

NORTH LINCOLNSHIRE COUNCIL

PEOPLE CABINET MEMBER

CORPORATE PARENTING IN NORTH LINCOLNSHIRE

1. OBJECT AND KEY POINTS IN THIS REPORT

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to consolidate the Councils responsibilities as a Corporate Parent, and to:

Refresh commitment to the purpose and function of the Corporate Parenting Board and “Creative Conversation”.

2 BACKGROUND INFORMATION

- 2.1 For children who are “looked after” by the Council we have to care for them and enhance their life chances as any good parent would do. The Children Act 1989 makes it clear that this is a responsibility for the whole Council, and not just for the directorate that delivers services for children and young people.
- 2.2 The Statutory Guidance on The Roles and Responsibilities of the Lead Member for Children’s Services and the Director of Children’s Services (2013) specifies that the Lead Member with responsibility for children, “have a shared responsibility with all officers and members of the local authority to act as effective and caring corporate parents for looked after children, with key roles in improving their educational attainment, providing stable and high quality placements and proper planning for when they leave care”
- 2.3 Locally we have made a commitment to ensure our children are central to the development of services to improve their outcomes. We want our children to be looked after within a stable family home, have support to do well in school, be healthy, in further training and in employment. We want them to take part in positive activities that enable them to be playing an active role within their community and be ready for adulthood and parenthood.

- 2.4 Locally we have a Corporate Parenting Board attended by senior representation from all the council's directorates, as well as from other key agencies such as the police and health. As a result children have experienced improved life chances, taken part in regional and national events and we have secured a positive commitment to the role of the corporate parent.
- 2.5 This has also resulted in a number of supported activities. Children are engaged in positive activities including arts and crafts, drama and sports as well as participating in preparation for adult life including, swimming lessons, catering, interview skills and volunteering.
- 2.6 Recently the whole Council has worked together to ensure high quality provision through the design and development of Kingfisher Lodge, the Cabins, increased capacity to recruit and secure more foster families and adopters so children can live in families.
- 2.7 Training for elected members in their role as Corporate Parents with regard to safeguarding and corporate parenting responsibilities has been adopted as part of the annual training programme.
- 2.8 The Councils overall commitment is contained within the North Lincolnshire Corporate Parenting pledge. The Council has reviewed how to deliver these functions and ensure a continued success and tangible outcomes through active and regular feedback from the children and young people. Each Directorate has an action plan that underpins this.

3 OPTIONS FOR CONSIDERATION

- 3.1 Over all the Corporate Parenting falls into four areas: involvement of the Council, elected members and senior officers; partnership working; ensuring robust and sufficient services that meet statutory and regulatory standards, and; involving children and young people at the heart of all decision and activity.
- 3.2 It is proposed that the Corporate Parenting Board continues to be held quarterly and provides overview and scrutiny of how we meet the business functions 1, 2 and 3 and in addition and through a "creative conversation" involve children and young people to have their say and contribute toward the review and design of services. The purpose and function of the board, membership and chairing

arrangements are contained with the Terms of Reference attached.

- 3.3 The work of the Children in Care Council continues to be supported and their work should underpins and supports the success of the “creative conversation”.
- 3.4 Terms of reference for the Corporate Parenting Board including membership is attached.

4. ANALYSIS OF OPTIONS

- Managing the Corporate Parenting Board agenda in line with proposals outlined will allow the Council to fulfil its statutory responsibility and improve life chances to children in care. It will also enable Children and Young People to have a continued role, be at the heart of the process and continue to meet the Corporate Parenting Board in a creative conversation as a part of the Corporate Parenting Board meeting.
- Improved outcomes will mean that children and young people in care have:
 - Better choice of placements in families
 - A relationship with a Stable adult who works with and supports them
 - Better access to leisure and positive activities
 - Better access to work experience
 - More jobs available to care leavers
 - More support for education and training and make progress
 - Appropriate accommodation and support when they leave care
 - The gap is narrowed between them and their peers
 - Have timely access the health assessment and services.

5. RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS (FINANCIAL, STAFFING, PROPERTY, IT)

- 5.1 Elected Members, Officers and partners will have to commit time to the Corporate Parenting Board to ensure that we meet the pledge to Children’s and Young People in and having left care.

6. **OTHER IMPLICATIONS (STATUTORY, ENVIRONMENTAL, DIVERSITY, SECTION 17 - CRIME AND DISORDER, RISK AND OTHER)**

6.1 This is a statutory role where a positive impact will ensure that children and young people experience better outcomes.

7. **OUTCOMES OF CONSULTATION**

7.1 Children and Young People have expressed their desire to be involved in meeting/conversations that reduces bureaucracy (jargon and paperwork) and enables them to express their views and continue to contribute toward improved services and outcomes.

8. **RECOMMENDATIONS**

8.1 That the Cabinet Member approve the Corporate Parenting Board , Terms of Reference.

DIRECTOR OF PEOPLE

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Background Papers used in the preparation of this report: None