

# Corporate Parenting Board

20 June 2024

## Corporate Parenting Strategy 2024 - 2027

### For Review and Consultation

**Portfolio Holder:**

Cllr. C Sutton, Children's Services, Education & Skills

**Local Councillor(s):**

**Executive Director:**

T Leavy, Executive Director of People - Children

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**Report Status:** Public

**Brief Summary:**

This report presents Dorset's Corporate Parenting Strategy 2024 – 2027. The strategy aims to build on the successes of the previous Children in Care and Care Leavers Strategy 2020-2023. It has been developed with help from young people and is for all children and young people in our care and all our care leavers. It sets out how we plan to further improve the care we provide and is underpinned and informed by the vision outlined in Dorset's Children, Young People and Families Plan 2023-33.

**Recommendation:**

Members of Corporate Parenting Board are requested to note the content of this Strategy and take this forward as Dorset's Corporate Parenting Strategy 2024 – 2027.

**Reason for Recommendation:**

## 1. **Report**

- 1.1 Dorset's Corporate Parenting Strategy 2024 – 2027 is attached as Appendix 1

## 2. **Financial Implications**

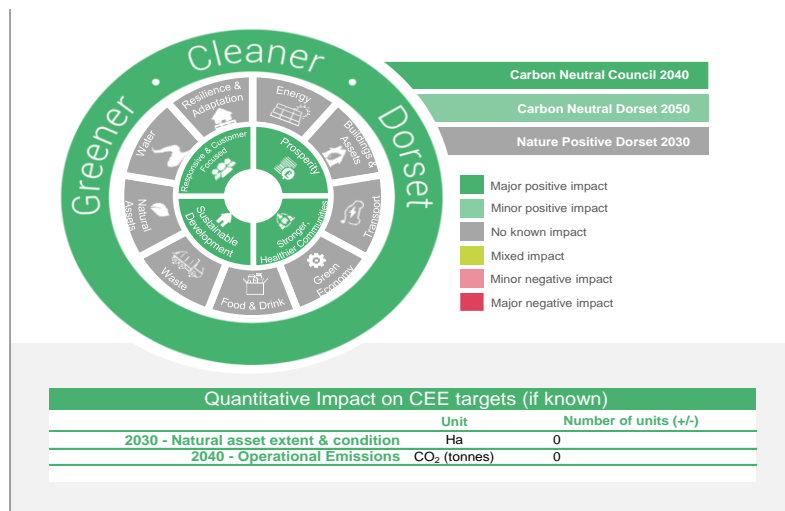
- 2.1 Dorset Council have adopted a policy of committing to reduce the number of Children in Care, taking a rights-based approach, and developing services which support children to be able to grow up in a family setting.
- 2.2 Keeping a stable child in care population in terms of numbers has helped us to avoid the increase in placement spend that most other local authorities have experienced.
- 2.3 The National Transfer Scheme has had immediate effects on Dorset Council with a sharp rise in the number of unaccompanied children in our care and supported by us as care leavers.
- 2.4 The challenges for fostering recruitment have been noted nationally within both local authority and IFA services. The Board recognises that it is all the more important for Dorset to be the fostering agency of choice for foster carers and supported lodgings carers and are committed to being ambassadors for the recruitment of Dorset carers.
- 2.5 The Board has supported investment in the residential estate for Dorset Children in Care and Care Leavers and members have actively participated at opening events and maintained oversight by visiting throughout the year.
- 2.6 In all that we do today we aim to equip children and young people 'for life', and wherever possible reduce the likelihood of needing to support Care Leavers in vulnerable adult populations. Investment in the Care Leavers Service has ensured we are in a strong position to deliver ever better services.

### 3. Natural Environment, Climate & Ecology Implications

3.1 As Corporate Parents we strive to ensure that our children experience love and care with permanent carers, close to the people and places that are important to them, recognising the link to improved mental health and educational attainment<sup>1</sup>.

3.2 Having sufficient placements in Dorset also reduces the amount of travel undertaken by families, social workers, and other children’s services staff. There are currently 187 children living in care outside Dorset. 44.96% of children (excl unaccompanied children) live over 20 miles away from home, with 27.91% living over 20miles away and out of county. While the majority of children live in neighbouring authorities, there are some children living as far afield as Blackpool, Sheffield, Leeds and Manchester.

3.3 Reduced travel should result in a reduction in the associated emissions from travel which is in line with the council’s priority of protecting the natural environment, climate and ecology.



### 4. Well-being and Health Implications

4.1 Young people have also told us that their physical, emotional and mental wellbeing is most important to them. Many of our children have experienced trauma of being separated from their families and communities. We also know that young people from global majority ethnicities have experienced systemic racism in society. Being happy

and confident in identity is key to emotional and mental wellbeing, particularly when it comes to race, sexuality, disability and gender. It is crucial that we encourage our children and young people to be comfortable in who they are and demonstrate sensitivity and inclusivity of difference for our young people to thrive.

**5. Other Implications**

5.1 These are considered in the Corporate Parenting Strategy 2024 – 2027.

**6. Risk Assessment**

6.1 **HAVING CONSIDERED:** the risks associated with this decision; the level of risk has been identified as:

Current Risk: Low  
Residual Risk:Low

**7. Equalities Impact Assessment**

**8. Appendices**

**8.1 Appendix 1: Corporate Parenting Strategy 2024-2027**

**8.2 ACCESSIBLE TABLE SHOWING IMPACTS**

<b>Natural Environment, Climate &amp; Ecology Strategy Commitments</b>	<b>Impact</b>
Energy	No known impact
Buildings & Assets	No known impact
Transport	No known impact
Green Economy	No known impact
Food & Drink	No known impact
Waste	No known impact
Natural Assets & Ecology	No known impact
Water	No known impact
Resilience and Adaptation	No known impact

<b>Corporate Plan Aims</b>	<b>Impact</b>
Prosperity	strongly supports it
Stronger healthier communities	strongly supports it
Sustainable Development & Housing	strongly supports it
Responsive & Customer Focused	strongly supports it

### 8.3 TABLE OF RECOMMENDATIONS

<b>Recommendations</b>	<b>Responses -will this be incorporated into your proposal? How? And if not, why not?</b>
<b>Energy</b>	
No recommendations found for this category	
<b>Buildings &amp; Assets</b>	
No recommendations found for this category	
<b>Transport</b>	
No recommendations found for this category	
<b>Green Economy</b>	
No recommendations found for this category	
<b>Food &amp; Drink</b>	
No recommendations found for this category	
<b>Waste</b>	
No recommendations found for this category	
<b>Natural Assets &amp; Ecology</b>	
No recommendations found for this category	
<b>Water</b>	
No recommendations found for this category	
<b>Resilience &amp; Adaptation</b>	
No recommendations found for this category	

## 9. Background Papers

10. **Report Sign Off**

- 11.1 This report has been through the internal report clearance process and has been signed off by the Director for Legal and Democratic (Monitoring Officer), the Executive Director for Corporate Development (Section 151 Officer) and the appropriate Portfolio Holder(s)