

CORPORATE PARENTING ANNUAL REPORT 2012-2013

REPORT OF THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR PEOPLE'S SERVICES

1 Purpose

- 1.1 To provide Scrutiny Committee with the Annual Corporate Parenting Annual Report.
- 1.2 The Annual report informs all members of the current position of the Council as 'Corporate Parent' and demonstrates that elected members are aware of their role as corporate parents. It updates members on the current performance of the Council in meeting this responsibility, and on action taking place to further improve outcomes for those children and young people for whom the Council has a parenting responsibility.

2 Background

- 2.1 The concept of Corporate Parenting was introduced in 1998 by the Secretary of State for Health, Frank Dobson, who outlined the duties of members as follows:

"For children who are looked after, your council has a legal and moral duty to try to provide the kind of loyal support that any good parents would give to their children...you should do your utmost to make sure that those children in public care get a good start in life...".
- 2.3 For 'Corporate Parenting' to replicate the quality of care afforded by a 'good parent', each agency and professional involved needs to consider how they can be proactive, within their own remit, on behalf of looked after children, and for all agencies to strive for ever stronger collaborative working so that the whole of the 'corporate parent' can be greater than the sum of its parts.
- 2.4 The Corporate Parenting responsibility is shared by the Council as a whole. All members, not just those with an interest in Children's Services, are 'Corporate Parents'. All members have legitimate mandate to ask "*would this be good enough for my child?*"

3 The Corporate Parenting Board

- 3.1 The Corporate Parenting Board first met in September 2006 and has met quarterly since that date. At the first meeting the terms of reference were confirmed as set out in the Council Constitution and it was further agreed that the Board would report to the Children's Trust.

3.2 The Corporate Parenting Board continues to meet quarterly and in the past year has received reports concerning:

- The outcome of Safeguarding Inspections
- Children's Services quarterly performance.
- Independent Advocacy for children and young people
- Housing and accommodation issues for Care Leavers
- Report from the Change Council regarding the work looked after young people are undertaking to help improve services and represent young people in care

3.3 Some members of the Corporate Parenting Board have identified themselves as available to undertake 'Regulation 33' monitoring visits to our Children's Homes.

4 The Corporate Parenting Board Annual Report

4.1 This year's annual report was presented as a draft report to the Corporate Parenting Board in July 2013, prior to submission to Scrutiny Committee, so that members of the Board could add to and amend the content and ensure that it represented the views of Corporate Parenting Board members.

4.2 The Corporate Parenting Board annual report encompasses the annual performance report in relation to Sunderland's looked after children and young people, including the demographic breakdown, the placements they live in, how they do at school and in other areas of their lives. It also includes what young people tell us through Viewpoint. This year's annual report also contains a section on adoption performance.

4.3 This Annual report also contains a short summary of the review of the Corporate Parenting Board which was carried out this year.

5 Recommendations

5.1 Members of Scrutiny Committee are invited to accept this Annual Corporate Parenting report.