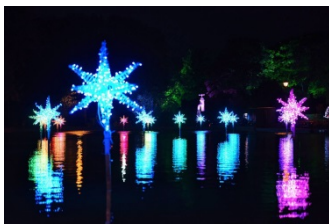


Sunderland City Council

Sunderland Corporate Parenting Board - Terms of Reference

Children's Services



1. Aims and Principles

1.1 The Corporate Parenting Board is one means by which Member involvement and commitment can be secured, to deliver better outcomes for children in care.

1.2 The aim of the Corporate Parenting Board is to oversee and ensure that Sunderland City Council has provided the following for children and young people in its care:

- Agree and ensure the delivery of the pledge to Children in care
- Improving the quality of provisions inside the City for Children in Care
- Providing warm, welcoming and safe accommodation
- Good quality care, nurturing supportive and meaningful relationships that encourage the growth of self-esteem,
- confidence and resilience; enabling young people to cope with change and difficult times
- The highest standard of education, wherever possible, in mainstream schools
- Opportunities and encouragement for self-development and keeping fit and healthy
- Opportunities for the transition to work, including open days and work placements
- Assistance with the transition, where possible, from being in care to being looked after by family
- Support with the transition from care to looking after themselves
- Placement stability that will avoid disruption and maintain continuity of care, education placements and relationships
- Support for families to enable children in care to leave care and return to their families

1.3 To achieve this, the Corporate Parenting Board agrees to:

- Listen to the views of children in care, young people and their carers, and to involve them in the development and assessment of services
- Encourage children in care to become active citizens and offer them new opportunities which are enjoyable and fun.
- Receive and act on performance data on Children in Care (both in and out of the City). This will include information such as equalities data,

needs, attainment levels, safety and provisions in place for children in care.

- being well-informed about all looked after children and young people in Sunderland
- giving consideration to the effect of Council decisions on children and young people
- listening to what children and young people have to say about their care experiences and needs

2. Meetings and Membership

2.1 The Corporate Parenting Board will meet quarterly. The agenda and minutes will be circulated at least three working days prior to the meeting.

2.2 The Board will be chaired by the Portfolio Holder for Children's Services, or nominated Deputy.

2.3 Membership will include:

- Chair of Children's Services Scrutiny Sub-Committee
- Representatives from the Change Council
- Portfolio holder for Health
- Portfolio holder for Children's Services
- One Councillor nominated from each area Committee
- Others who have a key contribution in delivering the Corporate Parenting Strategy, as may be determined by the Board

2.4 The Membership of the Board will be reviewed annually but will essentially remain as a Member-led Board. Furthermore, the Corporate Parenting Board will be attended by 'advisors' such as the Executive Director of Children's Services and/or the Head of Looked After Children's Services.

2.5 Every Councillor should have an understanding of Corporate Parenting, and as such the Council will circulate quarterly Corporate Parenting briefings. A Corporate Parenting handbook will also be made available to all elected Members.

3. Governance

- 3.1 The Corporate Parenting Board will report to Full Council. Information sharing arrangements will also be established with the Health & Wellbeing Board, the Change Council and the Fostering and Adoption panels.
- 3.2 The Board is not a committee of the Council under s.101 of the Local Government Act 1972 and will have no delegated powers and is not subject to the rules under the 1972 Act and Part 8 of the Council's Constitution requiring public access to agendas and meetings. However, agendas and reports will be subject to access by request under the Freedom of Information Act 2000 unless an exemption applies to specifically requested information. The political balance rules under ss.15-17 of the Local Government & Housing Act 1989 will not apply to the membership of the Board.

4. Roles and Responsibilities

- 4.1 Members of the Corporate Parenting Board will be expected to do the following:
- Ensuring the views and comments of children will be represented as part of the Board's discussions
 - To raise the profile of children in care and their carers, and to act as Champions for the needs and rights of children in care in their respective service areas:
 - To be creative and flexible in meeting the needs of Children in care.
 - To identify resources for Corporate Parenting and use these to good effect.
 - To develop and regularly review a Corporate Parenting Strategy
 - To regularly review and update information available to Members on Corporate Parenting
 - To develop, maintain and oversee an strategy/action plan for improving services for Looked After Children
 - Read agenda papers prior to meetings so that you are ready to contribute and discuss Corporate Parenting business
 - Uphold and support Corporate Parenting decisions;
 - Listen respectfully to the views of fellow board members;
 - Be willing to take on special tasks or attend additional meetings or functions;
 - Declare any conflicts of interest should they arise.