

CORPORATE PARENTING ANNUAL REPORT 2016-17

To: Children and Young People's Committee

Meeting Date: 5 December 2017

From: Lou Williams – Service Director, Children and Safeguarding, Cambridgeshire and Peterborough.

Electoral division(s): All

Forward Plan ref: n/a **Key decision:** No

Purpose: The report provides details of the work undertaken in respect of the Council's corporate parenting duties and functions.

Recommendation: It is recommended that the Committee consider and comment on the report

<i>Officer contact:</i>	<i>Member contacts:</i>
Name: Fiona Mackirdy	Names: Councillor Simon Bywater
Post: Head of Countywide and Looked After Children's services	Post: Chairman, Children and Young People Committee
Email: fiona.mackirdy@cambridgeshire.gov.uk	Email: Simon.Bywater@cambridgeshire.gov.uk
Tel: 01223 715576	Tel: 01223 706398

1. BACKGROUND

- 1.1 A raft of legislation including the Children Act 1989 and Children Act 2004 have successively strengthened public bodies' responsibilities to looked after children (LAC). Statutory Guidance issued by the Department for Education in 2012 also specifically laid out the statutory roles of Director of Children's Services and the Lead Member for Children's Services to cover both the social care and education services of the local authority. These individuals should provide strong leadership and ensure that there is a clear line of accountability for children's well-being. They have particular responsibility for vulnerable groups of children, including those for whom they are corporate parents. The Lead Member should provide *political* leadership whilst the Director of Children's Services should provide *professional* leadership.
- 1.2 Although not a statutory requirement, most local authorities have established a group of elected members to oversee the corporate parenting function of the local authority. All councillors and council officers share corporate parenting responsibility and cannot abdicate this responsibility in favour of those they see as being more central. Cambridgeshire County Council established a Corporate Parenting Board comprising elected members nominated by the Children and Young People's Committee, invited officers and representatives from the Voices Matter looked after children's group.
- 1.3 In October 2017 the Council voted to approve a change to the Corporate Parenting Board, to strengthen its governance and functions by becoming a sub-committee of the Children and Young People's Committee.
- 1.4 The Corporate Parenting Board received quarterly qualitative and performance reports summarising progress towards corporate parenting activities and priorities including health and education. At the end of each reporting year an annual Corporate Parenting Report is produced which focuses on key metrics and activity. This report is reproduced here for the Children and Young People's Committee. It was presented to the Corporate Parenting Board on 12 July 2017.

2. MAIN ISSUES

- 2.1 The Corporate Parenting Annual Performance Report is attached at Appendix One.

The key points of the Corporate Parenting Annual Performance Report were summarised in the report as follows:

- 2016-17 saw an increase of 9% in the number of Looked After Children in the 12 month period (a rate of 50 children per 10,000 locally, compared to 60 per 10,000 nationally)
- 6% of LAC population are children with disabilities and 9.9% are children seeking asylum
- 'No Wrong Door' model being created to give stability for families reducing the volume of children becoming LAC by better support in communities at an earlier stage
- 51% of looked after children were placed out of County (national target is 20%) but 31% of this group were out of county and 20 plus miles from home

- Cambridgeshire Fostering Service has recruited more carers in this reporting period than in previous years
- Children placed at a distance do not always experience the same equity of services as children closer to home
- Children out of county have the same access to health, education but they may not experience additional visits from professionals due to distances involved
- The highest proportion of placements made consistently is for the 11-15 and 16+ age groups but includes unaccompanied asylum seeking young people.
- 11.7% of the LAC population experienced 3+ placement moves. Reasons include children moving to their permanent/adoptive placement, and experiencing placement disruption
- 69% of children achieved placement stability – in placement for 2.5 years plus (national target is 70%)
- 54% of care leavers aged 17-21 were in Education, Employment or Training, compared to 30% 12 months ago
- The number of care leavers deemed to be suitable accommodation has decreased from 90% to 86%
- The fostering service had 107 fostering households approved for children aged 5 years plus
- 39 children were granted Adoption Orders during 2016/17 – an increase by 1 from the previous year

2.2 During 2017-18 the key corporate parenting priorities will continue

- Outcome 1: Looked After Children fulfil their educational potential
- Outcome 2: Care leavers successfully gain employment
- Outcome 3: Looked After Children have good health and wellbeing
- Outcome 4: Looked After Children and care leavers are well equipped to be parents
- Outcome 5: Cambridgeshire Looked After Children and young people placed outside the county are not disadvantaged

2.3 During 2017-18 key activity has been planned in addition to the priorities:

- Continued implementation of the Childrens Change Programme, specifically development of the 14-25 service for looked after children and care leavers
- Development of the No Wrong Door model of intensive support to looked after children and those on the edge of care in The Hub
- Review and updating of the Sufficiency Statement for services for looked after children
- Development of a Corporate Parenting Dataset to provide regular management information to the service and the Corporate Parenting Board
- Continued expansion and improvement of the in-house fostering service
- Development of the Contact service to a dedicated expert service to support children with maintaining relationships with parents and siblings.

3. ALIGNMENT WITH CORPORATE PRIORITIES

3.1 Developing the local economy for the benefit of all

There are no significant implications for this priority

3.2 Helping people live healthy and independent lives

There are no significant implications for this priority

3.3 Supporting and protecting vulnerable people

The following bullet points set out details of implications identified by officers:

- Looked after children and care leavers are one of the most vulnerable groups of children and research indicates they are more likely than the general population to experience adversity into adult life.
- Providing good quality care for children gives them the best opportunities for positive outcomes into adulthood

4. SIGNIFICANT IMPLICATIONS

4.1 Resource Implications

There are no significant implications for this priority

4.2 Procurement/Contractual/Council Contract Procedure Rules Implications

There are no significant implications in this area

4.3 Statutory, Legal and Risk Implications

The following bullet point sets out details of significant implications identified by officers

- Current corporate parenting arrangements and reporting constitute a key part of the council's statutory duty in this area

4.4 Equality and Diversity Implications

There are no significant implications in this area

4.5 Engagement and Communications Implications

There are no significant implications in this area.

4.6 Localism and Local Member Involvement

There are no significant implications in this area.

4.7 Public Health Implications

There are no significant implications in this area

Implications	Officer Clearance
Have the resource implications been cleared by Finance?	
Have the procurement/contractual/ Council Contract Procedure Rules implications been cleared by Finance?	
Has the impact on statutory, legal and risk implications been cleared by LGSS Law?	
Have the equality and diversity implications been cleared by your Service Contact?	
Have any engagement and communication implications been cleared by Communications?	
Have any localism and Local Member involvement issues been cleared by your Service Contact?	
Have any Public Health implications been cleared by Public Health	

Source Documents	Location
None	