

**SUNDERLAND'S GUIDE TO CORPORATE PARENTING**

**Report of the Associate Director – Children's Safeguarding**

**1. Purpose of the Report**

- 1.1 This report is to present Sunderland's Guide to Corporate Parenting for Elected Members to the Corporate Parenting Board in order that they can endorse the guide and agree that it be circulated to all elected members.

**2. Background**

- 2.1 Sunderland City Council and its partners want to support children and young people to enjoy and achieve the best possible outcomes. However, some children and young people, due to their needs and circumstances face difficult challenges and will require our support if they are to achieve their potential.
- 2.2 When a child or young person is unable to live with their birth family for whatever reason and becomes looked after, parental responsibility falls to the local authority, this is referred to as 'corporate parenting'.
- 2.3 The role of the Corporate Parent became a statutory requirement through the Children's Act, 1989, and it is commonly understood to mean that officers and elected members of a local authority have the responsibility to take the same interest in the progress, attainments and wellbeing of looked after children and young people, as any reasonable parent would be expected to do.

**3. Sunderland's Guide to Corporate Parenting for Elected Members**

- 3.1 The attached guide has been prepared to provide you with information which will allow you to carry out your responsibilities as a corporate parent. It provides guidance for corporate parenting on the following:
- Why you need to know about your role as a corporate parent?
  - What contact you should have with looked after children and care leavers?
  - What training is available to support you?
  - What you should do as an elected member, ward councillor and school governor.
  - What you should do as a member of the Corporate Parenting Board or Scrutiny Committee.
  - What you should do as an officer of the local authority.
- 3.2 The Guide was recently presented to the Children, Education and Skills Shadow Scrutiny Committee at its meeting of 21 January 2016 and endorsed the guide and agreed that it be circulated to all elected members.

#### **4. Recommendations**

4.1 The Corporate Parenting Board is asked to:

- Endorse Sunderland's guide to corporate parenting for elected members.
- Agree that it be circulated to all elected members.