snapshot	22	27	30	26	30	33	18	22	30	33	19	24								
UASC	% UASC	%	5%	6%	6%	6%	6%	7%	4%	5%	6%	7%	4%	6%			4%	5%	3%	4.10%	11.73%	
ICO	No. of Interim Care Orders	snapshot	73	70	66	73	78	72	50	54	66	72	41	63								
ICO	% Interim Care Orders	% snapshot	16%	15%	14%	16%	17%	16%	12%	12%	14%	16%	10%	15%	10%	14%	10%	20%	18%	17%	17%	
S20	No. of Section 20 CLA	snapshot	105	113	113	108	107	102	103	109	113	102	93	93								
S20	% Section 20 CLA	% snapshot	23%	24%	24%	23%	23%	22%	24%	24%	24%	22%	22%	22%	23%	26%	22%	15%	16%	16%	28%	
CLA 3+ MOVES	% CLA with 3+ placements during the year	%	5.5%	7.1%	6.4%	6.7%	6.3%	7.2%	7.5%	5.6%	6.4%	7%	6.5%	9.1%	7%	10%	6%	9%	11%	11%	9%	
2YR STABILITY	% CLA 2yr stability	%	70%	71%	73%	73%	71%	73%	71%	72%	73%	73%	78%	73%	75%	82%	77%	70%	71%	70%	63%	

Please note this report period covers Quarter 2 22-23 to Q4 22-23; not a full year’s data.

18. Performance indicators are calculated using data recorded on our LiquidLogic Case Management System. The table above shows performance indicators by months, quarters and years. You can see different types of indicators – snapshots, rates and numbers.



19. Snapshot indicators look at performance at a point in time, e.g., end of month, end of quarter. You can see for the first indicator, No. Of CLA, the No of CLA as at end of Q4 was 461, which is a snapshot measure as at March 23, the last month of Q4.
20. The Rate of CLA per 100,00 is a rate indicator and calculates based on population.
21. No. Of CLA starts is a number indicator, the totals for each month are added up to give an overall figure for the quarter.
22. The expected ranges are set from Department for Education figures which report regional; Southwest and national data. We have 10 comparator (statistical neighbours) Local Authorities and also compare ourselves against the England and regional averages and other Outstanding local authorities. Following this we analyse our data trends and set our targets which are reviewed annually.

### Our Children in Care (CIC)

23. From Q2 2022 we had 445 CIC, increasing to 461 at the end of Q4 2023, this is below our higher expected range of 469 and above our lower expected range of 407. Our rate per 10,000 who started to be looked after is 10 per 10,000 (lower expected range 12 per 10,000 higher expected range 18 per 10,000) at the end of Q4 2023 this compares to the England average of 24 per 10,000 and Southwest of 21 per 10,000 (Outstanding Local Authorities (OLA) at 24 per 10,000). Overall, since our last annual report we can see an increase of 40 CIC children (just below our higher expected range) and an increase of 74 care experienced young people.
24. We had 95 CIC (rate 15 per 10,000) over the last three quarters who ceased to be Looked After which is within our expected range and lower than the England average of 23 per 10,000 and Outstanding Local Authorities at 26.5 per 10,000, meaning we have less children leaving care, but note this report is only 10 months of data rather than 12 months of reporting. Children leave our care through the permanence of adoption or a return home to their parent/s.
25. We can see that from Q2 to Q4 we had 11 children leave our care, increasing to 15 in Q4. Our last annual report noted 139 children ceased to be looked after over a full year. Reunification home is considered in each child and young person's annual review and considered in supervision sessions with Social Workers, providing increased consideration of this option.
26. In the last three quarters, there have been 85 unaccompanied young people entering our care either as part of the National Transfer Scheme (NTS) or as a spontaneous arrival. We reported 104 in our last annual report (full year). To date for Q1 2023/2024 we have welcomed 5 young people. This shows a reduction of 19 in the overall number of UASC. Since July 10 young people who have been transferred are under 16yrs.
27. At the end of Q4 we have 16% of our children in care subject to Interim Care Orders an increase from our last report of 4% (12% in June 2022) this is just above our expected higher range of 14%. This is lower than the England average and

Outstanding Local Authorities (OLA's), but we are confident from the officer scrutiny in place that this is the right number for Wiltshire and thus is within our expected range.

28. 22% of our children in care have a Section 20 legal status, (year 2020/2021 it was also 22%) which is higher than the England average and lower than OLA's at 29%. (Section 20 Accommodation is where there is a mutual agreement between the local authority and the parents that a child should be in care). For 2020/2021 it was also 22% A proportion of these are still within court proceedings under the no order principle, and a smaller number with a long-term fostering permanence plan with no need to have a legal order in place.

### Placement Stability

29. There is a range of information made available to the Corporate Parenting Panel which helps to indicate the effectiveness of the Council's work in terms of Priority 8 "A loving home where I have good relationships, respect and the opportunity to see my family". The two key performance indicators below indicate our performance for stability.

30. **% of looked after children with 3 or more placement moves in the last 12 months.** In Q2 July 2022-23 Wiltshire performance was 5.6% below our lower expected range of 6.5%. At the end of Q4 2023 we are reporting 7%, below our upper range of 9.1% and in line with our lower range of 7%. Since the last annual report, we have had an overall improvement with less children having 3 or more placement moves in 12 months. This indicator demonstrates strong performance as less children are moving in an unplanned way indicating placement matches are strong.

31. Examples of a planned move would be a baby that is placed with its parent in a parent and child residential placement, the assessment is unsuccessful and the child moves to foster care and then moved to adoptive carers. This would count as 3 placement moves although they are planned and in the best interests of the child. An example of an unplanned move is where a placement of child is at risk of disrupting because the care provider is struggling with the care needs of the child and an alternative placement needs to be identified.

#### Previous report

QUARTERS				EXP. RANGES	
21-22	21-22	21-22	22-23	Lower	Higher
Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	exp. range	exp. range
8.2%	8.1%	9.1%	7.5%	7%	10%

#### Current report

QUARTERS			EXP. RANGES	
22-23	22-23	22-23	Lower	Higher
Q2	Q3	Q4	exp. range	exp. range
5.6%	6.4%	7%	7%	10%

32. Below shows that stability in placements for our children is stronger than our comparators.

COMPARATORS 2020-21				
20-21	20-21	20-21	20-21	20-21
Wilts	Eng	SW Region	SN	O/S LAs
6%	9%	11%	11%	9%

33. **% of children looked after for more than 2.5 years and in placement for at least 2 years.** In 2020/21, Wiltshire performance was 78% within the target range of 75 to 82%. For 2023/23 our performance has dipped at 71.6% and is below our 75% lower range. Due to national placement sufficiency issues, we are seeing that more children are not being able to be matched to the most suitable placements when entering the care system, often meaning they have moves within this time period. We are reviewing these to inform our learning. A placement sufficiency strategy and action plan is in place to address this and is overseen by the Director.

Previous Report

QUARTERS				EXP. RANGES	
21-22	21-22	21-22	22-23	Lower	Higher
Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	exp. range	exp. range
78%	75%	73%	71%	75%	82%

Current Report

QUARTERS			EXP. RANGES	
22-23	22-23	22-23	Lower	Higher
Q2	Q3	Q4	exp. range	exp. range
72%	73%	73%	75%	82%

34. We can see our stability rate although slightly reduced, is still higher than in Outstanding local authorities. Considering this landscape, stability remains exceptionally strong.

COMPARATORS 2020-21				
20-21	20-21	20-21	20-21	20-21
Wilts	Eng	SW Region	SN	O/S LAs
77%	70%	71%	70%	63%

35. We know that the impact of Covid on our young people’s mental health has been significant and it has also had an impact on carers resilience. At the end of Q2 last year we implemented a weekly Stability Panel to provide additional support to those carers and young people where their stability was at risk. This was trialled and then stepped down due to lack of referrals. Most placements ending over these quarters were residential placements, where nationally we are seeing a shift in shorter notice

periods being served for our more complex young people. These young people are found alternative placements.

36. Our children’s home contract will provide and 12 new bed provision for our more complex young people, when the tender is awarded. We are also launching Mockingbird in 2023 which is a national programme to support the resilience of our foster carers who care for our children and young people with more complex trauma needs. An extensive review of our CAMHS contract is due with proposals for recommissioning being published in Autumn 2023. A local Emotional Wellbeing and Mental Health Strategy is also being developed to shape future early help, emotional wellbeing and mental health services for children and young people in Wiltshire.

37. Nationally local authorities and independent fostering agencies have reported reduced applications to foster which means there are fewer foster placements. This results in increased competition for residential homes for children. There are a total of 46 children who have been in care for more than 2 and half year but have not been in the same placement for at least 2yrs this makes up 28.4% of our children in care.

% CLA in care 18months+ who are not in long term arrangements

38. This has remained consistent over the last year but above our expected higher range. All children in care that are not matched long term with carers are reviewed at Permanence Panel which is held monthly and the suitability of long term matching is considered. A number of children and young people are not ready for matching due to their presenting trauma. Long term matching is also considered in all annual reviews by the child’s Independent Reviewing Officer. There is no comparative data for this measure nationally. We are reviewing how we collate this data for Q1 2023 – 2024.

QUARTERS				EXP. RANGES	
21-22	21-22	21-22	22-23	Lower	Higher
Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	exp. range	exp. range
41%	42%	43%	43%	30%	35%

QUARTERS			EXP. RANGES	
22-23	22-23	22-23	Lower	Higher
Q2	Q3	Q4	exp. range	exp. range
43%	42%	43%	30%	35%

39. From quarter 1 to quarter 4 inclusive, 10 young people have returned home to the care of their parents under placement with parent regulations, 5 of which were planned and in line with their care plan timings under Placement With Parents Regulations.

40. Of the unplanned returns:

Reunification of four siblings' home to Mum but the move was planned but this happened quicker than we had planned when they refused to return to their foster carer's care following staying contact, we are due to return to court as they no longer need to be in our care. A 16yr old returned to the care of their mother following a difficult period in her placement, we assessed and supported this under Placement with Parents Regulations.

41. In September 2022, 2 young people had their full care orders rescinded following successful reunification, with the plan to make applications to the court later this year for a further 7 young people.

Children and young people placed over 20 miles from home (excluding UASC)

42. Our performance in this area is just outside of our expected upper range. We have seen an increase in the number of children placed over 20 miles, above our higher expected range. This has largely been impacted by national pressures in the placement market resulting in less placement options to keep our children close. 71% of children placed more than 20 miles from home are living within Wiltshire, meaning 29% are placed out of the Wiltshire border. This is a continued area of focus supported by our Placement Sufficiency Strategy.
43. From Q1 to Q4 we had a net addition of 11 children/young people placed 20 miles from home but within our county border. Our numbers 20 miles from home and out of county have reduced from 95 to 91(23%) at the end of Q4.

Previous report

QUARTERS				EXP. RANGES	
21-22	21-22	21-22	22-23	Lower	Higher
Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	exp. range	exp. range
36%	37%	36%	38%	34%	37%

Current report

QUARTERS			EXP. RANGES	
22-23	22-23	22-23	Lower	Higher
Q2	Q3	Q4	exp. range	exp. range
38%	39%	39%	34%	37%

COMPARATORS 2020-21				
20-21	20-21	20-21	20-21	20-21
Wilts	Eng	SW Region	SN	O/S LAs
35%	21%	31%	33%	25%

44. We have been successful in two matched funding DfE bids for 12 new residential beds (small 3 to 4 bed homes) within Wiltshire. The tender was advertised in January 2023. We are in the final stages of awarding this contract at the time of writing this

report. As part of this plan, we purchased our second children's home in Melksham. This in addition to our current Residential Step Down Programme. These two initiatives are in place to try and reduce the number of our children placed 20 miles away from home and more specifically, the number of our children placed in residential provision out of county (currently 29%). Year three of Fostering Excellence will report into POB and CPP in June 2023.

45. We have seen a slight increase in children leaving care during 22/23 which is within our expected range. Those coming into care is steady over the last 2.5 years in comparison. Our last annual report sighted the pressure placed upon the budget if our numbers of children in care increase above our expected ranges. Separate information on budget forecasting is presented to Cabinet as part of the overall financial position reporting. A working group led by the Director of Families and Children's Services commences in January 2023 to provide scrutiny and oversight of our plans to manage the projected financial challenges in relation to the placement budget. As of June 2023, our number of children in care is 451 so has reduced in line with these plans.

#### Children Missing from Care

46. In Q2 2021, 81 children in care had missing episodes (*missing episodes are where a child or young person does not return home/at their placement at the expected/agreed time and are reported missing to the Police*) this has reduced over the last 12 months and is below our expected lower range of 90. Comparative data for children in care is not published separately to overall missing young people.

#### **Last report: number of children in care who had a missing episode**

QUARTERS				EXP. RANGES	
21-22	21-22	21-22	22-23	Lower	Higher
Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	exp. range	exp. range
81	51	56	49	90	120

#### **In County**

QUARTERS				EXP. RANGES	
21-22	21-22	21-22	22-23	Lower	Higher
Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	exp. range	exp. range
38	28	34	32	30	60

#### **Out of County**

QUARTERS				EXP. RANGES	
21-22	21-22	21-22	22-23	Lower	Higher
Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	exp. range	exp. range
39	23	22	17	15	45

Current report:

QUARTERS			EXP. RANGES	
22-23	22-23	22-23	Lower	Higher
Q2	Q3	Q4	exp. range	exp. range
47	49	71	90	120

In County

QUARTERS			EXP. RANGES	
22-23	22-23	22-23	Lower	Higher
Q2	Q3	Q4	exp. range	exp. range
34	40	47	30	60

Out of County

QUARTERS			EXP. RANGES	
22-23	22-23	22-23	Lower	Higher
Q2	Q3	Q4	exp. range	exp. range
13	9	24	15	45

47. There are less children in care having missing episodes placed out of county than in county *and* overall incidents of missing are reduced. We are reporting a focused themed Missing CIC data spotlight report to Corporate Parenting Panel on the 27 June 2023. Our overall number of young people missing are still below our lower target range of 90. At each Corporate Parenting Panel Missing Data is reviewed. However, the Corporate Parenting Panel need to consider the missing episodes of children in care only; not children who are not in care. We have therefore produced a separate report that focuses on missing children in care and give a thematic overview. The themes will be included in the next Annual report covering April 2023 – March 2024.

### Our Fostering Service

48. % in LA provision - Excluding Connected Carers (*Connected carers are members of a child's extended family or have a connection to a child, they are approved and assessed to meet the needs of that specific child/children long term. They have the same support and payments as our mainstream foster carers*)
49. We have less children placed with our in house foster carers over the last year at 39%. The final year report for Fostering Excellence is currently being collated which sets out the plans to increase performance. We remain ambitious and want to see 65% of our children in 'in house' foster care. Over the last two years of our Fostering Excellence programme, we have increased the overall percentage of children living with in house foster carers by 2% and at the same time reduce the numbers living with IFA foster carers.

### Previous report

QUARTERS				EXP. RANGES	
21-22	21-22	21-22	22-23	Lower	Higher
Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	exp. range	exp. range
39%	38%	39%	41%	42%	48%

COMPARATORS 2020-21				
20-21	20-21	20-21	20-21	20-21
Wilts	Eng	SW Region	SN	O/S LAs
52%	48%	53%	49%	55%

### Current report

QUARTERS			EXP. RANGES	
22-23	22-23	22-23	Lower	Higher
Q2	Q3	Q4	exp. range	exp. range
39%	38%	39%	42%	48%

50. % fostered by relatives/friends (Connected Carers) Connected Foster Carer (Reg 24) is where a child's relative or a connected person is approved for that specific child/children long term. They are assessed, supported and paid the same as our mainstream Foster Carers.

51. It has been on our ongoing ambition to increase rates of connected carers. However, we are currently outside of our lower target of 17% at 14% but have increased on last year by 1%. As part of our placement sufficiency group there is improved focus on identifying connected carers earlier in the child's journey through child protection planning and Pre- Proceedings and the use of Family Group Conferencing.

### Previous report

QUARTERS				EXP. RANGES	
21-22	21-22	21-22	22-23	Lower	Higher
Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	exp. range	exp. range
14%	14%	14%	13%	17%	23%

### Current report

QUARTERS			EXP. RANGES	
22-23	22-23	22-23	Lower	Higher
Q2	Q3	Q4	exp. range	exp. range
14%	15%	15%	17%	23%

52. The third year annual Fostering Excellence report is currently being collated and is being presented to Performance & Outcomes Board in June 2023. Its findings will be included in the next Annual CPP Report.



53. The Fostering Excellence programme was implemented in Spring 2020, following planning and preparation, including consultation with foster carers over several months. Fostering Excellence is a three-year programme set out to transform our kinship and fostering services. Marketing and promotions activity has generated significantly higher levels of enquiries (230 in 2019/20 compared to 505 in 2021/22). Since May 2020 we have recruited an additional 61 carers up to 2022. The ambitious target of 65% approved 'in house' foster carer requires a net growth of 45 carers based on current figures. The final year of Fostering Excellence will be reported into Performance and Outcomes Board in June 2023 and is not submitted at the time of writing this report.

54. In March 2020, 30% of CLA were living in an IFA placement compared to 23% in September 2022 and 21% at the end of Q4 2023. Our in-house occupancy rates continue to be high, in April 2020 it was 73%-79% and in September 2022 it was 84%-93%. These continue to compare favourably nationally. Our occupancy in March 2023 was 91% (increase from 86% in March 2022) and well above compared the national average of 60% reported by the government in their national statistics April 2021 to March 2022 which was published in May 2023.

	Actual Mar 20	Actual Mar 21	Actual Mar 22	DIFFERENCE AFTER 2 years
<b>Foster Carer Households</b>	141	161	163	+22
<b>CLA with 'in house' carers</b>	206	212	233	+27
<b>CLA with IFA carers</b>	131	123	105	-26
<b>Ratio of children per carer</b>	1.46	1.33	1.35	-0.11
<b>% CLA with approved 'in house' foster carer</b>	45%	50%	53%	+8%
<b>% of CLA with IFA carer</b>	30%	29%	25%	-5%

55. Our ambition is that by creating positive change it will lead to improvements in our service, which will be reflected in our recruitment and retention data. We are promoting PACE (Playful, Acceptance, Curiosity and Empathy) and despite the delay of its rollout due to the pandemic, of the 157 fostering households in Wiltshire, 141 have at least one foster carer who has attended the PACE training at the end of Q4, the remainder will be undertaken by early 2024.

Photos of information stands during Foster Carer fortnight – 15 to 28 May 2023 shown overleaf



## Our Virtual School

56. The Virtual School Head (VSH) has contributed to each data set for the new CPP score card. In September 2022, indicative examination results were shared with the panel and in January 2023 the annual Head Teacher's Report was shared with published outcomes data.
57. GCSE attainment outcomes for learners at KS4 showed strong performance. Attainment 8 is a measure showing average academic performance and is calculated by DfE based on Y11 students' scores across 8 government approved GCSE subjects. In 2022, an average Attainment 8 measure of 22.4 for Wiltshire children looked after was published, which is higher than England (20.3), South West (18.9) and statistical neighbours (19.8). When this performance was compared with LAs judged outstanding by Ofsted, Wiltshire Attainment 8 rates were higher than 4 out of 5 of these comparators.
58. Progress 8 performance data for 2021-22 was very strong. This measure shows the progress made by children looked after between the end of Key Stage 2 and the end of Key Stage 4. It is a type of 'value-added' measure. The average Progress 8 score for Wiltshire is -0.5, which reflects performance that is better than in England (-1.3), South West (-1.3) and statistical neighbours (-1.2). When this performance was also compared with LAs judged outstanding by Ofsted, Wiltshire's average Progress 8 score was higher than 4 out of 5 of these comparators.
59. Suspension rates for Wiltshire children looked after remain high. Latest published data shows that 11% of Wiltshire children looked after have at least one suspension (fixed term exclusion), compared to 9.8% in England. The Wiltshire rate is lower than the published rate for the South West (12.5%) and statistical neighbours (11.1%). When Wiltshire suspension data is compared with LAs judged outstanding by Ofsted, 1 out of 5 of these comparators had a higher percentage of suspended pupils. This indicator remains a significant focus area for the Virtual School, with professional development priorities for the use of trauma informed practice in schools being rolled out as part of a Council wide project.
60. Attendance of Wiltshire children looked after compares favourably to other benchmarking cohorts, although was lower in 2021-22 than in pre-pandemic years. The Wiltshire children looked after absence rate was 7%, which reflects better performance than in England (7.8%) and South West (8.8%).

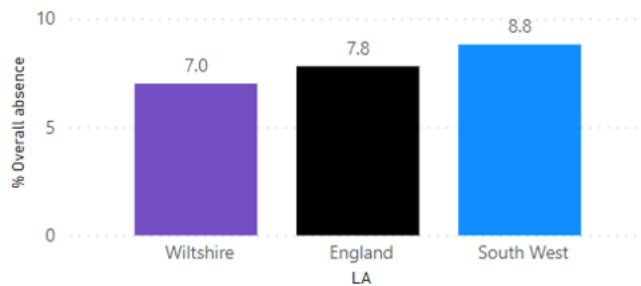
**Data source** - Statistical release

Outcomes for children in need, including children looked after by local authorities in England 2022 Reporting year

**CLA** Social Group name refers to children looked after (excludes children who are in respite care in their most recent episode during the reporting year) CLA for 12 months at 31 March

Data not available for AY 2019-20

**% Overall absence comparators AY 21-22 - 12 months CLA**



61. Persistent absence is a measure applied for children whose school attendance is lower than 90%. Performance for children in the Wiltshire Virtual School was strong for this measure. The persistent absence rate of 14.2% for Wiltshire children looked after was significantly lower when compared to England (19.1%), South West (22.2%) and statistical neighbours (20.7%). When Wiltshire children looked after persistent absence was also compared with LAs judged outstanding by Ofsted, 3 out of 5 of these comparators had higher rates of persistent absence.
62. Many education good news stories have been shared at CPP during the last year. Here are just a few of the anonymised examples shared by the Virtual School. The Chair sends a personal response to all children in care with a good news story:

*T has an EHCP and was in a special school in key stage 3. We supported him to move back to mainstream school for Year 10 onwards. T achieved GCSE level 3s across the board and should be immensely proud. He engaged really well with tuition and in-school support and is so pleased to have been accepted into a football academy, starting in September.*

*R came into care in Year 11. She responded really well to the additional support offered, both in school and through additional tuition. She got a 5 in English Language (after being predicted a 2) and 4 in Geography (predicted a 2) and a 6 in Art. She was so pleased and we are all very proud of her.*

*T came into care during Year 11, having had lots of disruption to his education before this point. When he became looked after, T was only attending school for an hour a day. With extra support, T engaged with 1:1 tuition and then sat exams, and was awarded GCSE grades for English and Maths. He is now also more stable in his care placement and plans are in place for him to move on to college.*

*R came to Devizes Area Board to help present an application for funding for West Lavington Youth Centre. R spoke elegantly and maturely in front of seven councillors and probably 25 members of the public/partner agencies, including*

*police and fire officers. For R to do this, and with such confidence, is an amazing achievement.*

*A passed her Level 3 BTEC Health & Social Care and is starting a child nursing degree at Oxford Brookes University.*

*C achieved A, B and C grades in her Physics, Maths and Chemistry A Levels. She is going to Exeter University to read Astrophysics.*

*H passed her Level 3 Advanced Technical Diploma and is starting a Forensics and Criminology degree at Aberystwyth University.*

*N passed her A Levels and is going to Bournemouth University to begin a degree in Forensics and Criminology.*

*D has graduated from Winchester University and is staying on for another two years to complete a Masters in Social Work practice.*

*G has graduated from Derby University with a first class honours degree in English Literature and has an interview to progress to an MA.*

### Our Adoption Service

63. The Wiltshire Council Adoption Service 2021–22 Year End report was submitted to Cabinet on 6 September 2022 and was presented to CPP on 15 November 2022 and thus information in respect of performance for adoption will not be repeated in this report. The Annual Report for 2023 will be submitted to Cabinet later this year.

### **Celebrating Children We Care For**

64. For the first time post Covid we were able to hold our Christmas Fostering event which was a great success, with attendance from Father Christmas and a very popular disco and entertainer. We also held a Christmas Children in Care event which was a very enjoyable afternoon. These events were attended by Members and Officers.
65. The Star Awards were held in April 2023 at the Civic Centre Trowbridge and were an even greater success than in 2022. We broadened the categories and invited all those nominated for an award (94 in total) as opposed to just the winners. We received sponsorship from Community Matters, Waitrose. We incorporated a disco which everyone enjoyed. It was a great way to celebrate all of our children and young people's success and there were some very emotional moments. We have already set the date for next year and booked the venue. We will include a more detailed report in our next Annual Report 2023-2024.

### **Canons House Children's Residential Respite**

66. There remains a strong connection between Canons House and CPP and the Registered Manager attended CPP in January 2023 to provide an update and discuss how Members can continue to build on their relationship and oversight of the



quality of care and the experience for children and young people who have respite. Open drop in sessions for any Member to attend in their role as corporate parents were held in March 2023, with more planned for June 2023.

67. The Child and Youth Voice Team are working with a commissioned specialist to gain the voice and views of children and young people with complex health needs and disabilities as part of our wider SEND work.
68. On 14 February 2023 we had an assurance visit from Ofsted. Feedback was that there were no serious or wide spread concerns or failures in relation to safeguarding. The inspector was complementary in relation to how Canons management have handled disciplinary procedures, body maps being more effective and a more curious approach in relation to safeguarding. Furthermore, activities are well planned and children's input and views are carefully considered. Significant improvement was also noted in relation to recording. There were two recommendations, one about the recording system and the logging of training, both of which have been progressed. Canons will go live on our LCS system on 1 July 2023 following a period of testing and all staff have been trained.

### **Participation of looked after children**

69. The IRO and Conference and Reviewing Service Annual Report for 2022-23 will be presented to Corporate Parenting Panel in June 2023. The work and impact described in this assists the Panel to understand how children and young people are best supported.
70. The report shows that Independent Reviewing Officers (IROs) chaired a total of 1193 reviews and 98% were held on time. This is an improvement from 94% last year and 89% the year before. When a child can contribute directly to their review and it is held on time, the likelihood is that the arrangement will be better, difficulties can be identified and resolved more quickly, and children will have a positive family experience living with their foster carers and enjoying opportunities to achieve and succeed. The report showed that in the year 2022-23, 95% children and young people participated in their reviews. This is the same as 2020-21 and an increase from 89% from 2019-20.
71. This section provides an overview of the activities, achievements, and feedback received from the Children in Care Council (CiCC) during the period of April 2022 to March 2023. The Child and Youth Voice team aims to support and develop the CiCC by building trust, meaningful relationships, and confidence among participants whilst actively engaging them in improving services and enhancing their overall well-being.

### **Attendance and Recruitment**

72. Over the year, 48 different children in care participated in CiCC sessions, consisting of 25 females and 23 males. Additionally, 27 new CiCC members were recruited during this year, reflecting the growing interest and engagement among children in care. The average age of attendees was 14 years old. The age range was 8 years old to 21 years old. With the older cohort who are 18+ not attending the groups but supporting with initiatives such as the Foster Carer Panels and interviews.

### Activities and Engagements

73. The team organised and facilitated a diverse range of activities in collaboration with Council leisure services, community partners and charities. Noteworthy activities included climbing, water sports, horse riding, drama sessions, and two residential experiences, one at PGL Activity Centre and another as a trip to Cornwall. These experiences aimed to provide opportunities for personal growth, skill development, and fostering positive and meaningful relationships.

### CiCC Contributions and Impact

74. CiCC members actively contributed to improving services by participating in young person interview panels for senior leader positions, ASYE Social Workers, and applicant foster carers. They played a crucial role in the commissioning process of the Residential Block Contract, where their questions and input contributed to the decision-making process. CiCC members engaged in a mystery shopper exercise evaluating the effectiveness and user-friendliness of the Integrated Front Door (IFD), providing valuable feedback such as staff sharing their first names, staff to offer reassurance when writing and not talking, Information Officers to prioritise next steps for children and families once the call has ended, staff need to use trauma informed language and that the automated phone lines hinder accessibility. One CiCC member had the opportunity to speak at a Full Council Meeting, sharing a video showcasing their involvement in various initiatives and showing what is possible with the right support and encouragement.

### Themes from CiCC Meetings

75. Feedback from Care Experienced young people was sought as part of the review of the Corporate Parenting Panel (CPP) priorities. Members highlighted the need for consistent and stable support systems, we know in Wiltshire we are stronger in this area compared to other local authorities.
76. The participants often felt different from their peers due to the number of professionals involved in their lives and the frequency of meetings they had to attend.
77. The majority (80%) of members reported having a loving home and good relationships, while the rest were unsure, and none stated not having a loving home. 60% of CiCC members reported having links with their local communities where they were trusted, while 40% were uncertain, and none reported a lack of local community connections.
78. A significant majority (90%) felt they had support to maintain their physical and mental well-being and be the best versions of themselves. Feedback was beneficial and in main shows that we are on a positive trajectory in the eyes of our CiCC members, there is a further opportunity to gain a greater understanding of all children in care as we pursue the Bright Spot's surveys in 2023/2024.
79. We are reviewing our Corporate Parenting Strategic Priorities, Promise, we are consulting with our Children in Care Council on 8th July 2023 where themes will be explored further.

## Ofsted Inspection

80. In June 2019, the Families and Children's Service was inspected by Ofsted and there were five areas identified as needing to improve:

- a) Raising awareness of Private Fostering (PF) in the community
- b) The impact of services on children's health and education when they are in care
- c) The clarity and accuracy of children's records when they are in care
- d) The availability of suitable placements when children first come into care
- e) The quality of social work supervision.

Progress on actions in response to these areas are highlighted below:

a) *Raising awareness of Private Fostering in the community*

81. Improvements/positives in the last 12 months:

Implemented plan of awareness raising with:

A range of community and voluntary groups

MOD establishments and Forces charities

Education & Early Years provision

Health providers, GP's, hospitals, MIU's Health Visiting, CAMHS, Police, Fire and Ambulance Services

Area Strategic Engagement and Partnerships Managers

82. The Kinship and Fostering Team have a detailed Private Fostering Awareness Action Plan. At the end of Q1 and Q2 there were 18 open cases, 2 of these were Ukrainian families/children; these are a sibling group. Open cases include those in assessment as we monitor alongside this process. Two of the 18 cases are open to Fostering Social Workers. 4 out of the 18 cases are in their 2<sup>nd</sup> year or beyond and on 12 weekly visiting.

Total PF notifications from 01/04/2022 – 30/06/2022 - 3 notifications.

83. Total notifications from 01/07/2022 – 30/09/2022 - 19 notifications. 22 in total for Q1 and Q2, 18 met criteria. 1 went home to SGO carers straight after notification and prior to initial visit. 1 went to grandparents straight after notification/initial visit and then became looked after. 1 was found not to be PF following initial visit (Ukraine family but parents with PR were staying with children and host family). This left 15 for assessment.

84. The total number of notifications received from 1<sup>st</sup> October 2022 to end of March 2023 (Q3 and Q4) was 23. 9 of these were Ukrainian children, 8 language students and 6 mainstream. At the end of Q4 16 PF assessments were underway, 2 of the young people had not yet arrived in the UK.

85. The total number of current arrangements at the end of March 2023 is 22, made up of 5 Ukrainian children, 6 language students and 11 mainstream children.

86. The annual Private Fostering Annual Report 2021-2022 will be reported into the Performance and Outcomes Board in June 2023.



*b) The impact of services on children's health and education when they are in care*

87. Regarding the health needs of children in care, inspectors stated that “challenges remain in ensuring that all children benefit from a timely initial and review health assessment”.
88. Review Health Assessments have remained on the agenda of Panel and by the end of Q4 we saw 82% of children in care had a health assessment in the last 12 months (target is 94%) and 61% had a dental check in the last 12 months. Rather than reporting on immunisations separately, they are reviewed during each annual health review.
89. Our new Portals system for the exchange of information between social workers and health colleagues was successfully launched on 01 September 2022. This will provide us with more accurate and timely performance information on medicals, dentals and optical checks and we should see these improve in the 12-month rolling period up to September 2023.
90. Initial Health Assessments within 28 days rose steadily reaching 80% in Q4, this is a significant improvement on the Q1 2021-22 figure of 71%. HCRG provide quarterly performance updates and our Designated Nurse for Looked After Children attends CPP. This is an area of priority focus and ongoing improvement.

*c) The clarity and accuracy of children's records when they are in care*

91. Since April 2022 the directorate has used the new Quality Assurance Framework and Audit Tracker where themes of Audits and outcomes are tracked, and the learning loop closed. In July 2022 our Independent Reviewing Officers completed an audit of Care Plans with the overall grading of Good. In October 2022 we completed an audit of Placement Plans with an overall judgement of Developing, this was repeated in Q4 with the overall grading of Developing. SMT completed an audit on the experience of care leavers with 36% outstanding, 42% good and 7% developing. Training sessions for PA's on Placement Plans will be undertaken in Q2 2023. We have a schedule of in service audits in CIC and Fostering that are reported into monthly POG's and quarterly performance SMT.
92. Following completion of our Annual Self-Assessment we have reviewed our auditing themes for the next 12 months to reflect the areas where we want to focus our line of sight.
93. “At a Glance” performance reporting has been developed in real time for children in care teams, these continue to allow reporting by exception and monitoring and enables managers to report in the performance outcome group (POG). We have seen steady improvement with significant targets achieved in Q4.

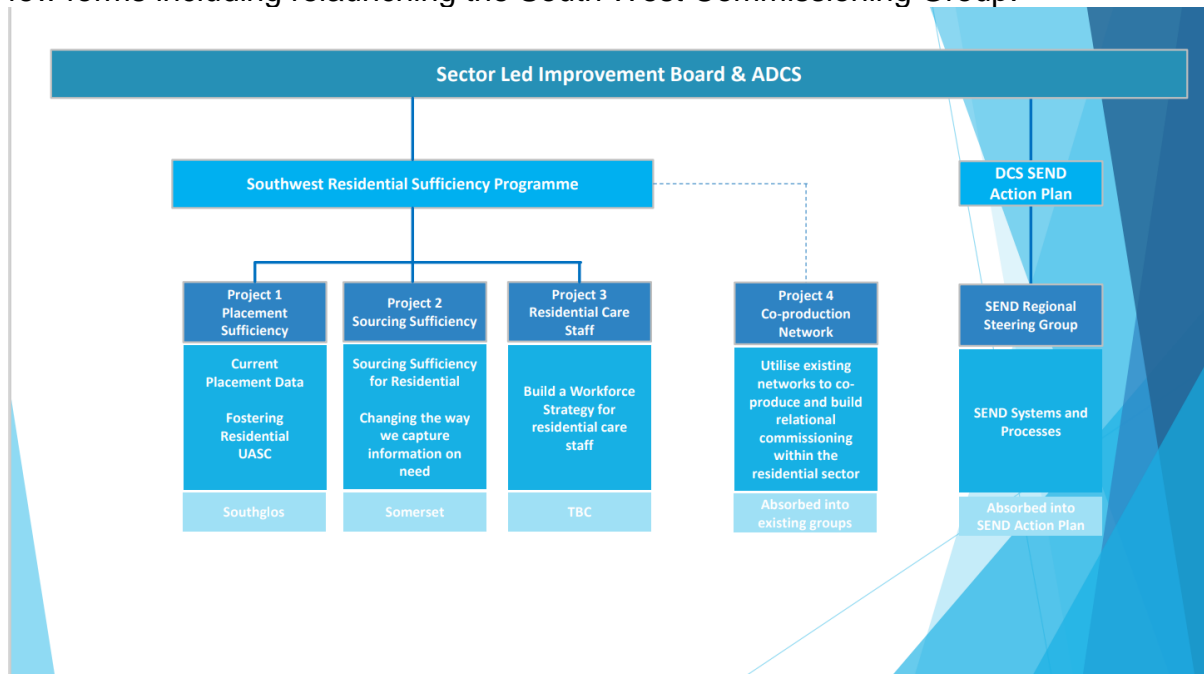
*d) The availability of suitable placements when children first come into care*

94. In the two years of Fostering Excellence, we have approved 61 new carers, whereas it took four years previously to approve 62 carers in total. Our target is to net grow 60 foster carer households over 3 years.

95. In year one we had a net growth of 22 carers and in year two we saw a net growth of 2. Despite our significant increase in approvals over two years, 61 in total, we have a net growth of 22 new foster carers due to 39 de-registrations of approved carers during the same period. Year three's report is being submitted to Performance and Outcomes Board and the Corporate Parenting Panel in June 2023.
96. Ofsted recently released an update on the national picture; the number of mainstream fostering applications has fallen from 10,520 in 2018 to 8,280 in 2022, and a relatively large number of enquiries are not translating into applications. This year only 6% of those who made initial enquiries about becoming a foster carer went on to apply. More mainstream fostering households deregistered (5,435) than were approved (4,035), leading to a net decrease in fostering capacity since last year. Almost one-third of deregistration's take place within the first two years. This puts into context that challenges in this space.
97. In addition to the Fostering Excellence approach described above, further work is taking place with the Southwest Sufficiency Project (SWSP). The project aims to create a whole regional system approach, with new models of commissioning placements, to ensure we can achieve the desired outcomes for our children and young people. There are six strands of work, but the focus of this working group is being reviewed following the governments Stable Homes, Built on Love strategy.
98. Due to a number of factors including the Children's Social Care Reform the original programme of work designed from the regions Market Position Statement, the decision has now been taken to focus solely on residential children's homes.
- **Project 1 - Placement Sufficiency**  
*Capture the current needs of the region for residential (including current fostering placements) to gain a bigger picture of potential impacts*
  - **Project 2 - Sourcing Sufficiency**  
*Improve regional sharing and intelligent use of data for residential children's homes, to better understand sufficiency issues and plan for future demand in terms of need and provision. This includes developing a clear and consistent regional referral form and system for the region.*
  - **Project 3 - Workforce Strategy**  
*Develop a region wide workforce strategy and implementation plan for residential care staff. Create a South West campaign and attractive training offer and improve access to better training. Develop an attractive career pathway and improve support*
99. The regional group have chosen to deliver on 3 projects that support building a residential regional infrastructure that is fit for the future; this aligns with the 'Social Care Reform' 2023.
100. The SEND project will continue as planned but will now be governed by the SEND Steering Group within the regional ADCS action plan.
101. Fostering will not have a standalone project but will continue to be engaged in the regional development work and colleagues will monitor and engage where necessary

to ensure we are using learning from all areas. National Association of Fostering Providers (NAFP) representation will continue to be present on the board.

102. The residential programme will utilise existing networks for **Project 4 ‘Co-Production Network’** and it is intended that existing groups, networks, organisations, and our providers will support this work. The network will likely take a few forms including relaunching the South West Commissioning Group.



103. Following our two successful bids with the DfE Children’s Homes Capital Programme 2021-23 application we have purchased our second children’s home. We went out to tender in March 2023 and at the time of writing this report we are confident we will award.

104. We have monthly meetings with commissioners and finance to review our most complex and costly packages. As previously stated, a new working group led by the Director of Families & Children’s was launched in January 2023 in relation to the placement sufficiency challenges to ensure our strategy for managing this is as robust as possible.

105. We have opened an additional House of Multiple Occupancy.

*e) The quality of social work supervision*

106. "At a Glance" reports have been developed in Liquid Logic for CIC, CIN and CLA and include case supervision. Timeliness of supervision recording on cases is tracked in Performance and Outcomes Groups and the Performance and Outcome Board. Q3/Q4 21-2022 shows recording of case supervision at 65%. This has improved steadily and we reported 92% at the end of Q4 2022-2023. PA Supervision has been a focus of improvement with us reporting 88% at end of Q4.

107. All teams undertook peer level scrutiny of supervision quality on a monthly basis for a period of 6 months, due to positive findings they have now been reduced to annual audits. Q1 2022 Supervision Audit outcomes were 10% Outstanding, 60% Good and 25% Developing.

### **Ofsted Summary**

108. Ofsted undertook their focused visit inspection on the Experience of Care Leavers in January 2022 with the findings below:

*"Care leavers in Wiltshire receive the right support, at the right time, to help them make progress in their lives and a large majority have positive experiences. They are well supported by a passionate, skilled, and stable workforce. Their individual achievements and successes are recognised and celebrated by workers, managers, leaders and elected members who are aspirational for them and share an ambition to be the best parents in the country".*

*"Leaders have a good understanding of service strengths and development areas and actively seek scrutiny and challenge from external sources and through regular and varied consultation with care leavers. This leads to plans which drive service improvement and help care leavers achieve their potential".*

109. This was a strong focused visit outcome and supports our ambition of achieving excellence in children's services. Our next full inspection was due in June 2022 (3-year cycle) so is imminent. We have recently updated our Self-Assessment and our Annual Conversation with Ofsted took place on the 30 November 2022.

### **Future Development**

110. Increased audit activity for children in care and care experienced young people is in place. In addition to the thematic Reflective Practice Audits and Senior Management Audits, we also undertake bi monthly in service audits to inform the training and development plan.
111. A separate Ofsted judgement for Care Leavers came into effect from January 2023 (published December 2022). The new judgement focuses on what matters most to care leaver's lives, including their:
- relationships and access to social and recreational opportunities
  - ability to influence the services they are offered
  - health and emotional well-being
  - learning and employment opportunities
112. Inspections will also consider whether local authorities are making good decisions for care leavers, and what they are doing to support them into adulthood. Inspections will consider the impact of leaders on practice with a specific steer for safeguarding and care leavers. We are gathering evidence on the impact of the local offer, triangulating this through discussion with young people and Personal Advisor's. There will need to be strong visibility of the local offer in young people's Pathway

Plans. We have a comprehensive Care Experienced Development Plan that reports into Corporate Parenting Panel.

113. From April 2023, Ofsted commenced regulating supported accommodation in England, with the expectation that the regulations and standards will become mandatory before the end of 2023. The overwhelming response from existing providers of 16+ supported accommodation for Wiltshire young people is that they welcome the regulations and will be registering with Ofsted and complying with the new regulatory regime. We are well placed for when these regulations take effect and commissioning are working with our providers to support their registration.

### **Impact and Ambition**

114. The Corporate Panel has received a breadth of activity relating to Wiltshire's children in care and care experienced young people. The strategic priorities have been reviewed and will be presented to Corporate Parenting Panel in June 2023, our Children in Care will then be consulted on these and once agreed they will progress to Full Council as part of the revised Corporate Parenting Strategy.
115. The Children in Care Council is now fully supported by the Child and Youth Voice team which ensures that the voices, experiences and opinions of our children and young people are reflected in operational practice development and in new areas of policy. - Strategic Priority - To be heard
116. Members have been able to consider key performance information relating to our children looked after and care experienced therefore allowing them to question officers about effectiveness, however this is balanced with narratives around good new stories, children and young people attending CPP, celebration of successes and raising awareness across the Council. - Strategic Priority – Support to be the best I can
117. Members have been provided with information about Fostering Excellence and how this work is progressing, including the marketing campaigns. We want to continue the work of Members in supporting the recruitment team reinforcing how it helps with them being involved at a more local level with their constituencies. Corporate Parenting panel will receive progress updates on our residential provision once it has been awarded. - Strategic Priority - A loving home where I have good relationships
118. There is a strong offer of council-wide support available to care experienced young people. The existing core offer has been reviewed regularly over the last 12 months, including the implementation of a care leavers app "Our Words." The Offer will be further developed with the support of the CPP and will continue to be a significant focus of the CPP over the next 12 months. The Care Leavers Covenant will be attending the June Corporate Parenting Panel meeting to explain the impact of membership.
119. In January 2023, Cabinet agreed to extend Priority 1 Banding and the local connection for all care experienced adults aged 21yrs to 25yrs. We are in the final stages of our revised Joint Housing Protocol. From April 2023 we have uplifted our Leaving Care Grant from £2000 to £3000 to support the increased cost of living. We

have secured funding for two new Senior Personal Assistant Posts (2-year funding) and two additional PA posts in each care leavers team (2-year funding) – Strategic Priority - Support for as long as I need it.

120. We had a return visit by the DfE National Lead, Mark Riddell, in October 2022 and received his formal feedback which commented upon our rapid progress. He noted our offer was better than good in some areas. We have revised our Care Experienced Young People's Development Plan with his additional recommendations on housing options and support with practical elements of moving into independence.

121. It is important that the CPP ensures the best possible support is available to children in care and those who are care experienced. In terms of ambition, we want to achieve the following:

Strategic Priority - Support to be the best I can

122. Narrow the gap in outcome and achievement, in the broadest sense, between our children and young people and others living in Wiltshire, thus reducing disadvantage and stigma.

123. For each of the priority areas, ensure that there are identified actions developed from scrutiny and challenge so that the CPP is an effective driver of change and improvement.

Strategic Priority - Support for as long as I need it

124. Ensure that the comprehensive and innovative offer to care experienced young people is based upon what they say they want and is effective. This will draw upon Council wide services and those that are provided by partner organisations and will be available to all our young people, including those who live outside Wiltshire, where applicable. Progress the Staying Close Project and provide updates to CPP.

Strategic Priority - Support to be healthy

125. Continue to improve educational outcomes for our children and young people as we know this improves resilience and problem-solving skills, improve health and lifestyle outcomes and reduce social isolation – these are things that young people are concerned about. We have secured two Emotional Wellbeing posts (2yr funding) to support our care experienced young people who do not meet the threshold for adult mental health services. The impact of these posts will be reviewed as part of reporting into CPP.

Strategic Priority - A loving home where I have good relationships

126. Increase accommodation options for children and young people, including approving more foster carers and Supported Lodgings providers, developing semi-independent and independent living options within Homes for Wiltshire and the voluntary sector and working with our commissioning colleagues as supported living providers become registered with Ofsted during 2023.

Strategic Priority - To be heard

127. Be sure that the voices of children and young people continue to be heard and understood by members, officers and all corporate parents whilst ensuring that their opinions are fully reflected in practice improvement.

### **Priorities for the next period include:**

128. Maintain and improve compliance with the KPI measures and achieve targets consistently in order to improve outcomes for children.
129. Improve placement sufficiency so that more children are looked after by Wiltshire approved foster carers and closer to their homes, schools and communities. Work with commissioning to ensure that we are forward planning and forecasting future need, particularly for our care experienced young people.
130. Improve educational outcomes and progress for children looked after and increase access to a range of training and employment opportunities for care experienced young people up to the age of 25.
131. Continue to ensure timely adoption for children where it is in their best interest.
132. Develop a clearer line of sight regarding outcomes for our care experienced young people and improve visibility and impact of our local offer and develop opportunities for education, training and employment. Sign the Care Leavers Covenant.
133. Improve the oversight and reporting of themes of children in care who go missing.
134. Launch of a new UASC Development Plan and Task and Finish group.
135. Continue to progress the voice and participation of children in care and build on existing relationships with members and officers.

### **Conclusion and Next Steps**

136. The previous Corporate Parenting Strategy received Full Council approval in October 2020, with the updated strategic priorities included. The new Corporate Parenting Strategy, with the updated strategic priorities will go before Full Council on 17 October 2023.
137. Enhanced reporting and regular performance reports has helped panel members understand the lived experience of our children and young people. We will continue to progress the participation of children and youth people, continuing to build relationships with our children and young people through activities and forums. We want to ensure there is young people representation at every panel, via a range of media and continue to meet our children and young people at organised activities and celebration events. We are considering holding two Dragons Den events per year to review our progress against our priorities. Panel have an increased narrative of children and young people's lived experience therefore enabling them to be a better corporate parent to children in care and care experienced young people. Members have joined children in care for a number of activities events during 2022/23 and this will continue through 2023/24.
138. The Chair continues to ensure that the Panel will:

- a) Review all priority areas to ensure they are being achieved and therefore the best impact upon outcomes for children and young people.
- b) Continue to work closely with the Children in Care Council to ensure that the voices and experiences of children and young people in care are reflected in the work of the CPP and hence the wider Families and Children's Services.
- c) Promote the importance of fostering and review the impact of the Fostering Excellence programme of work.
- d) Review the progress of the Placement Sufficiency Plan.
- e) In partnership with health colleagues, continue to track the improvement in health outcomes for children and young people, continuing to ensure that Initial and Review Health assessments are completed in a timely way as already evidenced during Panel reporting.
- f) Further strengthen and develop the local offer for care experienced young people, particularly ensuring that those living outside Wiltshire are not disadvantaged.
- g) Further strengthen our oversight and understanding of children in care who go missing.
- h) Strengthen and develop our UASC team and the services it provides and ensure that their voice is visible.
- i) Progress the housing and supported accommodation needs of our care experienced young people.

### **Main Considerations for the Council**

139. The Council is asked to note the work of the Corporate Parenting Panel to date and the success within the year to strengthen its functions and impact of its work.

### **Overview and Scrutiny Engagement**

140. In accordance with the agreed overview and scrutiny arrangements the draft annual Corporate Parenting Panel report was considered by the Children's Select Committee standing task group on 26 June 2023.

### **Safeguarding Implications**

141. Within their role as Corporate Parents, Councillors monitor closely the safeguarding of children and young people looked after by Wiltshire Council via the Children's Select Committee and Safeguarding Children and Young People's Panel.

### **Public Health Implications**



142. Children Looked After are at particular risk of experiencing inequalities in health outcomes due to their difficult start in life. Within their role as Corporate Parents, Councillors monitor the health and wellbeing support received by our looked after children to ensure they receive regular holistic assessments of their needs supported by appropriate and accessible service provision. This may include access to a wide range of services including immunisations, emotional wellbeing support or substance misuse services. Public Health are represented at Corporate Parenting Panel.

### **Environmental and Climate Change Considerations**

143. None identified.

### **Equalities Impact of the Proposal**

144. The proposals seek to bring Councilor's and Officers to work together to ensure that our Children and Young People have a voice within the Council in order to influence the improvement of services for them.

### **Risk Assessment**

145. Panel Members are required to have an enhanced DBS check undertaken and Risk Assessments will be drawn up for when visits are made to vulnerable children and when Councillors attend Officer Team Meetings, etc.

### **Financial Implications**

146. Expenses for young people participating in the CPP will be paid for from the Children in Care budget.

### **Legal Implications**

147. The Solicitor to the Council has confirmed that the Panel is an Advisory panel and not a Committee of the Council; it can therefore make recommendations but not decisions. Lucy Townsend (Corporate Director, People & Director of Children's Services) is the lead decision maker.

### **Proposals**

148. To receive and note the Annual Report and the work of the Corporate Parenting Panel to date, its functions and impact of its work and to ratify the improvements required to further strengthen Corporate Parenting in Wiltshire.
149. To receive and note the Annual Report of the Child and Youth Voice Team 2022/2023 attached as Appendix 1 to this report.

**Jen Salter, Director - Families and Children's Services**

**Lucy Townsend, Corporate Director - People**

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Report Author: Netty Lee (Head of Children in Care and Young People)

Contributors:

Kathryn Davis (Head of Service of Targeted Education)  
Michele Llewellyn (Service Manager – Children in Care)  
Simon Fairgrieve (Information Lead, Children's Social Care)  
Sara James (Service Manager for Quality Outcomes)

Date of report: 3 July 2023

**Background Papers – None**

**Appendices**

1 - Annual Report of the Child and Youth Voice Team

### **Corporate Parenting Panel Acronym List**

ASYE	Assessed and Supported Year in Employment (Social Workers) The Assessed and Supported Year in Employment (ASYE) is a 12-month, employer led and employment-based programme of support and assessment for newly qualified social workers (NQSWs)
ASYE DM	ASYE Development Manager Experienced social workers who support and mentor ASYE's
ATM	Assistant Team Manager
CAF – now ESA	Common Assessment Framework – now replaced with Early Support Assessment
CAFCASS	Children and Family Court Advisory and Support Service
CAMHS	Child & Adolescent Mental Health Services
CAO	Child Arrangement Order
CDT	Children's Disability Team – also referred to as CYPDT (Children and Young People with Disabilities Team)
CiC	Children in Care
CiCC	Children in Care Council
CiN	Child/ren in Need
CLA	Children Looked After
CP	Child Protection
CPC	Child Protection Conference
CO	Care Order
CRS	Conference and Reviewing Service
CSC	Children's Social Care
CSE and CE	Child Sexual Exploitation and Criminal Exploitation
DCE	Department for Children & Education
DfE	Department for Education

DOFA	Designated Officer for Allegations Investigates allegations of abuse against children by other professionals e.g. foster carers, teachers. Convenes DOFA investigations. Note, previously called LADO – Local Area Designated Officer
EDS	Emergency Duty Service
EET	In Education, Employment or Training
EHC Plan	Education, Health and Care Plan
ESH	Early Support Hub (part of our Integrated Front Door – IFD)
EWO	Education Welfare Officer
FACT	Families and Children’s Transformation Programme
FPO	Family Placement Officer Work with foster carers
FPT	Family Placement Team
FIS	Family Intervention Service
FTE	Fixed Term exclusion (from school)
FTE	Full Time Equivalent (staffing)
ICB	Integrated Care Board (replaced Clinical Commissioning Groups (CCG’s) from July 2022)
ICO	Interim Care Order
ICPC	Initial Child Protection Conference (the first conference held with a family on a child becoming newly subject to a child protection plan). Followed by Reviews (RCPCs)
ICS	Integrated Children’s Service Computer system devised by Government
IFA	Independent Fostering Agency
IFD	Integrated Front Door (comprised of our MASH, EDS and Early Support Hub)
IRO	Independent Reviewing Officer Chairs all statutory reviews of looked after children

JD	Job Description
KPI	Key Performance Indicators Those indicators deemed to be essential to enhance performance.
LAC	Looked After Children
LACYP	Looked After Children and Young People
LSCB (WSCB) Now SVPP	Local Safeguarding Children's Board (Wiltshire Safeguarding Children Board) Safeguarding Vulnerable People's Partnership
MAF	Multi Agency Forum
MASH	Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub
MOMO	Mind of My Own (app for young people)
NTS	National Transfer Scheme (relating to unaccompanied young people from other countries)
NEET	Not in Education, Employment or Training (and EET – in Education, Employment or Training)
NQSW	Newly Qualified Social Worker (in their first year of post qualifying practice)
OLA	Other Local Authority
OLA	Outstanding Local Authority (classified as Outstanding by Ofsted)
OOH / EDS	Out of Hours Service – also known as Emergency Duty Service
PA	Personal Adviser working with care experienced children and young people (care leavers)
PEP	Personal Education Plan
PEX	Permanent Exclusion
PI	Performance Indicators Set by Department of Children, Schools and Families (DCSF). Local authorities' performances are plotted against these
POB	Performance and Outcomes Board (Meets 6 weekly)

POG	Performance and Outcomes Group (service level regular meetings that scrutinise performance and report by exception to POB)
QA	Quality Assurance
QSW	Qualified Social Worker
RCPC	Review Child Protection Conference
RD	Role (job) Description
ROBLAC	Reducing Offending Behaviour by Looked After Children
SA	Single Assessment
SAIFT	Specialist Assessment and Intervention and Family Time team)
SEN	Special Educational Needs
SEND	Special Educational Needs and Disability
SGO	Special Guardianship Order
SSW	Supervising Social Worker – in the Fostering Team, supervises foster carers
SVPP	Safeguarding Vulnerable People's Partnership
TAC	Team around the Child
TM	Team Manager
UASC	Unaccompanied Asylum Seeking Children
VACS	Vulnerable Adolescent Contextual Safeguarding Panel (Multi-agency Panel with strategic oversight)
VARM	Vulnerable Adolescent Risk Management Meetings (Multi-agency risk management meeting at which case details discussed)
VS	Virtual School
VSH	Virtual School Headteacher
VSO	Virtual School Officer
WRMG	Wiltshire Risk Management Group

YOS	Youth Offending Service
YPSS	Young People's Support Service