

REPORT FOR DECISION



DECISION OF:	CABINET
DATE:	18 SEPTEMBER 2013
SUBJECT:	CORPORATE PARENTING STRATEGY
REPORT FROM:	CABINET MEMBER FOR CHILDREN AND FAMILIES
CONTACT OFFICER:	MANDY WILLIAMS, INTERIM STRATEGIC LEAD (PLACEMENT SERVICES & CYPIC)
TYPE OF DECISION:	Key Decision
FREEDOM OF INFORMATION/STATUS:	This paper is within the public domain
SUMMARY:	This report sets out a newly developed strategy and delivery plan for the Council in discharging its duty as a Corporate Parent for children and young people in its care and our care leavers.
Options and Recommended Options	Cabinet is asked to adopt the Revised Corporate Parenting Strategy and Corporate Parenting Panel Delivery Plan. Cabinet is also asked to note the revised terms of reference for the Corporate Parenting Panel, which will go to Council for approval on 16 October.
IMPLICATIONS:	
Corporate Aims/Policy Framework:	Do the proposals accord with the Policy Framework? Yes
Statement by the S151 Officer: Financial Implications and Risk Considerations:	The Strategy and supporting Action Plan sets out the Council's approach to care & care leavers – mitigating risks in this service area and ensuring adequate governance arrangements are in place. Any costs of delivering the Action Plan are to be met from existing resources.

Statement by Executive Director of Resources:		
Equality/Diversity implications:	Yes	No (see paragraph below)
Considered by Monitoring Officer:	Yes	The documents attached to this report will enable the Council to meet its duty and responsibilities as Corporate Parent to children and young people in care and care leavers in the Borough.
Wards Affected:	All	
Scrutiny Interest:		

JH

TRACKING/PROCESS

DIRECTOR:

Chief Executive/ Strategic Leadership Team	Cabinet Member/Chair	Ward Members	Partners
Scrutiny Committee	Cabinet/Committee	Council	

1.0 BACKGROUND

- 1.1 All Councillors and Council Officers share a statutory Corporate Parenting responsibility for children and young people in our care and our care leavers in Bury.
- 1.2 Edward Timpson (Children’s Minister) outlines that children in care and care leavers are a priority across the whole council not just Children’s Services. He recognises that Councillors come into politics to help the most vulnerable in society, and that children in care and care leavers are amongst the most vulnerable.
- 1.3. As Corporate Parents, Councillors are expected to publish a strategy which describes how they will fulfil their statutory duties to children in our care and care leavers.
- 1.4. The revised Corporate Parenting Strategy (Bury 2013) replaces and updates previous versions; it takes account of the changes in legislation since 2011 and the revised and enhanced expectations of Ofsted inspection of services to ‘Looked After Children’ and Care Leavers.
- 1.5. The strategy has been developed in consultation with members of the Corporate Parenting Panel and with young people.
- 1.6. The quality of Leadership, Management and Governance is a ‘Key’ and ‘Limiting’ judgement by Ofsted during inspections of Children’s Services. Ofsted now provide clear statements of expectations of Senior Managers and Leaders.

These statements imply greater evidence of scrutiny and challenge by Senior Managers and Leaders of services to 'Looked After Children' than is supported by current systems and processes.

- 1.7. The revised Terms of Reference of the Corporate Parenting Panel support the panel in having an increased role in such scrutiny and challenge.
- 1.8. The Terms of Reference have been developed in consultation with members of the Corporate Parenting Panel and with young people. The Council Solicitor has also provided advice.

2.0 ISSUES

The implications of the Corporate Parenting Strategy and the Revised Terms of Reference for the Corporate Parenting Panel are:

Increased expectation of external and internal partners to prioritise and improve the impact and effectiveness of their services for 'Looked After Children' and Care Leavers.

Increased expectation of Business Support functions in Children's Services (Social Care) in delivering performance information.

The Corporate Parenting Panel will be required to nominate a chair for the panel for the remainder of the Council year. The Lead Member will take on the role of a participating observer.

It is proposed to increase the number of elected members on the panel by three. This should be so that member representation on the Corporate Parenting Panel remains consistent with the political composition of the Council.

Risks: The Council and its partners will be inspected with regard to how it fulfils its functions as Corporate Parent.

Equality Issues: None

3.0 CONCLUSION

All Councillors have a statutory duty (Corporate Parent) to Children in Our Care and to Care Leavers.

The proposed revised Terms of Reference for the Corporate Parenting Panel and the proposed revised Corporate Parenting Strategy provide a robust platform supporting Councillors, Senior Leaders, Senior Managers and Council Officers to fulfil their statutory duties to Looked After Children and Care Leavers and improve outcomes for this vulnerable cohort of children and young people.

List of Background Papers:-

Corporate Parenting Strategy
Corporate Parenting Terms of Reference
Corporate Parenting Panel Delivery Plan

Contact Details:-

Mandy Williams
Interim Strategic Lead Placement Services
0161 253 5683