

**Bi Annual Update from the Corporate Parenting Panel**

**1. Purpose of Report**

- 1.1 To provide a bi-annual update to the Children's Select Committee on the progress and achievements of the Corporate Parenting Panel.

**2. Background**

- 2.1 On 19 December 2017, the Chair of the Panel (Cllr Laura Mayes) and Vice Chair (Cllr Pauline Church) and lead officer (Martin Davis) met to review the Corporate Parenting Strategy.
- 2.2 At that meeting it was agreed that the seven strategic priorities were relevant and should continue – this view was supported by the fact that no changes had been requested via the young people on the Children in Care Council. Moving forward it was proposed that the format of the Panel meetings would be changed so that each meeting focused on a strategic priority. There would be some statutory items that would also need to be considered at all meetings, but focus would need to be given on what is brought forward to meetings. These plans were presented to the CPP on 9 January 2018 and members were in full agreement to this proposal.
- 2.3 The Corporate Parenting Strategy was updated following this and now includes the updated "Promise" to children and young people in care. The Strategy is attached as Appendix 1 to this report.
- 2.4 The Corporate Parenting Strategy requires a six-monthly update to Children's Select on the progress made against each strategic priority and at each Panel meeting one priority is a focus for the meeting and the lead Councillor will present an update. This report provides this update.

**3. Update on Strategic Priorities**

- 3.1 CPP Meeting – 13 March 2018 – Councillors George Jeans and Melody Thompson were the lead Members for *Strategic Priority 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"*.

It was reported that the Children's Select Committee had convened a rapid scrutiny group who were asked to examine the draft of Wiltshire's Care Leavers Covenant which set out the Council's corporate responsibility for care leavers. This group first met in January 2018 and examined how the local offer intended to meet its goals and how it could address any perceived gaps or potential improvements.

Options for the offer included:

- Recruitment of two additional Personal Advisors;
- Introduction of the Grandmentors programme;
- Free Leisure Centre passes for Care Leavers;
- An increase to the Care Leaver Grant from £2,000 to £2,500;
- Council Tax exemption for Care Leavers;
- Contribution towards Wi-Fi payments;
- Payment of tuition fees; and
- Free bus pass for Care Leavers.

At the Panel meeting on 13 March 2018, members were asked to provide their feedback and opinion on the care leaver offer – particularly those which had financial implications and prioritise them in order of preference so that this could be fed into the next rapid scrutiny group meeting.

Since this time, work on providing an appropriate offer has continued.

3.2 CPP Meeting – 18 September 2018 – Councillor Phil Whalley is the lead Member for *Strategic Priority 5 – “Improve the educational outcomes for looked after children; closing the gap between looked after children and other children in the county”*.

At the meeting, the following was highlighted:

- That life chances would be improved if a young person had a good education and that Wiltshire Council had a moral and legal responsibility for all Looked After Children;
- There were currently 280 school aged Looked After Children and the Panel noted the Virtual School's results on pages 59 and 60 of the agenda. The Panel was asked to note that those children being assessed is small (e.g. 7 KS1 children and 18 KS2 children) and so this can skew the figures;
- There was some improvement for the KS1 and KS2 results for reading, writing and maths compared to last year although the results for KS4 are weak with 20.9% achieving levels 4-9 in English and Maths;
- Issues that impact on education performance to consider are the age at which a child came into care as this is a factor for when they might start to receive enhanced support, how long they have been in care and what disruptions and changes they have experienced;

- The Virtual School always look to place Looked After Children in Good or Outstanding Ofsted rated schools. If a school is then rated as “Requires Improvement” a judgement is made by the Virtual School and Social Worker as to whether it is in the child’s best interest to be moved to a different school;
- Personal Education Plans (PEPs) will be carried out using an electronic process (ePEP), the designated teachers from each school will be able to use the form to overview progress and identify areas of concern;
- The Pupil Premium (PP) allowance for LAC is £2,300 and it was confirmed that there was a robust process for the release of this funding – schools are required to indicate what they intend to spend it on and what improvements and outcomes are expected. Chris Whitfield (Virtual School Head - VSH) has the ultimate say on the PP spend and will re-iterate to schools that education must be the priority for young people;
- Every local authority must have a VSH and Wiltshire was in the original pilot scheme in 2007 so this position has been in place for over 10 years;

Chris Whitfield (Virtual School Head) reported that the Virtual School would be buying in an ePEP package for next year and that a Governing Body for the Virtual School was well established. Panel members asked to receive an update from the Virtual School Governing Body at a future meeting.

### 3.3 CPP Meeting – 20 November 2018 – Councillor Jane Davies - the lead Member for *Strategic Priority 2 – “Continue to improve timeliness of permanency for looked after children across the range of permanency options”*

At the meeting, the following was highlighted;

- The Permanence Framework that is for the establishing of emotional permanence (attachment), physical permanence (stability) and legal permanence (the carer has parental responsibility for the child) which gives a child a sense of security, continuity, commitment and identity – a sense of “home” and belonging;
- Social work teams and how they work closely together to achieve permanence for a child;
- Clear planning and review process and how it is undertaken for a child and what this involves;
- Monitoring of progress and outcomes takes place and with whom the data collected is shared and discussed;
- Routes to permanence which include adoption, long term fostering or orders such as a Special Guardianship Order (SGO) or Child Arrangement Order (CAO) or a return home;

*It was confirmed that one of the FACT workstreams is focussing on reunification. When it is the plan that a child will return home, the voice of the child, parents and the views of foster carers on how this might work will be taken into account.*

- Wiltshire's Adoption Scorecard for 2014-17 (for which Wiltshire shows strong results in the three key areas);

*During the 2015 Ofsted inspection they positively commented on the adoption results and performance has continued to improve since. It is anticipated that the implementation of Adoption West will help improve things further and members were assured that Wiltshire's performance would not be negatively impacted by the results of the other authorities who were part of Adoption West.*

- Regular monitoring reports are prepared and provided for Cabinet in relation to adoption;
- Definition of a long-term placement is one which is intended to provide for a child until they are 18 plus – if all goes well it is hoped they would 'stay put' in foster care. Long term matches with Wiltshire approved foster carers are agreed at Foster Panel. If a child has to be placed with an agency foster carer they can still be long term matched if it is the right plan for the child. In this case, due diligence would apply and requests are approved by the Permanence Panel and then Foster Panel;
- If children are unable to live safely at home with parents, the next best option in terms of outcomes for the child may be a placement with extended family or close family friends for example – this would require a Special Guardianship Order or a Child Arrangement Order;
- In 2015-16, 29 SGOs were granted for Looked After Children (2 broke down). In 2016-17, 21 SGOs (1 broke down) and in 2017-18, 19 SGOs were granted. There is a support group for those holding SGOs and the children are invited to the Christmas party with carers;
- It should always be considered whether a child can and should return home. Research shows that after leaving care many young adults do return home. So, the question should always be asked whether a return home is viable and safe;
- There is a lot of work going on as part of the FACT programme with the Sufficiency of Placements work stream, Reunification work stream and Kinship (Connected Persons) work stream;
- Placement stability, which can influence permanence, is measured by National Indicator 62 (placement stability: 3 or more placements during the year) which is currently at 8.8% (below current target range of 9-12%) and NI 63 (placement stability: 18 months plus in same placement) is currently 75%, above our statistical neighbours and the national average;

- In the post Looked After Children review audit completed in January 2017 almost 79% of those children reviewed had a care plan which included a plan for permanence. Those without an up-to-date plan were followed up – this audit is due to be repeated;
- The challenges faced are:
  - i) Sufficiency of placements around fostering and adoption – *When the Corporate Parenting strategic priorities were reviewed, it was agreed that this priority should remain, transformational work is located within FACT.*
  - ii) Assuring the breadth and flexibility of support around complex children – *The No Wrong Door programme and strong partnership approach will help with this, especially with those children that are hard to place.*
  - iii) The implementation of Adoption West reflecting a period of change – *As this has not yet gone live, we have been unable to assess the impact of the changes but will do so as soon as possible.*
  - iv) Adoption West will not support Special Guardianship Order work previously held by the Adoption Team, so this work will transfer to the Fostering Team.

3.4 CPP Meeting – 29 January 2019 – Councillor Pauline Church - the lead Member for *Strategic Priority 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”*

At the meeting, the following was highlighted:

- Blair Keltie had retired in his role as Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE) & Missing Children Service Manager and Andrea Brazier will be taking responsibility for this area of work and supporting Cllr Church with her strategic priority focus;
- The Ofsted recommendations of what local authorities should do to prevent CSE includes:
  - Ensuring that managers oversee all individual CSE cases and that plans are progressing appropriately
  - Ensuring that every child returning from a missing episode is given a return interview and that information obtained should be centrally collated and used to inform and improve future operational and strategic activity
  - Ensuring that schools and the LA cross-reference absence information with risk assessments for individual Looked After Children and Young People
  - Establishing a targeted preventative and self-protection programme on CSE for Looked After Children;

How we (the Council) respond to Looked After Children who go missing includes:

- Robust communication with Wiltshire Police with reports being sent directly to Families and Children Service Missing Co-Ordinators (Karen Stokes and Mel Gillingham) to manage responses
- Systems of escalation as required
- The Missing Co-Ordinators track and monitor completion of Return Interviews
- The performance is monitored by the fortnightly Performance and Outcomes Group (POG)
- The information and data collated is analysed and reported in quarterly reports to the Wiltshire Safeguarding Children Board, the Exploitation Sub Group, senior managers and to the Corporate Parenting Panel;

A graph recording Looked After Children missing episodes from 2015/16 to 2017/18 showed evidence that our responses to our children residing in Wiltshire is having a positive (trend) outcome with fewer missing incidents and more Return Interviews completed;

A graph recording our children residing out of county from 2015/16 to 2017/18 shows that our responses are improving but there is further room for improvement as the baseline was low;

There are a number of ways which are being used to support improvements in outcomes for Looked After Children who go missing which include:

- Reviewing and understanding criteria of top missing children
- A risk based approach to missing incidents and return interviews (assessing that although a child may not be where they are supposed to be at a certain time and are classed as “missing” it may be due to a missed curfew and it is known where they are/who they are with and they are not “at risk”)
- Police report direct to the Missing Co-Ordinators for children placed out of county
- Information is communicated for Looked After Children prior to placement starts and the responses made to the top missing incidents
- The need for standardised procedures – development of practice standards
- An update on national guidance (issued in 2014) to include resolving cross border issues where relevant information is not passed on/received
- The Safeguarding Panel is looking to map out CSE hotspots in the county
- CSE training for staff and for the dedicated Emerald Team.

Panel Members asked about County Lines – it was reported that there is a list of around 22 children who are thought to be involved with this and they are regularly discussed and monitored, but none of these are Looked After.

Return Interviews can be carried out face to face or online or via skype as appropriate. One of the issues faced is how “missing” is reported/recoded as there is a lack of standardisation of the definition of missing; that is differences between how Police and the Local Authority interpret it. The risk-based approach on deciding whether a Return Interview should be offered and completed is the best way using the intelligence known.

Work is ongoing to reduce missing incidents and it was confirmed that information is shared with Foster Carers before and during placement and the nature of any risk is discussed (if known) by the carer’s Supervising Social Worker. E-Learning on CSE/Missing children is available for staff and Foster Carers to complete.

Councillor Church had previously suggested that a RAG risk rating be introduced to identify the Looked After Children that are the most vulnerable and Officers had reported that this information would not be easy to achieve and as a result the Panel now received more detailed information in the quarterly missing reports that referred specifically to Looked After Children.

Councillor Church agreed to continue to explore the possibility of RAG risk rating and will liaise with Andrea Brazier about this so that all relevant teams are aware of, and can work together to help, the most vulnerable children and young people.

3.5 CPP Meeting – 19 March 2019 - Councillor Stewart Palmen - the lead Member for Strategic Priority 7 “*Ensure that looked after children and care leavers have timely and easy access to mental health services*”

At the meeting, the following was highlighted:

Those who might identify emotional and mental health issues in Looked After children and young people included:

- Foster Carers
- Medical Professionals during regular health assessments and via the completion of Strengths and Difficulties Questionnaires (SDQs)
- School staff
- Social Workers
- Family Support Workers
- Other Agencies that come into contact with the Looked After Children
- Self recognition of issues

Once issues are identified this would lead to an assessment by a CAMHS (Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service) LAC Therapist.

Another channel of entry to support children could come via a GP referral or from an A&E department following a self-harming episode requiring treatment or hospital admission.

The CAMHS Looked After Children Therapist (Roger Duncan) can be used to bridge the gap between services. He has been in post for 2 years and supports Looked After Children in the following ways:

- By meeting with the Looked After Children nurses for a weekly team meeting
- By joining the weekly Emerald Team meetings with Lena Pheby (Looked After Children Nurse) to identify any Looked After Children at risk of CSE
- By joining the monthly Vulnerable Adolescent Contextual Safeguarding Panel (VACS – previously Risk Management Panel) with Lena Pheby to identify any LAC who are considered at risk.

The CAMHS LAC Therapist offers the following:

1. Assessment of Looked After Children mental health needs and risk
2. Support for referrals to CAMHS
3. Short term therapy work for Looked After Children (10 cases)
4. Short term therapy work for Unaccompanied Young People (2 cases)

If further support is required after a set number of sessions the young person would be referred onto the CAMHS service. Currently there is only one CAMHS Looked After Children's Therapist, so capacity is limited. The CCG were carrying out a review of demand and capacity to identify the commissioning gaps.

It was confirmed that Roger Duncan does work with young people if their application to CAMHS is declined and if support has been requested by the family.

The CCG reported that there had been less bounce back from the young people in the system since the CAMHS Looked After Children Therapist role had been introduced. Other support services are available including Kooth (on-line counselling). Between April 2018 and March 2019, an average of 4.5 referrals of Looked After Children have been accepted in the specialist CAMHS Service – with a range of between 2 and 8 each month. This does not take into account those accessing Services through staff embedded in other teams, such as schools or The Emerald Team.

It was reported that there are many life experiences that can lead to mental health problems and Looked After Children are more likely to have experienced them; and not addressing these issues can lead to mental health issues in the future:

Early Life Experiences or Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs)

- Physical Abuse
- Emotional Abuse
- Sexual Abuse
- Witness to Domestic Violence
- Neglect

- Trauma (especially true of unaccompanied young people, sometimes arising from events in their country of origin) leading to PTSD. Interpreters are often needed to find out about these issues.

There are issues with providing CAMHS support for Looked After Children and Care Experienced young people, as follows:

- CAMHS is a “brand” that some young people may not want to be associated with as there is a stigma attached to the word “mental”
- Family care workers offering outreach in other Specialist areas are essential to provide support for those who don’t want to see a CAMHS therapist; children cannot be made to have CAMHS support
- Initial Health Assessments can be delayed, more often for children placed out of county
- SDQ scoring is sometimes not completed in a timely manner
- There is no quantitative data available to see how well we are doing.

Cllr Palmen shared his improvement suggestions as follows:

- Improve support for Unaccompanied Young people
  - *I am aware that recently funding has been secured for three levels of training that can Support UASC; Clinically, as a Social Worker and at a support worker/residential level.*
- Recognise Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs) early on and provide counselling and support quickly
  - *I feel this approach would benefit from multi-agency training and support including school as key front-line agencies.*
- Have quantitative measures of more than time for Initial Health Assessments.
- Improve the CAMHS brand?
  - *I am aware that recent changes in the CAMHS structure and establishment of the CAMHS Wiltshire Wellbeing team is currently addressing this.*
- Looking at the Panel’s Strategic Priority – do we need to take the focus off “Timely Support” and onto “Preventative measures with correct support?”

Lucy Baker (CCG Commissioning) wished to assure the Panel that the reported issue of timeliness of IHAs had been picked up and work was being undertaken to make improvements. They were talking to colleagues in Islington who are high performers in timeliness of IHAs to find out what they do. Lucy also reported that national funding was coming and that they would be looking to make improvements early on in a young person’s pathway.

Lena Pheby reported that they are considerate in the way they address and discuss emotional health issues when they are talking to young people to take away the “mental” stigma.

A Panel Member asked whether young people had to be in a “stable” placement before they could access the CAMHS service. If we are aware of a drug or alcohol issue, then we would recommend a referral for a Motiv8 session with hope that more would be provided.

Lucy Townsend (Director – Families and Children’s Services) reported that Tracy Daszkiewicz (Director of Public Health) was leading on the core skills workstream under the FACT project which was looking at support for adverse childhood experiences (ACEs).

A Panel Member asked if counselling should be offered to all children coming into care as standard?

Lucy Baker responded that workshop/play therapy is offered for younger children that come into care, particularly being available in school holidays so that they can continue to receive support during those times. Outdoor based activities and forest walks and talks are sometimes appropriate for older children. Lucy confirmed that the Wiltshire Wildlife Trust are used for adult support and she offered to see if they would be able to extend their service to young people. Chris Whitfield (Virtual School Head) suggested that she and Lucy Baker could meet to discuss support further and that funding from the top sliced Pupil Premium could be used.

A Panel Member asked if Wiltshire currently use the NSPCC for support work. It was confirmed that they do, but that they carry out specialist work and that they have a long waiting list to access the service.

The Panel requested an update in six months with an update on progress and Councillor Palmen would look to propose new wording for Strategic Priority 7 to cover more than speed of access to CAMHS support.

#### **4. Proposal**

- 4.1 That the Committee note the update from the Corporate Parenting Panel.
- 4.2 A draft full annual report will be presented to Children’s Select around September 2019 for planned presentation to Council in October 2019.

#### **Lucy Townsend (Director Families and Children’s Services)**

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Report Author: Deborah Barlow (Interim Head of Service - Children in Care and Young People)

2 May 2019

Appendix 1 – Revised Corporate Parenting Strategy

# **Wiltshire Council Corporate Parenting Strategy**

The Corporate Parenting Strategy is important

Hello and welcome to Wiltshire Council's Corporate Parenting Strategy, which is about what looked after children and care leavers expect our corporate parents to do and work towards to be good in their role.

The strategy is about us – the children and young people in and leaving Wiltshire Council's care. It's about how we are looked after and how things can be made better for us – not just while we are in care but also afterwards.

Within the strategy the corporate parents have worked with the Children in Care Council to set out a number of priorities. This is important as it means our views are included within the strategy.

As the Children in Care Council represent that voice of all looked after children and care leavers, it is really important to us that the strategy works, so that children and young peoples' experience of being in Wiltshire's care is a positive one and builds solid foundations for our future.

We run this programme to benefit all Children in Care. As young people, we feel like our voice is not always heard and we ask that all Corporate Parents commit to spending time listening to us.

- Children in Care Council members, January 2017

## 1. Introduction

Wiltshire Council (the “Council”) recognises that Looked After Children and Care Leavers are among the most vulnerable children and young people in our society.

The Council has a legal duty to act as a good and effective Corporate Parent to children and young people in its care.

The Council is guided in its duty as a Corporate Parent by The National Children’s Bureau, which has produced guidance supported by central government, including a summary of the legal and policy guidance that informs Corporate Parenting. This strategy has been developed having regard to that guidance.

An effective Corporate Parent will ensure that looked after children and care leavers have at least the same care, nurture, support and life chances as any other child in our society might expect. Where these opportunities are not provided Corporate Parents will have failed in their primary duty.

As a responsible and reasonable Corporate Parent, the Council will deliver on our Promise to looked after children. This Promise was reviewed in the Autumn of 2017 at a Shared Guardian Session with the Corporate Parents and representatives from the Children in Care Council. The Promise was then updated with the agreement of the children and young people and all Panel Members agreed and signed The Promise as detailed below on 14 November 2017:

We, the Corporate Parents commit to the following promise for the children and young people in care

We promise:

- A choice of home where you can stay until you are ready to move on from care
- To keep you together with brothers and sisters whenever we can, and to help you stay in close contact with your family if that’s what is right for you
- To listen to your views, act on them when we can and be honest when we cannot
- That your social worker will work hard for you to solve problems
- To tell you what your rights are and what you are entitled to
- That you will be involved in decisions taken during your looked after child review
- To involve you in decisions about school and to help you get to school so that your education can continue

- To arrange transport for you that is reliable and gets you to school, and important meetings, on time
- To invite you to group activities with other children living in care, and those leaving care, to help you feel more confident
- That we will deal with bullying quickly and efficiently
- To support you when you need help with school, leaving school and preparing for employment and training

The aim of this strategy is to ensure that the Council's Corporate Parenting functions support improvement in services and to ensure the best possible outcomes for children and young people. In order to achieve this, it is essential 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 looked after children and for care leavers, ensuring they consistently scrutinise the quality, effectiveness and performance of the services that support them.

## **2. Corporate Parenting - Defined Responsibilities**

Services for looked after children and care leavers need to be co-ordinated, focused and effective. Responsibility for this rests at a corporate level with Councillors who will hold senior staff accountable for the implementation of strategies and services.

In 2009, The National Children's Bureau, funded by the Government, created a gold-standard approach to corporate parenting, with a range of resources available to Councillors to help them design the best-fit corporate parenting model for local needs and to understand and fulfil their corporate parenting roles. This has been updated year on year and is available on the NCB website:

<http://www.ncb.org.uk/corporate-parenting>

NCB publications identify three distinct levels of role responsibility for Councillors; 'universal', 'targeted' and 'specialist'. These responsibility levels are defined below:

### **Universal responsibility**

Every elected member and manager within Wiltshire Council, in conjunction with members of governing bodies of partner agencies, needs to:

- Understand their 'Corporate Parenting' role

- Have knowledge of the profile and needs of looked after children, young people and care leavers
- Understand the impact of council decisions on all looked after children and young people
- Examine information about current levels of quality of care and services for young people and assess whether this would be 'good enough' for their own child
- If shortcomings in services and support for young people are identified, ensure that action is taken to address these shortcomings and strive to continually improve outcomes.

### **Targeted responsibility**

For elected members who visit Children's Homes or who are members of the Corporate Parenting Panel, and for managers of children's services, their responsibilities are as above.

In addition, they will also need to make sure, in partnership with those with lead responsibility in partner agencies, that they:

- Are aware of Government expectations regarding services for looked after children and young people
- Have access to and examine qualitative and quantitative information about children and young people in Wiltshire
- Consider how they are going to respond to and hear the voice of children and young people and their carers/parents
- Continually take action, in conjunction with officers and partner agencies, to improve services and respond to changing needs

### **Specialist responsibility**

This includes key roles of the Lead member for Children's Services, the Director of Children's Services, and the Chair of Corporate Parenting Panel. There is a responsibility for these individuals to:

- Provide leadership across the Council in safeguarding and monitoring the welfare of looked after children and young people
- Ensure effective governance arrangements are in place
- Undertake regular in-depth analysis of the needs of looked after children and young people and the services required to meet these needs

- Ensure the strategic plans of the Council and joint plans with partner agencies reflect the needs of looked after children and young people
- Keep up-to-date with national research and new performance indicators in relation to looked after children and young people

### **3. Corporate Parenting Panel – Functions and Terms of Reference**

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.

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:

1. Corporate Director Children and Education
2. Director – Families and Children
3. Head of Care, Placements and EDS
4. Senior Commissioning Officer – Children's Social Care (Voice and Influence)
5. A Representative from the Children in Care Council
6. Cabinet Member for Children's Services
7. Chair of Wiltshire Fostering Association
8. Conference and Reviewing Service Manager
9. Designated Doctor/Nurse for Looked After Children
10. Virtual School Head

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

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

- Strengthen the Corporate Parenting Role and Corporate Parenting function across Wiltshire Council as a whole.
- Continue to improve timeliness of permanency for looked after children across the range of permanency options.
- Ensure that there is sufficient accommodation for looked after children within Wiltshire which meets the needs of those children. Prioritise placement within Wiltshire.
- 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.

- Improve the educational outcomes for looked after children; closing the gap between looked after children and other children in the county.
- 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.
- Ensure that looked after children and care leavers have timely and easy access to mental health services.

The Panel will appoint a Chairperson on an annual basis.

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.

#### **4. Quorum**

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.

#### **5. Frequency of meetings**

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

#### **6. Reporting**

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. 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.

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.

#### **7. Terms of Reference**

Corporate Parenting Panel will;

- 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
- Receive reports from the Children in Care Council and act on their views
- Provide clear strategic and political direction in relation to corporate parenting

- Show ambition and aspirations for all looked after children and care leavers
- 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
- 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
- Listen to the views of children, young people and their carers to involve them in the assessment and development of services
- Engage with children and young people who are looked after, or have left care, by inviting them to act as advisers to the Panel
- 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
- Scrutinise key performance indicators in relation to children and young people in the care of Wiltshire Council
- Meet with government inspectors, where appropriate, for their input into inspections
- Participate as members of the adoption and fostering panels
- 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.

Revised and agreed May 2018