

# Part 11A

## Corporate Parenting Panel

## **Part 11A - Corporate Parenting Panel**

### **1. Functions**

1.1 The Corporate Parenting Panel is the primary vehicle for Councillors to meet with key officers and to challenge and scrutinise the performance, quality and efficacy of Wiltshire Council's services.

1.2 The Corporate Parenting Panel will comprise up to 8 Core Members drawn from elected Councillors politically balanced and nominated by group leaders. Group leaders will ensure that they appoint substitute members to cover absences. Associate Members will include officers from the council and key partner agencies and comprise of:

- Corporate Director
- Director – Children's Operational Services
- Head of Care, Placements and EDS
- Senior Commissioning Officer – Children's Social Care (Voice and Influence)
- A Representative from the Children in Care Council
- Cabinet Member for Children's Services
- Chair of Wiltshire Fostering Association
- Conference and Reviewing Service Manager
- Designed Doctor for Looked After Children
- Virtual School Headteacher

1.3 If any of the core members are unable to attend a meeting they will send a substitute representative.

1.4 On behalf of all Councillors acting as Corporate Parents, the Corporate Parenting Panel will ensure delivery of the following seven strategic priorities:

- 1.4.1 Strengthen the Corporate Parenting Role and Corporate Parenting function across Wiltshire Council as a whole.
- 1.4.2 Continue to improve timeliness of permanency for looked after children across the range of permanency options.
- 1.4.3 Ensure that there is sufficient accommodation for looked after children within Wiltshire which meets the needs of those children. Prioritise placement within Wiltshire.
- 1.4.4 Improve care leavers journey by ensuring an enhanced offer to care leavers across all areas: education, employment and training, independent living, housing options and health.
- 1.4.5 Improve the educational outcomes for looked after children; closing the gap between looked after children and other children in the county.
- 1.4.6 Ensure that looked after children are protected from the risk of child sexual exploitation and reduce the frequency with which some looked after children and care leavers currently go missing.
- 1.4.7 Ensure that looked after children and care leavers have timely and easy access to mental health services.

1.5 The Panel will appoint a Chairperson on an annual basis.

1.6 To ensure that strategic oversight and critical challenge is effective, each member of board will have a lead role in relation to delivery of one strategic priority.

## **2. Quorum**

2.1 The quorum of the Corporate Parenting Panel will be 75% (6) Councillors, 70% (7) Associate Members in attendance. Where the meeting is not quorate, the Chairperson will adjourn the meeting.

## **3. Frequency of meetings**

3.1 The Corporate Parenting Panel will meet bi-monthly with a minimum of 5 meetings a year.

## **4. Reporting**

4.1 The Panel would report its work through the Wiltshire Council Children's Select Committee. Following each meeting the Chairperson will send a copy of the Panel minutes to the Chairman of Children's Select Committee.

4.2 On a six-monthly basis the Panel Chairperson will prepare a report for Chairman of the Children's Select Committee, addressing progress against each of the seven strategic priorities.

4.3 In addition to this the Chairperson of the Corporate Parenting Panel will present an annual report to Full Council which will be shared with the Children's Select Committee prior to submission.

## **5. Terms of Reference**

Corporate Parenting Panel will:

- 5.1 Make a commitment to prioritising the needs of looked after children and young people and their carers and demand that all departments within the Council prioritise the needs of this group
- 5.2 Receive reports from the Children in Care Council and act on their views
- 5.3 Provide clear strategic and political direction in relation to corporate parenting
- 5.4 Show ambition and aspirations for all looked after children and care leavers
- 5.5 Ensure that all councillors and Wiltshire Council departments are fulfilling their roles and responsibilities as corporate parents proactively. This may involve, for example, the Corporate Parenting Panel organising specific education and training events for all members to ensure they are equipped with the knowledge and skills to be corporate parents
- 5.6 Investigate on behalf of all Councillors ways in which the role of Corporate Parenting can be improved, using examples of research and effective practice from other local authorities
- 5.7 Listen to the views of children, young people and their carers to involve them in the assessment and development of services
- 5.8 Engage with children and young people who are looked after, or have left care, by inviting them to act as advisers to the Panel

- 5.9 Monitor the performance, quality and outcomes of the Council's services in relation to children and young people in public care and identify any areas for improvement
- 5.10 Scrutinise key performance indicators in relation to children and young people in the care of Wiltshire Council
- 5.11 Meet with government inspectors, where appropriate, for their input into inspections
- 5.12 Participate as members of the adoption and fostering panels
- 5.13 Agree a work plan, review progress, membership of the panel and attainment of its role and terms of reference and report to the Cabinet and Children's Services Select Committee as appropriate, and in any case to the Full Council annually.