

# REPORT FOR DECISION

<b>DECISION OF:</b>	<b>Council</b>
<b>DATE:</b>	<b>16 January 2019</b>
<b>SUBJECT:</b>	<b>Corporate Parenting Board- Annual Report 2017/2018</b>
<b>REPORT FROM:</b>	<b>Councillor E O'Brien Chair – Corporate Parenting Board</b>
<b>CONTACT OFFICER:</b>	<b>Karen Dolton – Executive Director Children and Young People</b>
<b>TYPE OF DECISION:</b>	<b>COUNCIL</b>
<b>FREEDOM OF INFORMATION/STATUS:</b>	This paper is within the public domain
<b>SUMMARY:</b>	This report provides a summary of progress and key outcomes made over the past year by the Council's Corporate Parenting Board.
<b>OPTIONS &amp; RECOMMENDED OPTION</b>	<p><b>Option 1 (Recommended)</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Note the contents of the report and progress made by the Corporate Parenting Board over the past year.</li> </ol> <p><b>Option 2 (Not recommended)</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Reject the above recommendation</li> </ol>
<b>IMPLICATIONS:</b>	
<b>Corporate Aims/Policy Framework:</b>	Do the proposals accord with the Policy Framework?

	Yes
<b>Statement by the S151 Officer: Financial Implications and Risk Considerations:</b>	The scrutiny and governance function of the Corporate Parenting Board takes place within existing budgetary provision.
<b>Statement by Executive Director of Resources:</b>	There are no wider resource implications arising from this report.
<b>Equality/Diversity implications:</b>	None
<b>Considered by Monitoring Officer:</b>	Yes
<b>Wards Affected:</b>	All
<b>Scrutiny Interest:</b>	Overview and Scrutiny Committee

## TRACKING/PROCESS

**DIRECTOR: KAREN DOLTON**

Chief Executive/ Strategic Leadership Team	Executive Member/Chair	Ward Members	Partners
Scrutiny Committee	Committee	Council	
	Corporate Parenting Board 20.11.2018	16.01.2019	

## 1. BACKGROUND

- Burys Corporate Parenting Board has the responsibility to ensure that the Council acts as a good corporate parent to children and young people in care (CYPIC) and Care Leavers. The Board monitors that the duties of a corporate parent are being fulfilled and works in partnership with other statutory agencies. The Board requires knowledge and understanding of the needs of CYPIC and Care Leavers and takes a lead for the Council in monitoring how well services are meeting those needs. Bury Councils Corporate Parenting Vision is *"to do our best as parents for children and young people in our care and care leavers"*.

- In the Bury Children In Care Strategy, Corporate Parenting is defined as:  
*"The responsibility of local authorities to improve outcomes and actively promote the life chances of children they look after is referred to as 'corporate parenting' in recognition that the task must be shared by the whole authority in partnership with partner agencies along with parents". The role of corporate parent is to act as the best parents for each child they look after and to take action to speaking out on their behalf, arranging for appropriate services to meet their needs, standing up for them and representing them as needed, to ensure they grow up in the best possible way".*
- The purpose of this annual report is to provide an update from the Corporate Parenting Board about the work and progress that has been made in the period April 2017 – March 2018.

## **2. WORK OF THE CORPORATE PARENTING BOARD**

- The Corporate Parenting Board is now well established and meets 6 times a year. The Board produces an annual forward plan which sets out the priorities for the year. The "voice of the child" is key to setting the themes for the year. In the last 12 months there has been an increased focus on care leavers and their wellbeing, this is following the recommendation from the OFSTED inspection.
- Councillors on the Corporate Parenting Board continue to champion the needs and rights of Children and Young People in Care (CYPIC) and Care Leavers.
- Over the last 12 months, The Board regularly received reports, including Fostering, Adoption, Health, Education, Independent Reviewing Officers and Children's services. Officers were questioned about what is working well and what is being done to improve outcomes for CYPIC and Care Leavers and are required to report back to future meetings on progress.
- Young people from the Children in Care Council (CiCC) attend and update on activities and work they have carried out. The determination of the young people to improve their own lives and those of other young people, and their willingness to work with the Council to strengthen services and support is valued by the Board. The Board members welcome the opportunity to hear directly from young people, who are well supported by Children's Rights officers.
- The Corporate Parenting Newsletter is sent out on behalf of the Board twice a year. The aim of this is to raise awareness and understanding of Corporate Parenting and what it means to the lives of CYPIC and Care Leavers. The Newsletter also serves to support and promote fostering in Bury.

## **3. WHAT NEEDS TO WORK BETTER AND WHAT ACTION IS IN PLACE TO ADDRESS THIS**

- The Corporate Parenting Board has reviewed how it can better challenge to ensure improved outcomes for young people in care and care leavers. A key to this is the increased engagement with CYPIC and Care Leavers and

ensuring that more time is given to understanding their needs and how they are best met. The CiCC members are key players at the Board meetings as are foster carer representatives. This year Corporate Parents have attended CiCC meetings to discuss some of the everyday problems and issues facing children and young people while in care with a view to using this insight to influence future decisions for CYPIC. CiCC members also had a visit from the Interim Assistant Director to discuss what changes have been made to date and the impact of the changes. During this visit the Interim AD discussed issues around placement, education, supervised contact with family and LAC reviews.

- The Board is looking at how they can all champion CYPIC and Care Leavers to strengthen Corporate Parenting both by the Council and partner agencies. This includes looking at training needs for all Councillors and encouraging take up of the Total Respect training delivered by CYPIC and Care Leavers. All members of the Corporate Parenting Board are expected to attend the Total Respect Training.
- The Board has reviewed its Corporate Parenting Strategy, and aligned this to the CYPIC Promises and the Care Leavers Charter. A key strand of the reviewed Strategy is to ensure that Corporate Parenting is meeting the needs of CYPIC and Care Leavers and is "everyone's business". An action within the Strategy is to organise a "Corporate Parenting week". This will be held to promote awareness and to ensure the Corporate Parenting principles are embedded across Bury Council and with all partners.
- Bury Children's Rights (BCR) offers a visit to every child over the age of 8 who becomes newly Looked after. This visit is arranged within four weeks of admission to care; BCR will explain what they do, what forms of additional support are available and how the child or young person can access advocacy services. Take up of visits and subsequent support and advocacy is high; generally, between two thirds and three quarters of interviewees take up the offer. The services also provides advocacy guidance and support. Bury Childrens Rights provides advocacy and support up to the age of 25 and are currently developing a peer mentoring service.
- Care Leavers have contributed to a review of their Service via the Care Leavers Forum. It is recognised that further work is needed with Care Leavers to improve engagement and participation. Clearer links have been made relating to a wider participation framework with the Children in Care Council.
- The young people enjoy having a more responsible and meaningful role by through their membership of the CiCC. For each CiCC session the young people choose a Chair and Vice Chair and decide a topic and focus for each session. This means they are in control of the area of discussion and it ensures the sessions are worthwhile for all members. Recent topics have been placements and education.
- The CiCC undertake a variety of reward activities members. During 2017/18 there was a trip to Alton Towers, a party in the park which was held at Heaton Park and a bowling trip.

- The CiCC also undertake participation activities with the CYPIC and Care Leavers. During 2017/18 the participation activities included being involved in IRO interviews, consultation on projects for grant funding opportunities, designing logos, pre-approval foster care training, Total Respect Training, CiCC conference in Blackpool, EHWP network event, Young People's Interview Panel for Adult and Childrens Safeguarding Board Chair and A Take Over Day shadowing Childrens Rights and IRO Managers.
- This year, the Break Through Project have been supporting apprenticeship-ready young people to gain positions on the Bury Council apprenticeship scheme. The Through Care Team encouraged and supported participation in a programme designed by the Youth Service to develop social skills, communication skills, team work skills, and job readiness skills. The scheme was developed in partnership with Rathbone, a local training provider, to gain their expertise and support to create CVs, develop job search skills and interview techniques. Connexions offered IAG support to ensure appropriate placement and transition. Break Through were able to offer incentives across both services (IYSS and Through Care) to encourage participation and remove barriers. There were 9 Care Leavers referred. Out of these, 6 attended and all were offered an interview for the Bury Council apprenticeships. All the Young People were guided through the process and offered intensive support to aid their navigation and achieve success. Following this, 2 Care leavers were offered Bury Council apprenticeships. Those that were unsuccessful are continuing to receive support and looking at alternative EET provision.
- In the future, Break Through plan to continue to support the Care Leavers already signed up but re-launch to focus on those young people who may be further away from EET readiness. This will involve smaller steps and softer support to engage and maintain participation. The Team are currently formalising the structure and clarify need. Promotion and the new timetable of sessions will begin in Autumn 2018.
- Bury Through Care Team has been successful in its bid for funding from the Home Office and Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government 'Controlling Migration Fund'. The bid set out Bury's plans to better support our Unaccompanied Asylum Seeking Children, who arrive alone, with no family support and often very little English. A fixed term Social Work post has started on the Through Care Team to recruit safe and appropriate Supported Lodgings Providers for these unaccompanied children. The service will also support some of the most vulnerable young people in our Borough, and help integrate them into their local community and support the process of applying for asylum through the Home Office.
- The Virtual School management system, Looked After Call, has completed its pupil progress tracking system to a workable level. Although it is early days, without any further development the Virtual School will be able to extract and analyse data for pupil progress across year groups and subjects as well as for specific groups, for example pupils with Special Educational Needs (SEN).

- The Virtual School has been planning the alignment of its broader work for all vulnerable children and young people to the work of the primary and secondary SEMH Partnerships. These Partnerships have been established under Bury's Written Statement of Action following on from the SEND Review last year. The Partnerships are designed to support the inclusion all pupils with SEMH needs and will impact particularly to reduce the number of fixed term and permanent exclusions. Bearing in mind the incidence of SEMH needs in children in care (about 80%), this should have a particularly positive impact in the Virtual School. The Virtual School has a pupil 'panel' meeting once per fortnight which will align with each Partnership in the autumn term to discuss pupils with SEMH needs and to agree support plans for these pupils.
- The PPG+ guidelines distributed to schools at the start of the spring term have been well received and are working well to focus PPG+ spending by schools in relation to PEP targets as well as to ensure impact on educational attainment and progress. Schools have commented favourably on the clarity of the guidelines and the Virtual School has noted a distinct improvement in the clarity and focus of requests for PPG+ payments from schools. This has been an important development in terms of supporting next stage plans for the QA of both the quality of PEP documentation (rather than simply completion and compliance) and PPG+ grant spending.
- Through the Extended Managers' Meeting, the Virtual Head Teacher has been able to consult with Social Care Team Managers to establish alternative delivery of statutory CPD for Social Workers. The initial focus will be on PEP documentation and targets along with the appropriate use of PPG+ funding. This CPD will be delivered through regular Social Care team meetings with a view to increasing the number of Social Workers accessing the CPD as well as ensuring the relevance of CPD to Social Care work.
- Bury are developing a firm Local Offer for Care Leavers which sets out the services for care leavers available in area. In July Mark Riddell MBE, an advisor for the Department of Education, met with officers across the council to review progress in regards to the preparation and implementation of the Bury offer. The six main areas to be covered in which councils should assist care leavers are:
  - Health and Well-being
  - Relationships
  - Education and Training
  - Employment
  - Accommodation
  - Participation in Society

The responsibility of the offer sits with the Bury Council's Chief Executive and Leader of the Council, both must ensure the document reflects the breadth of services offered by the Council and partners and demonstrates Corporate Parenting has strong leadership. Mark Riddell has provided a letter outlining recommendations in regards to implementing the revised Care Leaver offer (see attached).

## **CURRENT POSITION (31.3.18)**

- As of 31<sup>st</sup> March 2018 there were a total of 333 children in care to Bury Council from age 0–18 years. This is made up of 54% male and 46% female.
- 2017/18 concluded with 52 interim care orders, 227 full Care Orders, 41 voluntary accommodation (section 20), 13 placement orders, 18 Child Arrangement Orders, and 16 Special Guardianship Orders
- Placing children near to home is a continued strength and enables children to be better supported and maintain family and local contacts. The majority of children Looked after by Bury are placed within twenty miles of home. Data at 31 March 2018 showed that of the 333 Looked After Children in Bury: 295 are placed 20 miles or less from home, 38 placed more than 20 miles from home. However, this year more children were placed out of the borough than in the previous year.
- The Health of Looked After Children Steering Group have been instrumental in reviewing the pathways to ensure that children receive their initial health assessment in a timely way. The percentage of children receiving their assessment within 20 days of becoming looked after was below 40% last year. The current figure remains consistently above 90%
- The number of fostering households have increased over the last twelve months. The total number at 31/3/18 are:
  - 72 general foster carers with 160 children in placement,
  - 56 friends and family carers with 110 children in placement
  - 13 short break/shared care carers.
- There has been a drop in the number of children placed with relatives or friends who live in Bury this year. In 2016/17 there were 49 children placed with relatives or friends, at 31<sup>st</sup> March 2018 there were 30. The number of children placed with external carers in Bury remains the same at 97 but there have been more children placed outside Bury either with an external placement (now 50 rather than 41) or family and friends who live outside Bury (45 rather than 34). There was also a drop in children placed with parents to 53. This was expected as there has been a review of “placed with parents” cases and care orders have been discharged where it was deemed no longer necessary for Bury Council to share parental responsibility.
- We are successful in preventing the majority of young people from being discharged from care too early and in supporting them to acquire independence skills. There were 149 discharges from care during the year 2017-2018. Of these, there were 6 discharges for 16-year-olds, 4 discharges for 17-year-olds and 39 on the young person’s 18<sup>th</sup> birthday
- There are currently 15 young people in continuing care, which means they remain with their foster carers post-18 years of age. The current training and support offer to support foster carers to ensure that they are prepared for this and are fully supported for long term placements and permanency are

being developed. 11 of Our Care Leavers are supported to remain in Staying put placements at the age of 18 with their foster carers.

- The Reach Out Project provide a flexible and responsive service to families where it is deemed a young person is on the cusp of care to stabilise relationships within the home. The service also work with Children in Care who are at risk of their placements breaking down to assist with placement stability.
- The residential placements broken down by each type of provision during 2017/18 are:
  - H5: Semi-independent provision: 17
  - K1: Secure unit: 0
  - K2: Children's homes: 23
  - R1: Residential care home: 1
  - R2: NHS/Health Trust providing care: 0
  - R3: Family centre/mother-and-baby unit: 2
  - R5: YOI: 1
  - S1: Residential school: 0
  - Total residential: 44
  - Residential employment is not usually included in statistics for residential care, however, there were no cases at 31<sup>st</sup> March 2018 in any case.
- Bury are part of a Regional Adoption Agency 'Adoption Now'. This is an integrated adoption service which is made up of 6 local authorities and 2 voluntary adoption agencies and commenced in November 2017. The Bury adoption figures for 2017-2018 are as follows: 12 Adoption Orders were granted, 6 children are placed but not yet adopted, 22 Should Be Placed For Adoption (Shobpa) decisions were made, 8 children awaiting placement orders, 11 matches made, 4 children placed in a concurrent placement/foster to adopt placements.
- We are 'in touch' with the majority of our care leavers with 98.3% recorded as being in touch on 31 March 2018.
- At 31 March 2018, 82.9% of pathway plan reviews had been held. This has been an improving position and compliance has increased with the recruitment to a Pathway Plan Reviewing post who is based with the Through Care Team. Work on the quality of pathway plans will be a future focus with SMART objectives routinely set and embedded that are meaningful for the young person.
- 88.1% are deemed to be placed or living in suitable accommodation. However, the number of young people in custody is high for the size and demographic of the authority.
- At 31 March 2018, 16 of our Care Leavers are supported to attend university.

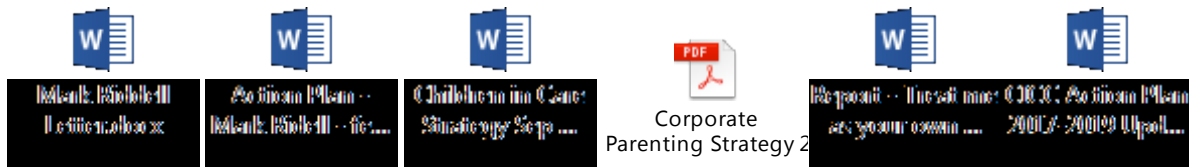


## **ACTIONS FOR 2018/2019**

- A "Corporate Parenting Week" campaign will be arranged during 2018/19 to raise awareness and understanding of what a Corporate Parent means and to promote fostering.
- In order to recognise and celebrate the achievements of CYPIC and Care Leavers, a celebration ceremony will take place at the Elizabethan Suite in October 2018. The awards evening has been named the "Believe and Achieve Awards" by the children and young people. This awards evening will celebrate the success and achievements in education, employment, training, sports, personal achievements, and creative arts.
- A wide range of participation and reward activities are being arranged for 2018/19. The young people have expressed an interest in getting a greater understanding of mental health in children, so they can raise awareness on these topics in Bury. This will be considered when planning the activities.
- The young people at CiCC have expressed an interest in designing postcards and thank you cards to send to all professionals who they feel have helped them while being in care such as Social Workers, school staff, Children's Rights Workers, IROs and other professionals. These will be designed and printed during 2018.
- The CiCC are undertaking a "Take Over of the Corporate Parenting Board" on 23<sup>rd</sup> November 2018.
- The launch of the updated Care Leaver Offer will take place in 2018/19
- A bid for a Housing Support worker from the Poverty and Homelessness Reduction Fund will be submitted
- Integration of the Children and Young people in Care team with the Through Care team will take place to improve the services to CYPIC and Care Leavers.
- Work to improve the Housing options for Care Leavers
- Work to increase the number of young people who are in Education Employment or Training

## **List of/Link to Background Papers**

CPB Strategy  
CICC Annual Report  
DfE Letter Mark Riddell and action plan  
LAC Strategy



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