

CORPORATE PARENTING BOARD

MINUTES OF MEETING HELD ON WEDNESDAY 28 MAY 2025

Present: Cllrs Bridget Bolwell (Chair), Duncan Sowry-House (Vice-Chair), Stella Jones, Matt Bell, Julie Robinson, Byron Quayle and Cathy Lugg

Officers present (for all or part of the meeting):

Paul Dempsey (Executive Director of People - Children), Paula Golding (Corporate Director for Care and Protection), Sunita Khattra-Hall (Corporate Director for Quality Assurance and Safeguarding Families), Jane MacLennan, Jo Smark-Richards, Kaye Wright (Youth Voice Manager) and Antony Nash (Senior Democratic Services Officer)

Officers present remotely (for all or part of the meeting):

Catrina Fountain (Communications Business Partner, Children's)

1. Welcome and Introductions

The Chair welcomed all in attendance with a special mention for the new committee members and thanked the outgoing members for their input over the last year

2. Minutes of previous meeting

The minutes of the meeting held on 9 April 2025 were confirmed and signed as a correct record of the meeting.

3. Declarations of Interest

There were declarations of interest.

4. Public Participation

There was no public participation.

5. Introduction & recent inspection report

The Executive Director for Children's services described the outcome of the most recent Ofsted report and a specific mention of the role of corporate parenting board in the report.

There was a discussion about the scope for improvement and the need for continued development of areas where needed.

6. Corporate Parenting Dataset

The Corporate Director - Care & Protection described the corporate parenting dataset and the following areas were discussed;

- The completion of Personal education plans and the barriers to their completion
- The educational attendance of Children in care
- The repetition of CIC and repeatedly entering care
- Distance from home as an area of concern and the reasons for children being placed such a distance from their parental home.
- Age tracking on the adoption statistics and sibling groups

7. Corporate Parenting Board Annual Report

The Corporate Director - Care & Protection described the Corporate Parenting Board Annual Report

The board discussed;

- the education and work aspirations of care leavers.
- the barriers and reasons for care leavers not engaging in employment or education.
- the addition of unaccompanied asylum seekers and the impact on workloads.

8. Youth Voice Strategy for Care Experienced Children and Young People

The Youth Voice Team Manager introduced the strategy and the Board shared recognition of the “We all bloom differently” work and the potential of repeating it as part of national care leavers month in November. There was also a discussion on language and stigmatisation and what actions were needed manage and improve this issue.

9. Care Leavers Annual Report

The Head of Service - Care Leavers & UASC introduced the item and the areas that are being developed. There was a discussion on the ongoing engagement of formerly cared for children from 21, 25 and beyond.

The value of Children's life stories in shaping services and policy was also recognised.

10. Aspire Adoption Statement of Purpose 1 April to 31 March 2026 and Annual Report 1 April 2024 to 31 March 2025.

The Head of Service - Care Leavers & UASC set out the report on behalf of Aspire and the key ambitions of Aspire over the coming year.

The board discussed the age and gender of those adopted and the reasons behind the changing demographics. The importance of support for adoptive families and the reduction of funding from central government was also raised.

11. Fostering Service Annual Report

The Service Manager – Fostering introduced the report sharing the key points and commitments from the report.

The Board discussed the following areas;

- Allegations and the importance of DBS checks and full vetting of fostering applications.
- Kinship and deregistration's and the mocking bird model in practice.
- Unsuccessful applicants and their next steps if they still wish to be involved in fostering.

12. Fostering Panel Chair Annual Report

The Board noted the contents of the report.

13. Date of Next Meeting

The next meeting of the Formal Corporate Parenting Board was held on 27 November 2025. The next informal meeting was held on 31 July 2025.

14. Urgent items

There were no urgent items.

15. Exempt Business

There was no exempt business.

Duration of meeting: 3.00 - 4.42 pm

Chair

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