

## REPORT OF THE DIRECTOR OF CHILDREN'S SERVICES

### CORPORATE PARENTING ANNUAL REPORT

#### 1. Purpose of Report

- 1.1 To appraise members on the previous 12 months functioning of the Corporate Parenting Board.

#### 2. Background

- 2.1 Exert from the Inspection of Sunderland City Council Childrens Services by Ofsted, June 2015: *"As a corporate parent, the local authority has not analysed, prioritised and planned sufficiently to improve outcomes for children looked after and care leavers. Corporate parenting board members cannot give clear evidence of how or where they have made a positive difference for children. The 'Change Council' (children in care council) is underdeveloped. The local authority has not done enough to involve children and young people, leading to low attendance by children and no representation from care leavers. There are no mechanisms in place for the corporate parenting board to seek the views of the wider children looked after population."*
- 2.2 One of the recommendations of this inspection was that Sunderland City Council should ensure that it meets its role and responsibilities as a Corporate Parent.
- 2.3 Work has been ongoing for the last 12 months to ensure that the council meets these obligations.

#### 3. Current Position

- 3.1 We implemented an improvement programme to address the deficits highlighted within the inspection report and to improve the effectiveness of both the Board and the Corporate Parenting role.
- 3.2 Initially we worked on improving the development of the Children in Care Council (Change Council) and its membership and have ensured that members of this council attend the Corporate Parenting Board, bringing any issues raised within their own meeting. Both the current and previous Board Chair have attended the Change Council, to hear young people's views directly.
- 3.3 The Change Council have re launched the 'Looked After Childrens Pledge', owned by both Council Members and Officers, alongside Change Council members, to ensure that we deliver the very best of services to young people. The progress of this is actively monitored within each Board meeting:

- Pledge 1: *"If possible I want to live with my own family or relatives"* - owned by Saul Cranson. The CPB Officer – Catherine Witt, Principal Social Worker, CPB Councillor - Louise Farthing;
- Pledge 2: *"If I need to come into care we will make sure that you are safe and appropriately cared for"* - owned by Leighton Conlon. The CPB Officer - Martin Birch, Head of LAC, CPB Councillor- Paul Stewart;
- Pledge 3: *"I feel that I am being listened to"* - owned by Loren Nergaard. The CPB Officer – Debra Patterson, Director of Safeguarding, CPB Councillor - Rebecca Atkinson;
- Pledge 4: *"I want to get a good education and enjoy my free time"* - owned by Kirk Scotter. The CPB Officer - Dawn Shearsmith, Virtual Head and the CPB Councillor - Patricia Smith;
- Pledge 5: *"I want to keep fit and healthy"* - owned by Billy Hardy. The CPB Officer – Anne Brock, Safeguarding Children Lead Nurse CCG and the CPB Councillor - Daryl Dixon; and
- Pledge 6: *"I don't want to leave care until I'm ready"* - owned by Kieran Boyce. The CPB Officer - Sheila Lough, Strategic Service Manager and the CPB Councillor - Christine Marshall.

- 3.4 We have undertaken a comprehensive consultation exercise with all care leavers, looking at how we can improve both the services we provide them via the Next Steps team, but also, how we can improve our accommodation offer to them. This was shared with the Board, with some young people from the Change Council directly talking about their experiences. This exercise will be completed annually and will serve as a benchmark for future improvements on service delivery to care leavers.
- 3.5 In addition to the Pledge, we have sought Member involvement in the delivery of other services to looked after children, in the form of the Regulation 44 Visits. Council Members attend these visits to the Childrens Homes on a quarterly basis and help form the scrutiny of the care provided by the Council to these children. A précis of all these visits is provided to the Board biannually for further scrutiny by all members of the Board.
- 3.6 The terms of reference for the Board were rewritten and agreed by all Council Members, ensuring that the aims and objectives of the Board were clear to the wider membership.
- 3.7 An annual Board plan was developed and agreed (see Attached), ensuring that there is a forward plan of items required by the meeting, in order that the Board are able to meet the requirements of the Corporate Parenting role and fully scrutinise the delivery of all services to Looked After Children.
- 3.8 More recently we have started to develop and implement a Corporate Parenting Training Package, initially for Council Members, but the intention is for this to be delivered to a wider cohort, namely, senior leaders and managers across all council areas.

#### **4. Recommendation**

- 4.1 Members to appraise themselves of the report and ask any questions needed for further clarification on the work undertaken on the Corporate Parenting Board.

#### **5. List of Appendices**

- 5.1 Corporate Parenting Board Work Plan 2016 - 17.

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### CORPORATE PARENTING BOARD WORK PLAN 2016/17

| FOCUS AREA   | HOW CORPORATE PARENTING BOARD WILL LOOK AT IT  | WHEN  | WHO IS THE LEAD?   |
|--|--|---|--|
| Education Attainment and NEET's                                  | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Highlight performance report / scorecard</li> <li>2. Strategy for improving attainment</li> <li>3. Use of pupil premium – how spent – impact</li> <li>4. Care Leavers NEET</li> </ol>  | 10/10/16<br>04/07/16<br>10/10/16<br>04/07/16 & 03/04/17   | Virtual Head Teacher<br>Virtual Head Teacher<br>Virtual Head Teacher<br>Virtual Head Teacher /Head of LAC  |
| Accommodation Options for Looked After Children and Care Leavers | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Review current accommodation offer – care leavers</li> <li>2. Young inspectors Reports</li> <li>3. Update on Semi-independent homes and Supported lodgings</li> <li>4. Regulation 44 visits – analysis of issues arising</li> </ol>  | 25/04/16 & 03/04/17<br>25/04/16, 10/10/16 & 03/04/17<br>04/07/16 & 03/04/17<br><br>04/07/16 & 03/04/17  | Head of LAC.<br>Participation and Engagement Lead & Head of LAC<br>Service Manager Accommodation<br><br>Regulation 44 Visitor  |
| Annual performance report / adoption performance                 | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Annual performance report Adoption/Panel Update</li> <li>2. Fostering annual report/Panel Update</li> <li>3. IRO annual report and Performance update</li> <li>4. IRO Performance update</li> <li>5. Children's homes inspection reports</li> <li>6. Corporate parenting annual report and Scrutiny report</li> <li>7. Commissioning placements for outcomes</li> <li>8. Sufficiency Strategy and updates</li> <li>9. LAC Strategy and updates</li> <li>10. Annual Update on the Virtual School</li> </ol> | 04/07/16 & 03/04/17<br>10/10/16 & 03/04/17<br>04/07/16 & 03/04/17<br>10/10/16 & 30/01/17<br>25/04/16 & 03/04/17<br>10/10/16<br><br>04/07/16 & 03/04/17<br>25/04/16 & 30/01/17<br>25/04/16 & 30/01/17<br>25/04/16 & 30/01/17 | Head of LAC<br>Service Manager LAC<br>Service Manager IRO<br>IRO Service Manager<br>Service Manager Accommodation<br>Director of Safeguarding<br><br>Commissioning Manager<br>Commissioning Manager<br>Head of LAC<br>Virtual Head Teacher |
| Health Updates and Performance                                   | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Health of LAC</li> <li>2. Access Mental Health Service</li> </ol>  | 04/07/16 & 03/06/17<br>10/10/16 & 03/06/17  | LAC Nurse<br>LAC Nurse   |
| Change Council   | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Consultation with the Change Council on their wishes</li> <li>2. Pledge updates</li> <li>3. £3 Regional Meal Challenge</li> </ol>  | Rolling Agenda item<br>Rolling Agenda item<br>Rolling Agenda item   | Participation and Engagement Lead  |