

Part 7 – Terms of Reference

CORPORATE PARENTING BOARD

1. Purpose

To make sure that the whole Council and relevant partner agencies commit to excellent standards of corporate parenting, to deliver the pledge to children in care, and to develop and implement the Corporate Parenting Strategy.

2. Key Responsibilities and Priorities

- 2.1 To creatively identify resources for Corporate Parenting and use these to good effect, in order to achieve sustained outcomes for children in care and care leavers which prepare them towards and for adulthood.
- 2.2 To set high expectations and aspirations and establish stable relationships and a sense of belonging for all children in care.
- 2.3 To seek improved long term outcomes for children in care and their families – for their happiness; well-being; educational success; and future prospects.
- 2.4 To ensure warm, welcoming and safe accommodation, preferably within Waltham Forest or as near to the borough as is practicable, including moves on into appropriate housing.
- 2.5 To make sure that the voice of the child and young person in care influences both policy and the services that they receive, and that young people are engaged with any action intended to develop, assess and improve services or to recruit key staff members.
- 2.6 To develop an informed view of Council and non-Council provision and services through a wide range of approaches which may include but is not confined to a programme of work and meetings and events, visits, direct engagement with children and Council officers, feedback from Board members, case studies and liaison with the relevant Scrutiny Committees.
- 2.7 To oversee and monitor the key performance indicators for the health, wellbeing and educational outcomes of looked after children, and to hold to account those agencies responsible for providing services to looked after children, with regard to the Local Authority (Public Health, Health and Wellbeing Boards and Health Scrutiny) Regulations 2013 and other relevant regulations and guidance and in liaison with the Waltham Forest Safeguarding Children Board, Health Scrutiny Committee and the Health and Wellbeing Board in the discharge of their scrutiny functions in relation to health.

- 2.8 To consider the outcomes of regulatory visits and inspection reports on provision for children in care and to receive regular reports on:
- 2.8.1 The work of the adoption and fostering services;
 - 2.8.2 The work of social work teams and other professionals
 - 2.8.3 The Virtual School
 - 2.8.4 Work experience schemes and the development of opportunities for children and young people, including those not in employment, education or training;
 - 2.8.5 provision for leaving care, housing and training for care leavers up to age 25; and
 - 2.8.6 work with those in the Secure Estate.
- 2.9 To ensure that relevant key plans, strategies and associated resources identify and make explicit the contribution that they make to targets agreed for improvement.
- 2.10 To celebrate the achievements of looked after children and their carers.
- 2.11 To ensure that children looked after by the local authority are offered the protection of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, 2 September 1990.
- 2.12 To establish and maintain specific task groups as necessary to make recommendations to the Board.
- 2.13 To give consideration to the effect of Council decisions on children and young people, and to make recommendations to the Cabinet as appropriate.
- 2.14 To produce an annual report to the Council.

3. Membership and Meetings

- 3.1 The Corporate Parenting Board is appointed at the Council annual meeting, and the Council may vary its membership from time to time. The Board may co-opt voting and non-voting members who are not members of the Council.
- 3.2 The Corporate Parenting Board meets approximately every two months. It is not subject to the provisions of the Local Government Act 1972 or the Local Government and Housing Act 1979 although the agenda and minutes will be normally circulated at least five working days prior to the meeting.

Standing Membership (voting):

- Portfolio Lead Member for Children and Young People (Chair)
- Relevant Lead Member for Health and Well Being
- A member of the Children and Families Scrutiny Committee
- A member of the Health Scrutiny Committee
- At least one Councillor nominated by the majority group
- At least one Councillor nominated by the minority group
- Chair and Vice-Chair of the Children in Care Council
- Representative of Foster Carers (to be elected by registered Waltham Forest foster carers and appointed for a term of two years from the date of election)

3.3 Others who have a key contribution in delivering the Corporate Parenting Strategy may be either co-opted (or invited as appropriate) by the Board from time to time (non-voting) without reference to Council. These may include representatives from:

- NHS including Waltham Forest Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG)
- North East London NHS Foundation Trust (NELFT) including Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS)
- Healthwatch
- Metropolitan Police
- Youth Justice
- Waltham Forest Safeguarding Children Board
- The Voluntary Sector
- Virtual School

3.4 The conduct of co-opted members is governed by the Member-Officer Protocol (Part 9 of the Constitution). It is expected that representatives of other agencies will be appointed and act on a professional and accountable basis.

4. Governance

- 4.1 The Corporate Parenting Board is accountable to the Cabinet and will submit an annual report to full Council. It will establish arrangements for sharing information with relevant Scrutiny Committees (especially Children and Young People, and Health), the Health and Wellbeing Board, the Children in Care Council and the Fostering and Adoption panels.
- 4.2 The Board is not a committee of the Council under s.101 of the Local Government Act 1972 and has no delegated powers. It 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 may 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 and Housing Act 1989 do not apply to the membership of the Board.
- 4.3 The quorum is one quarter of the councillor membership or the nearest whole number above one-quarter.
- 4.4 All Councillors are corporate parents and are encouraged to attend meetings of the Board at the invitation of the Chair. Substitution arrangements apply and are as set out in section 5 of the Council Procedure Rules in Part 4 of the Council's Constitution. Executive Members may be substituted only by the Leader or other Cabinet Members and not by non-executive members.
- 4.5 The Board is administered by Democratic Services, who will ensure the timely production of agenda and minutes.