

# **Corporate Parenting Board**

## **Thursday 10<sup>th</sup> March 2022**

### **Future Governance of Corporate Parenting Board**

#### **For Recommendation to Council**

**Portfolio Holder:** Cllr A Parry, Children, Education, Skills and Early Help

**Local Councillor(s):**

**Executive Director:** T Leavy, Executive Director of People - Children

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**Report Status:** Public

#### **Recommendation:**

Members are requested to note the content of this report and actively consider taking up the role of champion for areas of interest within the proposed themes of informal meetings.

#### **Reason for Recommendation:**

It is intended that this approach will strengthen the engagement of young people and provide wider opportunities for board members to be the best parents they can be for our children in care and care leavers.

#### **Executive Summary**

It is recognised that holding Corporate Parenting Board meetings in public may impact on opportunities for meaningful engagement for board members and young people. Informal meetings will offer wider engagement opportunities and strengthen further our Corporate Parenting ethos in Dorset.

The annual formal meeting will ensure that all Statutory Corporate Parenting Reports are available for publication.

**1. Financial Implications**

None identified

**2. Well-being and Health Implications**

None identified

**3. Climate implications**

None identified

**4. Other Implications**

None identified

**5. Risk Assessment**

Having considered the risks associated with this decision, the level of risk has been identified as: Low

Current Risk: Low

Residual Risk: Low

**6. Equalities Impact Assessment**

N/A

**7. Appendices**

None

**8. Background Papers**

**Future governance of Corporate Parenting Board**

**1. Role of the Corporate Parenting Board**

1.1. As Corporate Parents, all councillors should seek to stay informed about children in the council's care and care leavers. The establishment of a Corporate Parenting Board provides a forum for regular detailed discussion of issues, workshops and engagement with children in care and young people leaving care. Members of the board include young people and senior officers from a range of agencies, and in particular those that have a significant impact on children in care and care leavers. This ensures that the right people attend who are able to influence change informed by the views of young people who are either in attendance or being represented by Youth Voice groups.

## **2. Current governance of the Corporate Parenting Board.**

- 2.1. The Corporate Parenting Board currently meets a minimum of 7 times per year. Many of these meetings are held as formal committees, and are meetings held in public. The agendas for these formal meetings often have reports for noting and challenge, but very few require a formal decision to be made.
- 2.2. It has been recognised at Dorset Council, and at other local authorities in the country, that holding Board meetings in public may limit the ability to have open and honest conversations without disclosing personal details of children in care and care leavers, in particular, it has been found that holding meetings more informally, in different locations and at different times etc, can facilitate children and young people feeling able to participate more fully, and offer wider engagement opportunities for Corporate Parenting Board Members making discussions much richer. Corporate Parenting Board Members are better able to understand the issues, challenges and concerns and celebrate successes as they are experienced by young people, and also enables greater challenge of the Board Members in respect of the Council's Corporate Parenting role.

## **3. Proposed governance of the Corporate Parenting Board.**

3.1 It is suggested that there is a single formal annual meeting of the Corporate Parenting Board held in public that will:

- Receive annual statutory reports with regard to children in care and care leavers including annual reports from IRO, Fostering, Adoption, Private Fostering, Fostering Panel Chair, Quality Assurance and Annual Corporate Parenting Report, Virtual School and Health and Wellbeing. There are also updates with regards performance and other areas of interest in relation to children in care and care leavers.
- Agree an annual report summarising the Board's activities that will be presented by the Chair of the Corporate Parenting Board and the Portfolio Holder for Children, Education, Skills and Early Help to a meeting of Cabinet.

3.2 It is suggested that all other Corporate Parenting Board meetings are held informally, using different locations and methods of engaging stakeholders and children and young people to ensure that the Board is accessible and able to encourage the very best input from everyone taking part in the meetings.

## **4. Themes of Future Meetings**

4.1. The proposed themes of the informal meetings are as follows:

- **Engagement:** 2 workshops which include review of annual children in care survey and The Promise, and Review of The Corporate Parenting Strategy

- **Sufficiency:** Workshop which focuses on the experiences of young people in our residential care in Dorset and Quality Assurance of our residential care settings
- **Safeguarding:** Workshop which focuses on young people's experiences of feeling safe at home and in their community
- **Education, Employment and Training:** Workshop which explores young people's experiences of inclusion, celebrates exam results, and explores opportunities for work experience, apprenticeships, further learning and employment for our school leavers across the partnership and local communities.
- **Health and Wellbeing:** Workshop on happiness- strengthening the emotional well being of our children
- **Care Leavers:** Workshop focused on development of the core offer for our care leavers

## 5. Corporate Parenting Board Members – Champion Roles

- 5.1. Corporate Parenting Board Members are invited to nominate themselves as a champion for a theme that is of particular interest to them. Champions will be able to work with the lead officer and young people to contribute to the content of the workshop and act as an ambassador for young people promoting high aspirations and securing best outcomes through service development within the area of interest. Nominations of interest will be warmly received by Matthew Chislett and can be sent to [matthew.chislett@Dorsetcouncil.gov.uk](mailto:matthew.chislett@Dorsetcouncil.gov.uk).