

Wiltshire Council
Corporate Parenting Panel
Annual Report
Q2 July 2021 – Q1 June 2022

Wiltshire Council

Full Council

21 February 2023

Annual Report of the Corporate Parenting Panel
July 2021 to June 2022

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 2021-22 to Q1 2022-23. A further annual report will be provided to Full Council in May 2022 which will cover Q2-Q4 2022/23 and Q1 to Q4 2023-24 in May 2024. This will enable full year reporting thereafter.

This report was reviewed by the Children' Select Committee Standing Task Group on 10 January 2023 and by the CPP on 17 January 2023.

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 2021 to March 2022 attached as Appendix 2 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

Interim Director of Families and Children's Services

Lucy Townsend

Corporate Director – People/Director of Children's Services

Annual Report of the Corporate Parenting Panel
July 2021 to June 2022

1. Purpose of Report

- 1.1 This report forms the annual update to Council from the Corporate Parenting Panel (CPP) in accordance with the Council's Constitution.
- 1.2 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 work of the Child and Youth Voice team, ensuring the voice of young people are heard and transparent in all the work that we do; and that this informs future service delivery.
- 1.3 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.

2. Background

- 2.1 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.
- 2.2 Wiltshire Corporate Parents are responsible for 421 children who are looked after (end of Q1 2022) and 253 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.
- 2.3 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.
- 2.4 Councillors Mary Champion, Peter Hutton, (Chair), Laura Mayes, Dominic Muns (Vice Chair), Ashley O'Neill, Jack Oatley, Stewart Palmen, and Sam Pearce-Kearney formed the membership of the Panel during the period June 2021 to September 2021. From 1 October 2021, Councillor Ashley O'Neill was replaced by Councillor Simon Jacobs and from March 2022, Councillor Jack Oatley was replaced by Councillor Ernie Clark.
- 2.5 The Lead Officer was Iona Payne (Head of Children in Care and Young People's Service) until the 4 July 2022, when this role was taken on by Netty Lee.

3. Work Programme

- 3.1 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.
- 3.2 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 28.9.21	CPP Meeting 16.11.21	CPP Meeting 18.1.22	CPP Meeting 15.3.22	CPP Meeting 20.6.22
<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	Meeting Focus Strategic Priority update from Support Officer – Letter sent to young person Data Spotlight – Children placed in a registered Children’s Home 2020-2021 Report 7, report 8 and report 9	Report 2 and report 10	Report 2 and report 9	
<i>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</i>	<i>Stability and Permanence</i>					Meeting Focus Strategic Priority presentation/ update from Support Officer
<i>Support for as long as I need it</i>	<i>Timely and consistent support/Care Leavers</i>	Report 1 and report 3,	Report 1	Meeting Focus Data Spotlight – Care Leavers overview	Report 1 and report 16,	Report 1, report 20, report 22, and report 23

				Report 1, report 13, report 14 and report 15		
<i>To feel and be safe</i>	<i>Safety and Security/ Timely and consistent support</i>				Meeting Focus Strategic Priority update from the Lead Member Data Spotlight – Push and Pull Factors from Missing Return Interviews – April to Dec 2021	Report 19
<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 12		
<i>Support to be healthy and this includes opportunities to be involved in new activities</i>	<i>Health and Wellbeing</i>				Report 17	Report 21
<i>Support to be the best I can</i>	<i>Education</i>	Meeting Focus Strategic Priority update from Lead Member – Interview with Young People on their educational experiences		Report 11		

		Data Spotlight – Education/ Employment & Training				
		Report 5 and report 6,				
<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 4	Report 4	Report 4	Report 4	Report 4 and report 18

KEY

Report 1	CPP Data Scorecard
Report 2	Update on Children in Care Placement Budget
Report 3	Verbal Update on Strategic Priority - Support for as long as I need it
Report 4	Child and Youth Voice Update
Report 5	Examinations Results Update from Virtual School
Report 6	How we support those that are NEET
Report 7	Annual Fostering Report 2020-2021
Report 8	Update on behalf of the Stronger Families Service
Report 9	Map/update of CLA placed at more than 20 miles from home
Report 10	Wiltshire Council Adoption Service 2020/21 Year end report
Report 11	Annual Report of the Virtual School 2020/21
Report 12	Annual Report of the Health of Children Looked after 2020/21
Report 13	Update following visit from Mark Riddell (Care Leaver Adviser)
Report 14	Fostering Excellence Project – Midway Review April 2020 to September 2021
Report 15	Update on Progress of 2021/22 Objectives and Plans for the Quality Outcomes Service
Report 16	Update on the Ofsted Care Leaver Focussed Visit
Report 17	Out of Area Statutory Health Assessments for CLA – SSW CCG Position in response to letter from Deputy CNO
Report 18	Annual Report of the Child and Youth Voice Team 2021-2022
Report 19	Update on a Child Safeguarding Practice Review: Long term sexual abuse of children in care
Report 20	Update on the Council's Provision for Care Leavers and update on Actions identified in Ofsted Care Leavers inspection
Report 21	Update from the MOTIV8 Service
Report 22	Annual Report of the Independent Reviewing Officers 2021-22
Report 23	Wiltshire Independent Visitor Scheme Review of Service 2021-22

4. Scrutiny of Performance

4.1 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.

4.2 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 Leavers 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.

A copy of the CPP Performance report is provided at Appendix 1 of this report.

5. The Corporate Parenting Strategy

5.1 The Corporate Parenting Strategy was reviewed in 2020 and approved by Full Council in October 2020.

5.2 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.

5.3 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:

1. A loving home where I have good relationships, respect and the opportunity to see my family. *Cllr Mary Champion – Support Officer – Michele Llewellyn*
2. 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*
3. To feel and be safe. *Cllr Peter Hutton – Support Officer – Sara James*
4. Support with my mental health especially at school, at a time and a place that suits me and not services. *Cllr Stewart Palmen – Support Officer – Saffia Ahmad – Has left post and we are waiting for a replacement.*
5. Support to be healthy and this includes opportunities to be involved in new activities. *Cllr Ernie Clark – Support Officer – Sally Johnson*
6. Support to be the best I can. *Cllr Dominic Muns – Support Officer – Kathryn Davis*
7. Support for as long as I need it. *Cllr Simon Jacobs – Support Officer – Roxanne Falla*
8. 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*

6. Performance

- 6.1 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.
- 6.2 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:

Area	Indicator	type	MONTHS						QUARTERS					YEARS	Exp Ranges & Targets		COMPARATORS 2020-21						
			Population ->		106274	106274	106274	106274	106274	106274	106064	106274	106274	106274	106274	2021-22	22-23	22-23	106064	106064	106064	106064	106064
			21-22	21-22	21-22	22-23	22-23	22-23	21-22	21-22	21-22	21-22	22-23	2021-22	Lower exp. range	Higher exp. range	Wiltshire	Eng	SW Region	SN	O/S LAs		
CLA No./RATE	No. CLA	snapshot	425	430	427	426	424	429	434	437	432	427	429	427	407	469							
CLA No./RATE	Rate CLA per 10,000	rate	40.0	40.5	40.2	40.1	39.9	40.4	40.9	41.1	40.6	40.2	40.4	40.2	38.3	44.1							
CLA STARTS	No. CLA starts	number	8	12	13	4	16	23	51	32	27	33	43	143									
CLA STARTS	Children who started to be looked after – rate per 10,000	rate	9	14	15	5	18	26	19	12	10	12	16	12	18								
CLA CEASE	No. CLA Ceased	number	14	8	14	8	11	13	33	34	36	36	32	139									
CLA CEASE	Children who ceased to be looked after – rate per 10,000	rate	16	9	16	9	12	15	12	13	14	14	12	14	13	17							
UASC	No. UASC	snapshot	23	23	24	24	21	18	17	23	22	24	18	24	Ukraine	Ukraine							
UASC	% UASC	%	5%	5%	6%	6%	5%	4%	4%	5%	5%	6%	4%	6%									
ICO	No. of Interim Care Orders	snapshot	64	61	63	55	50	50	50	59	65	63	50	63									
ICO	% Interim Care Orders	% snapshot	15%	14%	15%	13%	12%	12%	13%	12%	15%	15%	12%	15%	10%	14%							
S20	No. of Section 20 CLA	snapshot	94	95	93	94	93	103	112	108	99	93	103	93									
S20	% Section 20 CLA	% snapshot	22%	22%	22%	22%	22%	24%	26%	25%	23%	22%	24%	22%	23%	26%							

Our Children in Care (CIC)

6.3 From Q1 2021 we had 434 CIC, decreasing to 429 at the end of Q1 2022, 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 16 (lower expected range 12, higher expected range 18) at the end of Q1 2022, this compares to the England average of 24 and South West of 21 (Outstanding Local Authorities (OLA) at 24). We had 139 (12) CIC over the last year who ceased to be Looked After which is below our expected range of (14) and lower than the England average of 23 and OLA at 26.5, meaning we have less children leaving care. Children leave our care through the permanence of adoption or a return home to their parent/s. A priority piece of work in relation to the reunification of older children in our long term care is planned to commence in January 2023.

6.4 In the last year there have been 104 unaccompanied young people entering our care either as part of the National Transfer Scheme (NTS) or as a spontaneous arrival. We have 12% of our children in care subject Interim Care Orders (within expected range). This is lower than the England average and 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. 22% of our children in care have a Section 20 (voluntary accommodation, where a family ask us to care for their child or agree with the LA plan that being looked after away from home is in their best interests) legal status, which is higher than the England average and lower than OLA's at 29%. 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

6.5 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.

6.6 **% of looked after children with 3 or more placement moves in the last 12 months.** In Q2 July 2021- 22 Wiltshire performance was 8.2%, below our upper target of 10%. At the end of Q1 2022 we are reporting 7.5%. We are just above the expected range in terms of the number of children with 3 or more placement moves in the last year. This indicator demonstrates strong performance.

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%

6.7 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%

6.8 **% 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%.

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%

6.9 We can see our stability rate, although slightly reduced, is still higher than in Outstanding local authorities. The current stability of placements is under pressure due to the local and national crisis in relation to placement sufficiency; meaning there is less opportunity for robust matching and choice of placements. 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%

6.10 By Q1 2022 we had 16 children whose long-term placements have been recorded as ending in the last 6 months. Reasons identified include 3 children moving due to the ill health of carers, 3 moved due to carers being unable to

meet the trauma need of the child, including a residential provision giving notice. One young person did not want to move to Lincolnshire with his long-term carers and then changed his mind so moved to join them a few weeks later (recorded as a placement breakdown) Two children returned home to parents; 1 young person requested to end their placement and was then placed long term with their short breaks carers, and 2 siblings remain long term matched. There were two other coding errors. This provides assurance that overall the reasons for placements ending is not of concern, and those ending are linked to the matching challenge point noted above.

6.11 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 this year we have put in place a weekly Stability Panel to add additional support to those carers and young people where their stability is at risk. This is being trialled and will be reviewed in January 2023. From Q3 2022 we will review these in our quarterly performance reports to provide enhanced oversight of these children and young people within our reporting.

6.12 % CLA in care 18months+ who are not in long term arrangements

We see that this has remained consistent over the last year and within our expected ranges. All children in care that are not matched long term with carers are reviewed at Permanence Panel which is held monthly. There is no comparative data for this measure. All children and young people in long term fostering placements will be considered for a long term match annually, residential placements cannot be long term matched. Long term matches are approved at our Fostering Panel and then signed off by the Agency Decision Maker.

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%

6.13 Positively in the last 12 months, 16 young people have returned home to the care of their parents under placement with parent regulations, 6 of which were planned and in line with reunification plans. Within the last quarter a further 3 young people had their full care orders rescinded following successful reunification, with applications to the court pending for a further 2 young people to return home. We will be applying renewed focus on this as part of permanence planning for those children aged 14+ as part of their transition planning.

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

Our performance in this area is just outside of expected ranges. 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. By Q1 2022 we had a net addition of 7 young people placed over 20

miles from home than there were in Q4. From the data provided, 6 of these (net) are more than 20 miles from home but have remained within the Wiltshire boundary i.e. they are not being placed at a more considerable distance away. 71% of children placed more than 20 miles are within Wiltshire meaning 29% are placed out of the Wiltshire border. This is an area of focus as we are determined to have less children placed more than 20 miles away from their home.

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%

COMPARATORS 2020-21				
20-21	20-21	20-21	20-21	20-21
Wilts	Eng	SW Region	SN	O/S LAs
37%	21%	31%	33%	25%

6.15 We have been successful in two matched funding DfE bids. This will progress our plan for 12 new residential beds (small 3 to 4 bed homes) within Wiltshire, which will go out to tender for a provider in January 2023. This in addition to our current Residential Step Down Programme. These are two initiatives to 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%). The Annual Fostering Excellence Report which is our programme of work to increase the number of in house foster carers, was presented to CPP in November 2022.

6.16 We have seen a slowdown in children leaving care during 21/22 which has continued into 22/23 in Q1 and 2. Those coming into care is relatively steady over the last 2.5 years in comparison. Significant pressure is 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.

Children Missing from Care

6.17 In Q2 2021 81 children in care had missing episodes, this has reduced over the last 12 months and below our expected lower range of 90. Comparative data for children in care is not published separately to overall missing young people.

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

38	28	34	32	30	60
----	----	----	----	----	----

Out of County

39	23	22	17	15	45
----	----	----	----	----	----

6.18 There are less children in care having missing episodes placed out of county than in county. An increased number of the overall missing young people, 87% (Q2 2022) are missing less than 24hrs but we need this broken down for children in care so Q3 2022 a deeper dive into these missing episodes will be undertaken, including a breakdown of how many young people have repeat missing episodes, how many were offered Return Home Interviews and how many accepted; where they live, type of placement and location; cross referencing to information we gather as part of contextual safeguarding.

Our Fostering Service

6.19 % in LA provision - Excluding Connected Carers

We have seen an overall increase of children placed with our in house foster carers over the last year, this improvement is supported by our Fostering Excellence Programme. However, despite increased gains in recruitment, we have also seen a number of resignations which will be reported in the next annual report. We remain ambitious and would 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 CLA living with in house foster carers and at the same time reduce the numbers living with IFA foster carers.

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%

6.20 % fostered by relatives/friends (Connected Carers)

It has been on our ongoing ambition to increase rates of connected carers. However, we are currently outside of our lower target of 17% and have declined slightly since Q4.

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%

6.21 The annual Fostering Excellence report being shared next quarter, sets out the plans to address the connected carers challenge.

6.22 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 seeking to transform our kinship and fostering services. Marketing and promotions activity has generated significantly high levels of enquiries (230 in 2019/20 compared to 505 in 2021/22). Since May 2020 we have recruited an additional 61 carers. The ambitious target of 65% approved 'in house' foster carer requires a net growth of 45 carers based on current figures. In March 2020 45% of CLA were living in an in-house provision compared to September 2022 when it increased to 54%. In March 2020 30% of CLA were living in IFA compared to 23% in September 2022. Our 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.

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

6.23 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. An example of positive change is the introduction of Dyadic Developmental Practice (DDP) to train foster carers, fostering social work staff and others across the directorate, specifically with reference to the PACE model. PACE acronym stands for Playful, Acceptance, Curiosity and Empathy. The completion of its roll out has been delayed somewhat due to the pandemic although of the 181 fostering households in Wiltshire, 140 have at least one foster carer who has attended the PACE training, the remainder will be undertaken by early 2023.

6.24 The annual Fostering Excellence Report will be reported in the CPP Annual Review in 2022/2023.

6.25 Foster Carer consultation conducted at the end of 2021 confirms a high level of satisfaction with the support offered by the service with 91% of carers either satisfied or very satisfied with the services we are providing and 91% rated the support and supervision from our Supervising Social Workers (SSW) to be

either helpful or really helpful and beneficial. The implementation of our new payment schedule for connected carers (backdated to April 2022) has addressed the disparity with mainstream carers which has improved satisfaction with these carers.

Our Virtual School

- 6.26 The Virtual School Head (VSH) has contributed to each data set for the new CPP score card. In June 2021, education was the scheduled 'spotlight' focus for panel. The Virtual School Head highlighted to panel that National curriculum statutory assessments for EYFS, KS1 and KS2 were cancelled by the DfE for the academic year 19/20 and for 20/21 due to Covid-19. Therefore, the attainment data in the scorecard (with the exception of GCSE results) is from latest published data in academic year 18/19. In the absence of statutory assessments, the Virtual School has continued to seek end of year teacher assessments from schools, so that important judgements about (and support for) the progress and attainment of our children could continue to be made. The Virtual School Head has proposed that teacher assessment data is included in the score card from September 2021 in order that panel can continue to provide effective scrutiny and make meaningful comparisons when looking at 21-22 data.
- 6.27 The VSH provided panel with a teacher assessment update noting that the percentage of children in the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) achieving a Good Level of Development (GLD) increased by 20% in 19/20 from the previous academic year. The percentage of children reaching the expected standard in reading, writing and maths at the end of Key Stage 1 increased by 9.6% in 19/20 from the previous academic year. The percentage of children reaching the expected standard in reading, writing and maths at the end of Key Stage 2 increased by 15.37% in 19/20 from the previous academic year.
- 6.28 Latest published data (LAIT 2018-2019) shows that attendance of Wiltshire looked after children was higher (96.6%) than for looked after children nationally (94.9%), in the Southwest (94.4%) and for statistical neighbours (94.5%). There is no published data for 2020 or 2021 due to removal of requirements to report in the context of Covid-19. However, internal data sets, before the Covid-19 impact from March 2020, we were on track to have absence rates lower than for CLA nationally (at 4.7%) by the end of the academic year. In academic year 2020-21, attendance reporting was again impacted by Covid-19. Schools and settings remained open to looked after children during the lockdown period January through March 2021.
- 6.29 For the end of Q2 2022 the VSH reported that the % of pupils achieving the end of KS2 expected standard in reading, writing, and maths (CLA for 12 months) was at 21.4%. The 15 children in that year group had achieved the expected standard in all measures. There is an education focus at the January 2023 CPP meeting with the annual Headteacher's report and the finalised data scheduled to be presented.

6.30 For the Year 6 children (KS1) 5 out of the 15 of them had an EHCP and 4 had SEN support. The progress score for that cohort from reception to year 6 for reading was significantly above the national average and the phonics for year 1 children was above the national average for the last academic year.

6.31 The Key Stage 4 outcomes in 2021 were less strong, but this was understood in the context of a very high number of young people with special educational needs in the Y11 cohort (50% with an EHCP and 33% attending special schools). Internal (unverified) data for outcomes at KS4 in 2022 indicated that 22.9% of children achieved the 9-4 pass in English and Maths. This is the first year that children have sat examinations since 2019 and, when compared with data from 2019, Wiltshire's 2022 outcomes are above our own previous performance from that year, as well as above national CLA, Southwest and statistical neighbour 2019 outcomes.

6.32 Many education good news stories have been shared at CPP during the last year. Here are just a few of the anonymised examples shared at September 2021 meeting. The Chair sends a personal response to all children in care with a good news story:

* achieved A*, A*, A, A in her A levels this summer and is starting an English literature degree at Exeter University.

* passed all her A levels and is starting a sociology degree at Westminster University.

* achieved a triple distinction in her Health and Social Care Diploma. She is starting an education studies degree at Bath Spa University which will lead to qualified teacher status.

* is an unaccompanied asylum seeking young person who travelled to the UK from Afghanistan when he was just 13. This year,* was awarded a merit in his mechanical engineering BTEC and has now just started at Bournemouth, studying for an Engineering degree, achieving his long held ambition to go to university.

* passed all her A levels and is starting a journalism degree at Cardiff University.

* passed his level 2 Plumbing course and has started his level 3 course this year – he's well on his way to being a qualified plumber.

*passed his catering course and has achieved his ambition to be a full-time chef, building on his part-time role last year. He's now working full-time as a chef in a pub. He has a lot of responsibility now and ran the kitchen by himself last Sunday.

* started at his new special school in June, having received alternative education for the previous 9 months. Extensive preparation and support had been put in place by residential staff and the school, so he could become

familiar with the journey, staff, the environment and his peers. * accessed outdoor learning activities throughout the summer holidays so there was still an element of routine in preparation for his return to school. * has settled in well to school this term and had glowing feedback from staff. He has received a certificate for being kind and helpful in class. He is really enjoying his new school and looks forward to going each day. This could not have happened without the incredible support and understanding from residential and school staff who are working together to ensure positive outcomes for *.

* has achieved an amazing set of GCSE results – 8 passes in total - all at Grade 4 or above including a Grade 5 in her English; this is a fantastic achievement for * who has struggled enormously at school and has an EHCP; she has shown huge resilience and personal determination, achieving above her expected attainment. * has now successfully transitioned to Wiltshire college.

* has done incredibly well completing Y11 this year and achieved GCSE passes in French and Science. This is a fantastic achievement for *, a Sudanese UASC , who has only completed one formal academic year of UK education, much of which was spent in lockdown. * is a remarkable young man who has shown tremendous resilience and determination in his wish to achieve well academically and has been a role model to his peers in this respect. He is now transitioning in Y12 for the new academic year and will take further GCSEs next year to enable transition to college.

* started on a child care course at college but left her course having decided she would prefer to work with older people. Her experiences in caring for her Nan had been influential in this decision. With encouragement, * enrolled on a level 2 Health and Social Care course, along with a maths GCSE resit. She was highly praised by her tutor for working very hard through lockdown and for engaging well in college when she could be in. She was predicted Merits across the board but qualified this year with Distinctions and a grade 4 for her maths resit. She is now undertaking the level 3 course at Salisbury 6th form and aiming for university after this.

* has received additional tutoring to support her (and our) aspirations for her to achieve the best possible GCSE results at the end of Y11. Her FFT (prior attainment) predicted grade for the end of the year was 1.9, but her NTP tutor has reported that she is now working at a grade 4. She's made amazing progress!

Our Adoption Service

6.33 The Wiltshire Council Adoption Service 2021–22 Year End report was submitted to Cabinet on 06 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.

7. Celebrating Children We Care For

- 7.1 The Star Awards were held in April 2022 and were a great success, with our very own band made up of children looked after, who stole the show. This gave us opportunity to celebrate our children in care and acknowledge their achievements with 27 children and young people receiving Star Awards. We are currently planning the event for 2023.
- 7.2 The CYV Team and Kandu Arts Project supported a band to perform at the Star Awards. The band was created by our new chair of the CICC and her foster siblings to support a Children's Charity which educates and helps children. The Band did a fantastic job and were applauded as the highlight of the evening. One band member said it was one of the best nights of their lives and the foster carer said the performance brought the family closer together. The Band has future aspirations to raise the profile about fostering within the community, so other children in care can be placed with excellent foster carers. The band has now been linked in with the charity Homes for Good, who recruit foster carers in churches across the region, and plans are in place for them to perform and raise awareness to this cause.

The Star Awards







8. Canons House Children's Residential Respite

8.1 Following its inspection in January 2022 regular updates are provided to Corporate Parenting Panel as to the progress of developments that are taking place. Reg 44 inspection visits are now commissioned from independent specialists, to provide independent scrutiny and assurance. There is a development plan overseen by Interim Director of Families & Children's Services. The Panel are sighted on the progress being made and updates on occupancy levels. There is a strong connection between Canons House and CPP and the Registered Manager is attending 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. The Child and Youth Voice Team are recruiting a specialist worker to gain the voice and views of children and young people with complex health needs and disabilities.

9. Participation of looked after children

9.1 At June 2022 Panel, The Conference and Reviewing Service Annual Report was presented. The work and impact described in this assisted the Panel to understand how children and young people are best supported.

9.2 The report shared that Independent Reviewing Officers (IROs) chaired a total of 1191 reviews and 94% of these were held on time. This is an improvement from 89% last year. 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 2020/21 95% children and young people participated in their reviews. This is an increase from 89% from 2019/20.

- 9.3 In April 2021 our new Child and Youth Voice (CYV) Team was launched. This includes a support and lead worker. CYV have been working closely with CPP and the CiC Teams to enable all children in care to have a stronger voice. CYV have been working collaboratively with Children in Care Council (CiCC) and have set up the new CiCC Ambassador and Consultant schemes. CiCC Ambassadors can be CiCC members, council staff and councillors who have a specialist interest in an important issue to CiC such as mental health, housing, employment, activities and tackling racism. These will reflect our priorities. We currently have over 30 CiCC Ambassadors. All of the Ambassadors get together at least twice a year to share information with each other. The CYV team have a number of ideas to improve membership and engage with those harder to reach young people, ambassadors playing a key part in this.
- 9.4 The CiCC consultancy scheme means young people in care can be consultants and help the Council with important business and offer consultancy. Consultants are offered a high level of support, training and reimbursement by way of vouchers for their time and expertise. There is more about the CiCC Consultant and Ambassador Scheme in the separate CiCC annual report which is attached as **Appendix 2** to this document.
- 9.5 Our CYV team have enabled children in care to be part of the recruitment of Social Care staff. CiCC members and consultants have interviewed Social Workers, Assistant Team Managers, CiC Personal Assistants, Independent Reviewing Officers and Independent Visitors and Heads of Service. The CYV team supported CiCC members and consultants to deliver some training for the newly elected members. By empowering Youth Consultants to conduct these types of interviews sends a clear message to potential employees that Wiltshire Council takes the voice of its service users seriously. Feedback from candidates was that the way in which Wiltshire conducted the process was exemplary and their most positive interview experience.
- 9.6 The CYV team bring a valuable perspective and provide Panel and officers with greater insight on the impact of services for our children in care and care experienced adults.

10. Children in Care Council (CiCC) and Voice Updates

- 10.1 CYV were given the responsibility of supporting and facilitating the CiCC in January 2021.
- 10.2 The Children in Care Council continues to be a key stakeholder group relating to matters included in the Corporate Parenting agenda. CPP have worked hard to maintain positive collaborative relationships with the CiCC. Through the Shared Guardian sessions, they have helped to influence the work and priorities of the CPP.
- 10.3 At the meeting on 28 June 2022, the Child and Youth Voice Team Annual Report covering April 2021 to March 2022 was presented.

- 10.4 The 'Dragons Den' activity was a chance for 5 young people aged 16 to 24 who are either currently in foster care or are care experienced to scrutinise Wiltshire's Care Leavers Local Offer. The two Children in Care Teams were tasked with creatively pitching Wiltshire's Local Offer to a panel of care experienced young people, for the purpose of the session these young people were known as the Dragons. The two teams were asked to inform the Dragons about their entitlements, considering areas such as education, housing, jobs, health, and transport. After the presentation's the Dragons discussed whether what they had heard reflected their lived experience. The Dragons then invited the members of the teams to re-join the discussion and fed back their thoughts about the local offer and asked questions to the presenters.
- 10.5 Due to Covid restrictions the CiCC mainly took place bi-monthly using Microsoft Teams. Despite low numbers of attendees at the virtual CiCC, the group has had positive sessions where guests were invited. In one session a member of the Kinship and Fostering Team came along to find out what the participants thought made a good foster carer. We also had a guest who facilitated a mindfulness session, the young people found this really helpful. To help raise awareness about CiCC the team organised a residential trip to PGL Liddington in September 2021. The trip was very popular, with 18 young people between the ages of 11–17 years old in attendance. The young people took part in activities such as climbing, canoeing, ziplining, archery and much more. As a result, the membership of CiCC increased by 15 young people.
- 10.6 Instead of holding formal CiCC meetings, we consulted with young people and now offer a fun, activity-based programme to engage young people in the CiCC. Staff members from the CYV team aim to support the participants to feel connected as a group and build positive relationships with one another. The CYV team listen to what the participants are telling us and a one-page summary is produced after every activity which is shared with Corporate Parents.
- 10.7 As of June 2022, our Children in Care Council had 43 members. The current age breakdown is shown below

Age	Participants of that age
9	3
10	2
11	0
12	6
13	6
14	8
15	9
16	4
17	2

These are 26 females and 17 male participants.

- 10.8 Elected members and officers who attend the Corporate Parenting Panel and who oversee a strategic priority are also invited to attend the CiCC. Each CiCC

session has a theme relating to the strategic priorities and lead priority elected members have a chance to come along and have an informal chat with the members, this provides them with feedback on whether their priority is achieved.

10.9 Members and officers have attended a number of these fun activity sessions with children in care and care experienced young people such as horse riding, bubble football and air soft.









10.10 Our CYV Support Worker has used his expertise as a care experienced young person to support the Principal Social Worker in delivering workshops to social care practitioners and foster carers on ‘the new ways of writing’. He has read his own case records and reviewed how these could have been written in a more child friendly and accurate way. This follows the publication in 2019, of [Language that Cares](#) by the fostering and adoption charity TACT that aimed to change the language of the care system to reduce stigma and barriers for understanding. Social care practitioners and foster carers are encouraged to write their case records and diary sheets to the child/young person and to think about the language they use so that children and young people feel empowered and fully understand their care experience or experience of receiving services. Young people have fed back that ‘the new ways of writing’

is important to them as it makes them feel that they are being 'talked to' rather than 'talked about'. The Panel strongly promote and reinforce that language is adapted in line with their wishes and feelings.

10.11 Youth Consultants inspected Canons House and were tasked with coming up with ideas about what makes a home feel homely. They used their expertise as care experienced young people, to make recommendations of how the staff could work with young people to ensure their experience is as home from home as possible.

10.12 With each CPP Agenda, good news stories are captured about the progress and achievements of children in care and care experienced young people. For example, in August 2021 A level and vocational results had seen 6 year 13 students achieve results to enable them to take their next steps including university or apprenticeships.

10.13 CYV have continued to promote the use of Mind of My Own app. Wiltshire has become one of the top local authorities in the country in terms of Mind of My Own app usage, and recently won the Hidden Gem Award and came second in the Standout Organisation category at the Annual Mind of My Own Awards. The Child and Youth Voice Team and the Kinship and Fostering Team have worked collaboratively to introduce a new young person led Fostering Consultation Panel. Youth Consultants have the chance to meet with applicants that are being assessed to become Wiltshire foster carers, ask them questions and share experiences to aid learning and help prepare applicants to become foster carers. The young people we consulted wanted to be referred to as a 'panel' rather than a 'meeting,' 'training event,' or 'conversation.' The Young Person's Fostering Consultation Panel provides feedback on each applicant in a written report which is considered by the main fostering panel when deciding to approve an applicant.

10.14 Fostering applicants involved in the sessions gave the below feedback:

"We felt like it was a very valuable time because it is one thing talking with an assessing social worker about the theory of fostering and another having a live conversation with care experienced adults and those young people who are currently home away from home. The panel were broad and diverse in terms of experience and age, and gender and I felt challenged and humbled. It was chaired really well considering this was a new concept and it was online too."

"All the young people were fantastic, and I think every person being assessed for fostering should go through this process. It puts it into reality and is challenging but with more space for more conversations to happen instead of it feeling like an interview. All the communication before and after was great and it was handled very professionally."

10.15 The Child and Youth Voice Team support with training new foster carer applicants. In the 30-minute slot the team delivers a PowerPoint presentation overview of the team's work. We also have a scenario-based role reversal exercise where applicants are asked to think about how they may feel if they

were the ones who lived away from their friends and families and play a short powerful video.

- 10.16 Members of the Child and Youth Voice Team have attended recruitment events and shared their experiences of being in care with members of the public. This helps potential foster carers hear about the positive difference they could make to children's lives.
- 10.17 It is evident that the work of the CYV Team is having a significant positive impact on the delivery of the Corporate Parenting priorities as voice and the participation of children in care and care experienced young people and adults is visible and informing our development as Corporate Parents and shaping our future strategy.

11. Ofsted Inspection

11.1 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*

11.2 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

Community Engagement Managers

11.3 The Kinship and Fostering Team had a detailed Private Fostering Awareness Action Plan 2021-2022. 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 the assessment. Two of the 18 cases are open to Fostering Social Workers. 4 out of the 18 cases are on 12 weekly visiting.

11.4 PF assessments - total number of notifications received from 1st April 2022 and end of Sept 2022 (Q1 and Q2).
Total notifications from 01/04/2022 – 30/06/2022 - 3 notifications.

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 CLA. 1 was found not to be PF following initial visit (Ukraine family but parents with PR were staying with children and host family). This leaves 15 for assessment.

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

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

11.6 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".

11.7 Review Health Assessments have remained on the agenda of Panel and by the end of Q1 94% of children in care had a health assessment in the last 12 months, 42% had a dental check in the last 12 months and 72% of children had up to date immunisations.

11.8 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.

11.9 It is a significant challenge for the NHS to collate up to date information on immunisations as these are not centrally recorded and require manual input. A solution has been identified within the Annual Looked After Children's Review Report which will go live in early 2023.

11.10 Covid Vaccinations have remained on the agenda and for our children in care aged 12 or over.

66% have had 1 or more vaccinations

26% have declined or are undecided

8% not yet undertaken but scheduled, with no practice concerns linked to the reasons why they have not yet been vaccinated

11.11 Initial Health Assessments – 3 children (14%) were impacted by Paediatrician availability in Q1 and 4 children (19%) were impacted by placement moves with actions in place to improve this. The health provider and commissioner 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

11.12 In July 2021 the Quality in Assessment audit was graded overall; Good. In August 2021 a deep dive audit on outcomes was graded Outstanding and an audit on

quality of case recording in September and October 2021 were also graded Good. In February 2022 a repeat deep dive audit into outcomes was undertaken, rated as Good. 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; but this does not cover the whole timeframe for this report. These will be included in the updated Annual CPP Report for the period 2022/2023.

11.13 Following completion of our Annual Self-Assessment we have reviewed our auditing themes for Jan – March to reflect areas where we want to focus our line of sight.

11.14 “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).

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

11.15 As mentioned above the Fostering Excellence is now in its third year. In year one, 2020, it improved recruitment activity and achieved its target of a net increase of 20 carers. The Annual Report for Year 2 will be included in the next Annual CPP Report.

11.16 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 currently 6 project strands.

11.17 Following our two successful bids with the DfE Children’s Homes Capital Programme 2021-23 application we will be going out to tender in the New Year of 2023 to providers, which will include some emergency provision.

11.18 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 launched in January 2023 in relation to the placement sufficiency challenges to ensure our strategy for managing this is as robust as possible.

11.19 We are reviewing our Supported Lodgings commissioning contract and we are about to open an additional House of Multiple Occupancy. There is a Placement Sufficiency programme in place which considers future proofing for the needs of our 16+ young people.

e) The quality of social work supervision

11.20 “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 was added to reports in Q3 and Q4 2021/2022 and is tracked in Performance

and Outcomes Groups and the Performance and Outcome Board. Q3/Q4 21-2022 shows recording of case supervision at 65%.

- 11.21 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, 5% audits not undertaken due to sickness.

12. Ofsted Summary

- 12.1 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".

- 12.2 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 2022 (3-year cycle) so is now expected to take place in 2023. We have recently updated our Self-Assessment and our Annual Conversation with Ofsted took place on the 30 November 2022, their letter following this is awaited.

13. Areas for Development

- 13.1 Increased audits activity for children in care and care experienced young people in January to March 2023 is scheduled to further inform the training and development plan.

- 13.2 A separate Ofsted judgement for Care Leavers comes into effect from January 2023 (published December 2022). The new judgement will focus on the things that matter 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

- 13.3 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 planning to evidence how 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.

- 13.4 From April 2023 Ofsted will be regulating supported accommodation in England, with the expectation that the regulations and standards will become mandatory before the end of 2023. The overwhelming response with 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.

14. Impact and Ambition

- 14.1 The Corporate Panel has received a breadth of activity relating to Wiltshire's children in care and care experienced young people. The strategic priorities are reviewed on regular basis to ensure they are meaningful and reflective of the needs and views of our children in care and care experienced young people.
- 14.2 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
- 14.3 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
- 14.4 The current priorities continue to be driven jointly by Members and lead officers and there is an improved knowledge base for each area and opportunities to discuss with the Child and Youth Voice team during Shared Guardian sessions. The strategic priorities will be reviewed in February 2023 to ensure that they are currently representative of our children in care and care experienced young people.
- 14.5 Members have been provided with information about Fostering Excellence and how this work is progressing, including the marketing campaigns. The marketing campaigns have been geographically driven (more recently in Chippenham) with the Chair attending to support the recruitment team reinforcing Members being involved at a more local level to their constituencies.
Strategic Priority - A loving home where I have good relationships
- 14.6 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. 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.

- 14.7 We had a return visit by the DfE National Lead, Mark Riddell, in October 2022 and received his formal feedback which commented upon the rapid progress that had been made since his formal two day visit in October 2021; impressed with the leadership and management approach and that we were ambitious and aspirational to have a better offer for our care experienced young people. The team approach by PA's was described as highly responsive to the needs of care leavers. He commented that we had accepted and progressed all of his recommendations and had worked hard to get a 'Whole Council Approach' and that we had some opportunities in the 'family business' and our EET rate had improved. He noted our offer was better than good in some areas. We are revising our Care Experienced Young People's Development Plan with his additional recommendations on housing options and support with practical elements of moving to independence.
- 14.8 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:
- 14.9 *Strategic Priority - Support to be the best I can*
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.
- 14.9 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.
- 14.10 *Strategic Priority - Support for as long as I need it*
Ensure that the comprehensive and innovative care 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.
- 14.11 *Strategic Priority - Support to be healthy*
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.
- 14.12. *Strategic Priority - A loving home where I have good relationships*
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.

14.13 Strategic Priority - To be heard

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 these opinions are fully reflected in practice improvement.

15. Priorities for the next period include:

- Maintain and improve compliance with the KPI range measures in order to improve outcomes for children
- Improve placement sufficiency so that more children are looked after by Wiltshire approved foster carers, closer to their homes, schools and communities
- 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
- Continue to ensure timely adoption for children where it is in their best interest
- Update our Care Experienced Young People Development Plan to reflect the requirements of the standalone Ofsted ILACSCare Leavers grading.
- 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
- Improve the oversight and reporting of themes of children in care who go missing
- Continue to progress the voice and participation of children in care and build on existing relationships with members and officers

16 Conclusion and Next Steps

16.1 The Corporate Parenting Strategy received Full Council approval in October 2020, with the updated strategic priorities included. These will be further reviewed in February 2023.

16.2 An enhanced reporting system through the CPP Scorecard and regular performance reports has helped to ensure a better understanding of panel as evidenced in the updates from strategic leads contained within this report. Members have a greater understanding of children in care and care experienced young people, through the participation of child and youth voice, the chair of the CICC and young people attending the Panel and joint shared guardian sessions. Panel have an increased narrative of children and young people's lived experience therefore enabling them to be the best corporate parent the children in care and care experienced young people need. Members have joined children in care for a number of activities during 2021/2022.

16.3 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) 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.
- e) Further strengthen and develop the local offer for care experienced young people, particularly ensuring that those living outside Wiltshire are not disadvantaged.
- f) Further strengthen our oversight and understanding of children in care who go missing.
- g) Progress the housing and supported accommodation needs of our care experienced young people.

17. Main Considerations for the Council

- 17.1 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.

18. Overview and Scrutiny Engagement

- 18.1 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 10 January 2023.

19. Safeguarding Implications

- 19.1 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.

20. Public Health Implications

- 20.1 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.

21. Environmental and Climate Change Considerations

21.1 None identified.

22. Equalities Impact of the Proposal

22.1 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.

23. Risk Assessment

23.1 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.

24. Financial Implications

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

25. Legal Implications

25.1 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.

26. Proposals

26.1 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.

26.2 To receive and note the Annual Report of the Child and Youth Voice Team 2021/2022 attached as Appendix 2 to this report.

Jen Salter (Interim Director of Families and Children's Services)

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

Contributors:

Kathryn Davis (Head of Service of Targeted Education (and Virtual Head Teacher)

Michele Llewellyn (Service Manager – Children in Care)

Karen Stokes (Missing Children Co-Ordinator)

Simon Fairgrieve (Information Lead, Children's Social Care)

Sara James (Service Manager for Quality Outcomes)

Date of report: 9 January 2023

Background Papers – None

Appendices

1 - Children in Care Performance Data 2021/22 (Q2 2021 to Q1 2022).

2 - Annual Report of the Child and Youth Voice Team – April 2021 to March 2022.