

NORTH LINCOLNSHIRE COUNCIL

**CHILDREN AND FAMILIES
CABINET MEMBER**

MULTI-AGENCY CHILDREN IN CARE AND CARE LEAVERS PLAN 2020-2022

1. OBJECT AND KEY POINTS IN THIS REPORT

- 1.1 To inform and seek the Cabinet Member's approval of the reviewed and revised Multi-Agency Children in Care and Care Leavers Plan 2020-2022.

2. BACKGROUND INFORMATION

- 2.1 Our ambition is for children to live within their home, attend their school and be a part of their community. As corporate parents, children in care and care leavers in North Lincolnshire are our children – and it is deeply rooted in the culture of the Council and its partner organisations to care about them in this way. We are collectively ambitious for children in care and care leavers and we expect their outcomes to be every bit as good as their peers – and better. Both whilst they are children in our care and as they progress to adulthood.
- 2.2 The Multi-Agency Children in Care and Care Leavers Plan 2020-2022 sets out our key priorities, promise and commitment to children in care and care leavers. It builds on our success and sets out an ambitious agenda for further improvement.
- 2.3 For those very few children who need to be in the care of the Council we will continue to invest in family-based care to achieve stability and permanence. This means working to keep children within their family networks, help them to return home, or within high quality family placements where this is not possible.
- 2.4 The plan also complements and works in conjunction with the North Lincolnshire 'Children in Care and Care Leavers Sufficiency Strategy 2020-2022'.

3. OPTIONS FOR CONSIDERATION

3.1 The Multi-Agency Children in Care and Care Leavers Plan 2020-2022 details the progress made in improving outcomes for our children in care and care leavers in line with the Council priorities of **Safe, Well, Prosperous, Connected**. Examples of our successes include:

- Fewer children are entering care demonstrating the success of our approach to helping families remain together.
- A small and reducing minority of children live outside the Council area
- The majority of North Lincolnshire's care leavers are in education, employment and training
- All our care leavers who live in the community have suitable accommodation and support overseen by their Personal Advisor
- Very few children in care in North Lincolnshire commit offences and this indicator continues to be lower than the England average
- Attendance at school continues to be high, with few missed days of school and very little persistent absence.
- There are very few children receiving an exclusion from school in the primary age range.
- Most children in care in North Lincolnshire experience stability in their workers, schools and care.

3.2 The plan is underpinned by a longstanding and effective approach to Corporate Parenting overseen by the Corporate Parenting Board. Shared commitment across partner organisations means that we work together to ensure that children in care and care leavers are a priority and have priority access to services.

4. ANALYSIS OF OPTIONS

4.1 The plan includes the '2020 – 2022 Delivery Plan'. The plan identifies the priority success measures and areas for further development. These include:

- Helping children to remain within, or have opportunities to return to, their families, schools and community
- Ensuring that all children in care and care leavers have the opportunity to be a part of the children in care council and events
- Placement sufficiency and stability as a priority to enable children in care have choice of care to meet their needs.
- Ensuring that all children in care and care leavers have education and training that meets their needs

- Enabling all children in care and care leavers to have access to equipment that enables them to connect with the 'on-line' world

5. FINANCIAL AND OTHER RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS (e.g. LEGAL, HR, PROPERTY, IT, COMMUNICATIONS etc.)

5.1 Financial - the plan is in line with the existing agreed budgets and reflects the commitment of the council and its partners to prioritise services to children in care and care leavers. Whilst there are no additional resource implications contained within the strategy, partners have re-affirmed commitment to prioritising children in care and care leavers in the delivery of services through the continuing Corporate Parenting Promise.

6. OTHER RELEVANT IMPLICATIONS (e.g. CRIME AND DISORDER, EQUALITIES, COUNCIL PLAN, ENVIRONMENTAL, RISK etc.)

6.1 In ensuring children in care and care leavers continue to be priority groups, the plan contributes to achieving positive outcomes for children and young people that will have a positive impact in:

- Prosperous - supporting children's confidence, success and engagement with education, employment and training
- Safe and Well - enabling families to stay together in their communities promotes resilience and a sense of belonging which supports safety and wellbeing
- Connected - children are supported to take an active part in their communities through the support of their carers and workers building community resilience and social capital

7. OUTCOMES OF INTEGRATED IMPACT ASSESSMENT (IF APPLICABLE)

7.1 An Integrated Impact Assessment Stage 1 Initial Screening Template has been completed in relation to this strategy and did not identify any negative potential impacts.

8. OUTCOMES OF CONSULTATION AND CONFLICTS OF INTERESTS DECLARED

8.1 The voice of the children in our care and young people who have left care is integral to all aspects of the work we do and the delivery of this plan. Children in care and care leavers have been engaged with, involved and consulted throughout and their views, ideas and feedback have informed the review of progress and development of this plan.

8.2 The Children in Care Council have also reviewed and provided feedback on the Corporate Parenting Promise contained within the plan.

9. **RECOMMENDATIONS**

- 9.1 That the Cabinet Member welcomes the positive review of the plan and endorses the revised Multi-Agency Children in Care and Care Leavers Plan 2020-2022.

DIRECTOR OF CHILDREN AND COMMUNITY RESILIENCE

Church Square House

SCUNTHORPE

North Lincolnshire

Post Code

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Date: 04/009/2020

Background Papers used in the preparation of this report –

- Multi-Agency Children in Care and Care Leavers Plan 2020 – 2022

Multi-Agency Children in Care and Care Leavers Plan 2020-2022

Status	Date	By Whom
Approved		
Lead	July 2020	Paul Cowling/Rachel Smith
Head of Children's Social Care	Sept 2020	Ann-Marie Brierley
Review Date	June 2021	

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Foreword

Welcome to our **Children in Care and Care Leavers Plan 2020/22**.

Under the auspices of the Integrated Children's Trust partners, our North Lincolnshire **Children's Commissioning Strategy 2020/24** clarifies our integrated **One Family Approach** and commissioning intent in relation to health, social care and education for children, young people and families.

Children, young people, families and communities are at the heart of what we do and we are proud to acknowledge and celebrate the positive outcomes achieved to date and the strength of partnership working. We are ambitious for the future and for our children and young people, and we have high expectations of ourselves as partners, working with children, families and communities, to improve outcomes (to be safe, well, prosperous and connected). We want to build on the collective strengths of our people and place to innovate and change through integration and system redesign. In North Lincolnshire, our One Family Approach aims to create **a system that works for all children, young people and families** where we work together to provide and commission integrated services for children and young people.

Our ambition is for children to be **in their family, in their school and in their community**. As partners take a One Family Approach across North Lincolnshire, we want children, young people and families to be able to build upon their strengths and their resilience to find or be enabled to find solutions when things are not going so well. They should be able to access available information, advice, guidance and be enabled to maximise their potential and enhance their life chances. We want all children and families to have a sense of belonging and equality of opportunity and through our integrated working, we will address inequalities and enable those more in need to achieve positive outcomes. Where there are significant concerns, we want children, young people and families to be able to access swift, creative and flexible help so they can remain independent. We will protect children and young people with an aim to build resilience and help them live within their family, attend their school and be a part of their community.

The **One Family Approach - Helping Children and Families in North Lincolnshire 2020/24** sets out how services support children, young people and families to participate, find help online and in their networks and communities, to be resilient and stay independent.

We want children, young people and families to be supported by a workforce that is resilient, confident, competent and with authorisation to do what they think is the right thing to do without escalating children and families unnecessarily through a range of organisational systems and referral processes when the day to day contact with trusted professionals can make the difference. We will listen to families, work to build upon the child and family's strengths, help them find solutions and only when necessary consult with others to seek assurance, check they're doing the right thing and continue to support the child and family. We want to create equality of opportunities by acknowledging inequalities and removing barriers and we will prioritise services to our most vulnerable children and young people so they have fair and equitable opportunities to be the best they can be, irrespective of their background and circumstances. We will develop an integrated workforce, one that works with the whole family and where we reduce unnecessary duplication of professionals involved with a child and family. We will do so by implementing an agreed practice model, based in psychological approach to consultation and formulation where the initial contact both with the child and family and or professional is one of enablement.

By listening, learning, reviewing and adapting; by taking account of the performance data and intelligence, by listening to our children, young people, families and taking account of the **Children's Challenge 2020/24**, we have identified specific areas of focus on which we want to 'shine a light' for commissioning and partnership action.

This **Children in Care and Care Leavers Plan 2020/22** sets out our key priorities, promise and commitment to all our children in care and care leavers and it articulates our ambitious agenda for further improvement.

As corporate parents, children in care and care leavers are our children and we are proud to acknowledge and celebrate the positive outcomes achieved to date and the strength of partnership working.

This plan builds on successes and achievements it is set within a framework of strong corporate parenting, excellent individual care planning and a firm focus on the voice, needs and wishes of children and young people.

For those very few children who need to be in the care of the Council, we will continue to invest in family-based care to achieve stability and permanence and help them to return home, or within high quality family placements where this is not possible.

We recognise the invaluable role our foster carers play in this and express our ongoing commitment to them as partners in providing the best care for our children. We will continue to develop adoption services as part of a regional approach with the aim of, where possible, keeping children within our area to maintain permanence within each child's school and community. We will continue to provide our comprehensive offer for Care Leavers through strengthening our leaving care services further.

This plan, in conjunction with the **Children in Care and Care Leavers Sufficiency Strategy 2020/22**, is monitored and reviewed through our well-established performance improvement mechanisms, including monthly performance monitoring and tracking and the quarterly self-evaluation and review process.

As the Cabinet Member for Children and Families and Director of Children and Community Resilience, we have specific roles and responsibilities for children in care and care leavers and we will continue to celebrate and engage our children in care and care leavers.

Underpinned by our values of equality of opportunity, excellence, self-responsibility and integrity, we all, as corporate parents, will continue to work together to further improve outcomes for our children and young people.



Julie Reed
Cabinet Member for Children
and Families
North Lincolnshire Council



Mick Gibbs
Director of Children and
Community Resilience
North Lincolnshire Council

Achieving the best outcomes

We will provide a wide range of services that help improve and enable the best possible outcomes for children in care and care leavers in their:

- o Learning, education and training,
- o Emotional, mental and physical health,
- o Social interactions and positive 'fun' activities,
- o Relationships with those who are important to them,
- o Positive engagement with communities and networks
- o Progression to successful adulthood.

To enable children to achieve the best outcomes possible within their own families and local communities, or within a suitable care environment we will:

Safe

- ▶ Continue with and build upon our ambition and belief that children should live with their family, their school and their community.
- ▶ Take a long-term view of permanence and the importance of family and community by seeking to strengthen and improve parent/families ability to care.
- ▶ Where children enter care, work immediately with the child, their family and partners to return the child to their family where it is possible to do so with the help they need.
- ▶ Strive to ensure that children in care live in a family setting where they feel cared for, valued and where their needs are fully met.
- ▶ Continue to achieve timely permanence for children and young people who enter care.

Well

- ▶ Be creative, flexible and developmental in being responsive to the changing environment as a result of Covid-19.
- ▶ Act as good, effective and proactive Corporate Parents.
- ▶ Have a thorough understanding of the individual needs of children and young people entering care, living in care or leaving care.

Prosperous

- ▶ Continue to have strong ambitions and high aspirations for all of our children in care and care leavers
- ▶ Ensure that all children in care and care leavers continue in or return to education employment or training during and following Covid-19.
- ▶ Work to restore children to their family at whatever stage they are in their life journey where this is possible and in line with their needs
- ▶ Develop integrated services for our young people leaving care that is holistic and builds resilience.
- ▶ Support Care Leavers to maintain their tenancy and contribute to their financial stability by paying full Council Tax benefit.

Connected

- ▶ Ensure that we listen to and learn from the voice of children in care and care leavers
- ▶ Build on, utilise and develop innovative and creative models that promote children's relationships with those who are important to them such as the 'You Say Who' model
- ▶ Maintain a culture of high support and challenge including robust oversight by the Independent Reviewing Service.
- ▶ Continue to provide robust leadership and management that ensures children are at the centre and services focus on the needs of the children in our care and care leavers, concentrating on the journey of each individual child and young person.

Our children in care and care leavers

Who are children in care and care leavers?

- ▶ Children who are in the care of, or are provided with accommodation by, the Council are looked after by the Council up to the age of 18 and are encouraged to remain living with their carer past this age in 'Staying Put' or 'Staying Close' arrangements.
- ▶ After 18 they cease to be 'in care' but the Council continues to have responsibility under the Children (Leaving Care) Act 2000 (as updated in 2010) to provide advice, guidance and assistance up to 25.
- ▶ For children who enter care on a voluntary basis, their parent retains parental responsibility. For those children where the Council has applied to the court for a 'Care Order', the Council can share this responsibility along with the parents and or act on behalf of the child where this is not possible
- ▶ In North Lincolnshire, about 6 out of every 1,000 children are in care at any given time and the overall care population continues to be in line with or lower than statistical and national comparators.
- ▶ Over the last 3 years there has been an increase in the number of unaccompanied asylum-seeking children presenting in North Lincolnshire. These young people become the responsibility of the Council in the same way as other children in care and become care leavers as they reach adulthood.



How well are we doing for our children in care and care leavers?

There is a strong commitment across partners to improving outcomes for our children in care and care leavers. Examples of our successes include:

Safe

- ▶ The rate of children in care is reducing and is in line with statistical neighbours and the England average.
- ▶ Fewer children are entering care demonstrating the success of our approach to helping families remain together.
- ▶ All formal reviews of children in care's Care Plans are consistently held within required timescales.
- ▶ All children in care have an allocated, qualified Social Worker.
- ▶ Children in care and care leavers have continued to receive prioritised visits, support, and help in line with their individual needs throughout the Covid-19 period.
- ▶ All Care Leavers have an allocated Personal Advisor (PA) up to the age of 21 years and this continues up to the age of 25 if the young person wishes.

Well

- ▶ All our care leavers who live in the community have suitable accommodation and support overseen by their Personal Advisor
- ▶ All children in care have up-to-date health checks, assessments and reviews of their health needs and individual health plans supported by a Designated Looked after Children's Doctor and Nurse.
- ▶ All care leavers have a 'Health Passport'
- ▶ All children in care have a 'Strengths and Difficulties' (SDQ) questionnaire to assess their emotional health. All children who are assessed as having 'high' needs are prioritised for a CAMHS service.

Prosperous

- ▶ The majority of North Lincolnshire's care leavers are in education, employment and training - with rates well above England and Statistical Neighbour comparisons.
- ▶ Few children in care have moved school within the last year.
- ▶ Improving performance in relation to children achieving educational qualifications.
- ▶ All children in care have an allocated worker from the Education and Inclusion Service
- ▶ Very few children in care in North Lincolnshire commit offences and this indicator continues to be lower than the England average
- ▶ Children in care's attendance at school continues to be high, with few missed days of school and very little persistent absence.
- ▶ There are very few children receiving an exclusion from school in the primary age range.

Connected

- ▶ A small and reducing minority of children live outside the Council area. The proportion of children in care living outside of the area continues to be very low and compares favourably with England and statistical neighbours.
- ▶ Most children in care in North Lincolnshire experience stability in their workers, schools and care.
- ▶ All care leavers living in their own accommodation are provided with free wifi to ensure they are able to be connected

To further improve outcomes for children in care and care leavers, we have to continue to focus on the following issues:

- ▶ Permanence and stability for all children in care and care leavers
- ▶ Education outcomes for all children in care
- ▶ Opportunities in education, employment and training for care leavers
- ▶ Ensure that robust planning and support is in place to enable all young people to return to education and training following the disruption of COVID 19
- ▶ Further development of the One Family Approach to enable children to remain within and return to live with their families from care
- ▶ Working with partners and the community to meet the challenge of reducing harm and potential harm to young people who take part in risk facing behaviours
- ▶ Ensuring the needs of Unaccompanied Asylum Seeking Children are met through a partnership approach
- ▶ Stability and choice for care leavers within their own accommodation as detailed in the **Children in Care and Care Leavers Sufficiency Strategy 2020-2022**

Corporate Parents

The Role of Corporate Parents

The role of a good Corporate Parent is to enable the outcomes that every good parent would want for their own children.

A good parent:

- puts their child or young person first;
- keeps them safe and advocates for them;
- meets all their needs;
- helps them to 'be the best they can be'
- supports them through to adulthood and independence.

Throughout their care journey, the Council and partners have a duty to provide for the child or young person's needs in the way that a good parent would. As Corporate Parents, we must work together to provide everything that a good parent would. We must collectively care about these children and young people, as well as care for them.

The Responsibilities of Corporate Parents

The moral imperative to improve outcomes for children in care is underpinned by specific roles and duties:

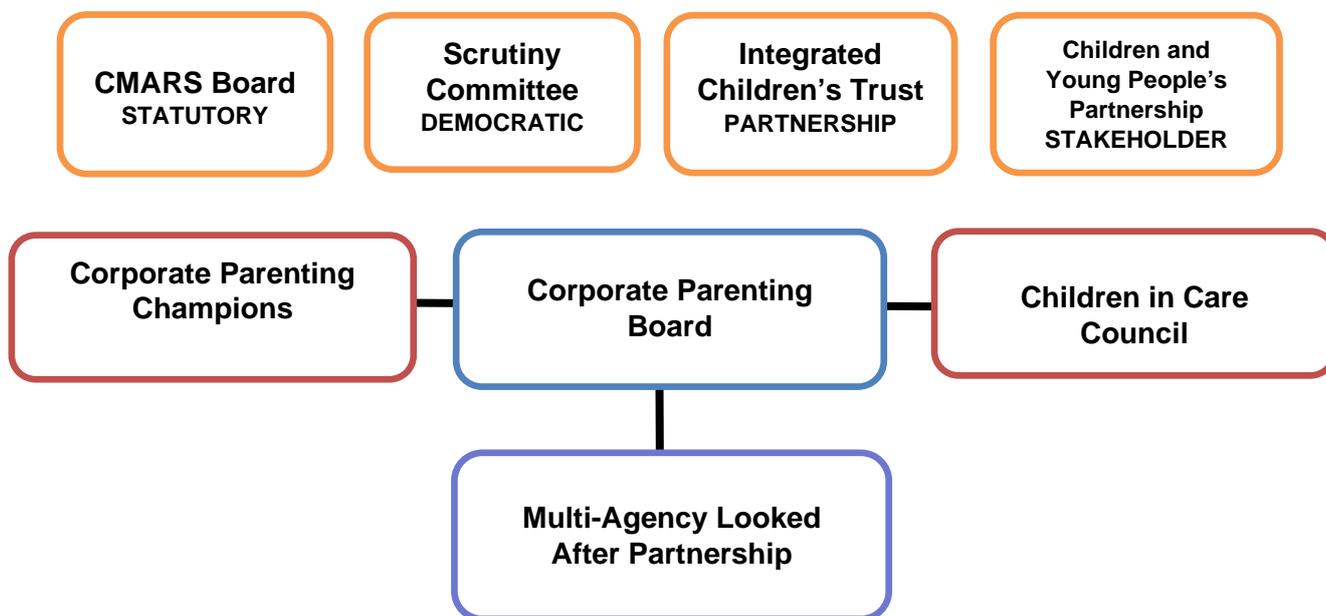
- ▶ The Children Act 2004 makes it clear that the council must take the lead, via its Lead Member for and Director of Children's Services (in North Lincolnshire this is the **Cabinet Member for Children and Families** and **Director of Children and Community Resilience**), in bringing together a partnership designed to address the needs of children in care and care leavers. This is the **Corporate Parenting Board**.
- ▶ The statutory guidance on the roles and responsibilities of the Director of Children's Services and the Lead Member for Children's Services 2013 covers the legislative basis for the two appointments, roles and responsibilities of the post holders, and how this relates to Government expectations about local authorities' role in education and children and young people's services. This includes all children in the care of the Council (regardless of where they are placed).
- ▶ Further Statutory Guidance places specific powers upon partner agencies to provide specific services for children in care or contribute to working together to meet the needs of these children. Under s10 of the 2004 Act, partners of the council are under a duty to cooperate in this endeavour, and schools have a duty to promote the well-being of children in care, Clinical Commissioning Group have statutory guidance to underpin their role and commitment to children in care.
- ▶ The Children and Social Work Act 2017 further strengthens the expectations to work together as Corporate Parents to achieve positive outcomes for children in care and care leavers. This includes defined Corporate Parenting Principles including to act in the best interests and promote physical and mental health and well-being, encouraging children to express their views, wishes and feelings and taking these into account making the best use of services to promote high aspirations and seek to secure the best outcomes. Also to achieve stability in

their home lives, relationships and education or work and prepare children and young people for adulthood. It also expects the council to publish a local offer to care leavers.

- ▶ The 2016 Government publication ‘Keep on Caring – Supporting young people from Care to Independence, 2016’ clearly outlines the Government’s commitment to promoting and improving outcomes for Care Leavers. They set out 5 key outcomes that need to be achieved through effective corporate parenting. They are:
 - All young people should be better prepared and supported to live independently
 - Improve access to education, employment and training.
 - care leavers should experience stability in their lives, and feel safe and secure
 - improved access to health support
 - care leavers should achieve financial stability

Governance arrangements for effective Corporate Parenting

North Lincolnshire has an established model of Corporate Parenting. It includes well-defined decision-making processes in the council with clear links to the Children in Care Council. Senior Leaders regularly reviews how we deliver these functions and that there are tangible outcomes through active and regular feedback from children and young people.



The Corporate Parenting Board

The role of the Corporate Parenting Board is to take a clear strategic lead in ensuring better outcomes for children in care and care leavers – aligning political ambition to deliver beyond statutory duties. The Corporate Parenting Board is chaired by the Cabinet Member for Children and Families and is attended by Elected Members, the Director of Children and Community Resilience, the Senior Leadership Team and partners to enable children and young people to be at the centre of the activity and board meeting.

The board has a significant impact in raising the profile of children in care in the council and with partners and continues to build a strong council and cross agency commitment to children in care. It demonstrates a clear focus on leadership and innovation in the corporate parenting role and ensures service promises are implemented. The multi-agency children in care and care leavers partnership reports to the Corporate Parenting Board through the Multi-Agency Looked After Partnership group (MALAP), relevant Corporate Parenting Champions and board members. This includes reports from the Virtual Head for Children in Care and the Designated Nurse for Children in Care as well as in relation to the safeguarding of children in care and relevant information in relation to key priorities as defined by the board.

The Corporate Parenting Board:

- ▶ Oversees and leads on ensuring progress on this plan, making sure that all services provide support and take action to honour the promises made to children and young people
- ▶ Oversees the impact that the Multi-Agency Looked After Children Partnership has on children in care and care leavers ensuring action is taken if needed
- ▶ Engages with children in care and care leavers to ensure that there is meaningful communication and partnership in delivering the promise
- ▶ Corporate Parenting Champions are part of the Corporate Parenting Board and:
 - ensure implementation of their action plans to make the promise real for children in care
 - provide opportunities for wider discussions and sharing experiences in carrying out the promises
 - report on the delivery, outcomes and activity in the implementation of promises

Members of Corporate Parenting Board provide the collective leadership required to improve outcomes for children in care and care leavers. Partners provide the additional commitment to children in care and care leavers that a parent who is ambitious for their children would make. This shared commitment across partner organisations means that we work together to ensure:

- ▶ children in care and care leavers are a priority and have priority access to services
- ▶ children in care and care leavers should have stability and permanence
- ▶ children in care and care leavers are enabled to be safe, healthy, ambitious and to achieve their full potential
- ▶ children in care and care leavers are supported to maintain and build relationships with those who are important to them
- ▶ children remain in and return to their family, school and community wherever this is possible
- ▶ children in care and care leavers are involved in their plan and in helping to shape and to improve services
- ▶ we continue to challenge ourselves and each other to promote diversity and inclusion and ensure the diverse needs of children in care and care leavers are met and they are treated fairly with dignity and respect.
- ▶ corporate parents are equipped to meet the needs of our children in care and care leavers
- ▶ These commitments are articulated in more detail within our Corporate Parenting Promise (Appendix 1)

The Multi-Agency Looked After Partnership

Chaired by the Head of Social Care (Deputy Director) this is a multi-agency group of managers and responsible officers that plans, reviews, monitors and develops all aspects of our work in relation to our statutory and aspirational work with children in care and care leavers.

The Multi-Agency Looked After Partnership:

- Oversees and reports to the Corporate Parenting Board on the implementation of the 2020-2022 Delivery Plan, monitoring progress and taking action as appropriate – reporting on its progress to the board
- Develops exception and summary reports for presentation to the Corporate Parenting Board.
- Reports on performance and activity

The Multi-Agency Looked After Partnership provides oversight of key areas that ensure that the partnership continuously seeks to improve the full range of outcomes for our children and young people, these include the safeguarding of children in care and care leavers, ensuring they have stability in their living arrangements and relationships, good health and wellbeing and achieve their potential and aspirations in their education, training and employment.

Children and Young People's Partnership (CYPP)

An important stakeholder group with the voice of children and young people strongly represented, the CYPP sets a local agenda for improving outcomes. The CYPP in consultation with the Youth Council has agreed and supports the ambitions that:

- ▶ children in care and care leavers feel safe and are safe
- ▶ children in care and care leavers enjoy good health and emotional wellbeing
- ▶ children in care and care leavers recognise and achieve their potential

The Voice of Children in Care and Care Leavers

The voice of the children in our care and young people who have left care is integral to all aspects of the work we do and the delivery of this plan. Children in care and care leavers have been engaged with, involved and consulted throughout and their views, ideas and feedback have informed the review of progress and development of this plan.

Their voice is heard through a variety of mechanisms including through individual feedback on their care, their plans, the support they receive and via independent advocates and reviewing officers. Also through consultation tools including Child and Family Feedback and wider consultation including a bespoke consultation on the changes to practices during Covid-19.

The Children in Care Council

The Children in Care Council (CiCC) represents all children in care and care leavers in North Lincolnshire. It is integral to, and plays a key role in, the involvement of children in and leaving care in developing services, ensuring their voices are heard and children and young people having a real say in the issues that affect their lives.

To ensure that services are effective in delivering on the above priorities the partnership recognises the importance of listening, taking note of and acting upon messages from all the children and young people in and leaving our care. This means placing children and young people at the centre of planning, developments and practice and providing a variety of opportunities for them to be genuine partners in planning for the things that affect them.

As a learning organisation we ensure systems are in place to capture comments made by individuals and apply these in a more general way so that innovation and effective practice is shared and embedded in the work of all staff.

As corporate parents we will listen to and take into account the wishes and feelings of every child and young person in our care, and those that have left our care. This is demonstrated at every level through the plans that we make and the records that we keep. This happens informally on a day-to-day basis and formally, for example as part of child in care and Pathway Plan reviews; through consistently obtaining regular feedback and checking that children and young people understand their plans and the reasons for decisions and actions taken.

Over the last decade, the CiCC has been fully involved in reviewing services, it meets regularly with the Cabinet Member for Children and Families, the Director of Children and Community Resilience, Independent Reviewing Officers, the Advocacy Officer, workers from Social Work and Fostering Teams and senior officers from across the council and its partners. The CiCC has been consulted on, been involved with or given feedback on a number of issues, recent examples include:

- ▶ The assessment and recruitment of foster carers as part of the approval process
- ▶ Interviewing and appointing staff across services
- ▶ The design, development and implementation of the annual Corporate Parenting Week
- ▶ The design and use of a number of forms, procedures, guides
- ▶ Consultation and development of information and leaflets
- ▶ Development of the Integrated Offer to Care Leavers
- ▶ Development of Wi-Fi for all care leavers in their accommodation

- ▶ The Corporate Parenting Promise
- ▶ Regular attendance and input into the Corporate Parenting Board – including challenge questions to the board members

We will continue to build on engaging children and young people so that their voice is integral to our practice. This includes listening to their feedback and comments on the best way to engage with children and being flexible and responsive to their needs and requests.

What will success look like?

Drivers:

Achieving these outcomes for children in care and care leavers will require:

- ▶ empowering children in care and care leavers
- ▶ building family and community capacity
- ▶ developing the workforce

Outcomes

It is important that we, and our young people, are able to hold us to account against our priorities, and that we ensure that we achieve our collective goals as corporate parents. We have, therefore, identified priority success measures and areas for further development:

Safe

- ▶ Children in care have access to and choice of care to meet their needs.
- ▶ Children in care and care leavers experience stability in their home and relationships
- ▶ All Care Leavers are living in high quality accommodation.
- ▶ Continue to build on work with adolescents in the context of contextual safeguarding to focus on developing resilience and community resilience
- ▶ Build on the partnership approach to reducing the vulnerability of children in care and care leavers to exploitation.
- ▶ All children in care and care leavers have an allocated social worker or personal advisor who builds a sustained relationship with them
- ▶ All care leavers are supported by a suitable qualified and experienced personal advisor, and this personal advisor remains the lead worker for the duration of the young person's journey as a care leaver.
- ▶ Children are supported to remain within, or have opportunities to return to, their families and the community.
- ▶ Practice is scrutinised and challenged by an effective Independent Reviewing Service to ensure the best outcomes for children and young people.

Well

- ▶ All children in care and care leavers are supported and encouraged to be active and live healthy lifestyles
- ▶ 100% of Care Leavers have a health passport and are registered with local health services in their community.
- ▶ The emotional well-being of children in care and care leavers is improved through bespoke packages of support tailored to their needs.

Prosperous

- ▶ All children in care have education that meets their needs and attend school
- ▶ Children in care and care leaver's educational achievements and prospects are not disadvantaged due to Covid-19
- ▶ All children and young people have aspirational educational targets supported by outcome-based plans

- ▶ Children in care and care leavers have the support they need to achieve their full potential
- ▶ The diverse needs of children in care and care leavers are met and they are treated fairly with dignity and respect.
- ▶ Further opportunities for children in care and care leavers to experience the world of work, to gain employability skills and to plan for their futures
- ▶ The life opportunities of children in care and care leavers are improved through access to education, higher education and bespoke apprenticeships for children in care and care leavers
- ▶ Children in care and care leavers are an outstanding asset to their community.
- ▶ Children in care and care leavers are supported by a knowledgeable and high-quality workforce.

Connected

- ▶ All children in care and care leavers have an identified 'team' of social and professional support in line with their wishes and feelings and are supported through the 'You Say Who' model
- ▶ All children in care and care leavers have access to equipment that enables them to connect with the 'on-line' world
- ▶ 100% of our care leavers in semi-independent accommodation have access to the internet.
- ▶ Children and young people are empowered and enabled to participate in their community, have equality of opportunity, and access to creative, flexible support at the earliest point, in the right place by the right people.
- ▶ Every child is given the opportunity to take part in positive activities
- ▶ 100% of Care Leavers are offered the opportunity to attend suitable drop-in support sessions, access advocacy support, and are aware of their rights to make a complaint if required.
- ▶ Children's views are fully considered in their plans and the services we deliver and regarding future service delivery
- ▶ All children in care and care leavers have the opportunity to be a part of the children in care council and events

Appendix 1: Our Corporate Parenting Promise

The Council, the Lead Member and partners on the Corporate Parenting Board take a clear strategic lead to ensure we fulfil our responsibilities towards our children in care and care leavers and children and young people experience better outcomes.

The Corporate Parenting Promise has been in place in North Lincolnshire for a number of years. It was developed with members of the Children in Care Council to set out the responsibilities of Corporate Parents towards children in care and care leavers. The promise has been central to delivering corporate parenting that is aspirational and effective.

Building on the on-going support and involvement of Corporate Parents from all agencies to further develop this, plan for the future and ensure that our aspirations for children in care and care leavers are clear, developmental and forward thinking, we have developed the promise in conjunction with implementing our Care Leavers Local Offer (as required by the Children and Social Work Act 2017). The Children in Care Council have also further reviewed the promise and we have collectively agreed the revised North Lincolnshire Corporate Parenting Promise 2020-2022. The purpose is to have a child-focused, aspirational and comprehensive Promise to children in care and care leavers.

This promise:

- ▶ tells children and young people what they can expect from North Lincolnshire Council and partners as a child in care or care leavers
- ▶ encourages best practice
- ▶ promotes positive and better outcomes
- ▶ reinforces the corporate parenting responsibilities of all partners
- ▶ provides clear information on the services, support and resources all partners will deliver to children in care and care leavers

The Children in Care Council have been consulted regarding the promise and agreed its content.

Corporate Parenting Promise to Children in Care and Care Leavers (2020 – 2022)

The Children and Social Work Act 2017 sets out the following Corporate Parenting Principles:

- act in the best interests, and promote the physical and mental health and well-being, of children in care and care leavers;
- encourage them to express their views, wishes and feelings;
- take into account their views, wishes and feelings;
- help children in care and care leavers gain access to, and make the best use of, services provided by the local authority and its relevant partners;
- promote high aspirations, and seek to secure the best outcomes for them;
- for children in care and care leavers to be safe, and for stability in their home lives, relationships and education or work;
- prepare children in care and care leavers for adulthood and independent living.

As Corporate Parents for children in care and care leavers in North Lincolnshire, we promise that to do this we will:

- Ask your views, listen to what you say and act on it
- Support you and give you the information you need to lead a healthy lifestyle
- Support you to feel safe

- Support you to have contact with your family and friends
- Make sure services and support are available to help you to be the best you can be
- Have ambitions for you and support you to reach your goals
- Have high expectations of you and expect you to act sensibly, but also take into account what is going on in your life at the time
- Support you to get the education and training you need and help you develop your skills and achieve your goals in life
- Work with you to support other children and young people who may have had similar experiences
- Offer training and work experience and support you to find employment
- Support you and your children while you gain life experience and become independent from us
- Offer an open door for support and advice, whatever your age
- Celebrate your successes and achievements
- Help you be involved in your community

Complementing the Corporate Parenting Promise, the Council and its partners have committed to the **Local Offer to Care Leavers**.



Local Offer to Care
Leavers July 2018 refr

This document tells care leavers about all the help that is available to them. It ensures that care leavers know where and who to go to for advice and help. Care leavers helped us design this local offer and we will continue to listen to their views to make sure the services we offer are what they need.

Additionally, North Lincolnshire Council supports the Barnardo's Beyond Care Campaign so that care leavers in North Lincolnshire have good accommodation and support.

Appendix 2: Corporate Parenting Development

Background

Corporate Parenting development is important to ensure that all partners, Senior Officers and Elected Members understand the needs of children in care and care leavers, their responsibilities and how they can support the children and young people as Corporate Parents.

The Services to Children Workforce Strategy sets out in detail the Council's approach to ensuring the workforce has the capacity to improve outcomes.

Corporate Parenting Training for Elected Members

Elected Members have a responsibility to ensure that services for our children and young people are good and to ensure there are sufficient resources and accommodation choice. Elected Members also take part in visits to Children's Homes, scrutinise services and have an overview of performance measures to ensure children in care and care leavers are safe and services are effective.

All elected members are expected to undertake training to ensure they have the knowledge to fulfil their safeguarding and corporate parenting responsibilities.

The Council's overall commitment to the children in our care is contained within the North Lincolnshire Corporate Parenting promise. The Council regularly reviews how we deliver these functions and ensure tangible outcomes through active and regular feedback from the children and young people.

The Corporate Parenting Training details the responsibilities and roles of members and Senior Officers as Corporate Parents for children in and leaving care. The training provides information on the care population in North Lincolnshire, the roles of carers and services and the needs of children in care and care leavers.

The training includes case examples and exercises to highlight the role of members as Corporate Parents. It is based around the National Children's Bureau guide "Putting Corporate Parenting into Practice - A Handbook for Councillors" and the North Lincolnshire guidance "Corporate Parenting - A Guide for Elected Members and Senior Managers"

It provides the opportunity for Elected Members and Senior Officers to discuss issues relating to corporate parenting, share ideas and raises awareness of the issues facing children in and leaving care.

Appendix 3: 2020 – 2022 Delivery Plan

Key Priority	Action(s)	Milestones / target	When by?	Lead/Lead Group
Safe	Review the capacity of the Leaving Care Service in light of the increase in the leaving care population	Review completed and updated structure developed to reflect the leaving care population	October 2020	Service Lead – Social Work / Group Manager - Environmental Health and Housing
	Provide integrated support to all care leavers that meets their needs during and following Covid-19	Care leavers have appropriate support and engagement that ensures they are able to continue to engage with and access support	September 2020 and ongoing	
Connected	Develop consultation/feedback using web-based / app-based tools and a centralised electronic system.	Identify options for systems that will enable collation of feedback	December 2020	Service Lead – Social Work
		Identify systems accessible to children and young people Have revised system in place by March 2021	March 2021	
	Continuing to develop the support offer in relation to 'drop-in' and other opportunities for engagement	Revised schedule of drop-ins Increased reach of young people Increased reach and attendance at Children in Care Council	October 2020 January 2021	Service Lead – Social Work

Safe	Develop specific stability measure for care leavers living in the community Implement the learning from this measure	Care Leavers experience increased stability in their accommodation.	March 2021	Group Manager - Environmental Health and Housing
	Review children in care and care leavers in relation to contextual safeguarding and vulnerability	All children in care aged over 10 have an updated vulnerability checklist	September 2020	Service Lead – SAP, IMAP and Exploitation
Prosperous	Ensure that all children in care's individual needs in education are reviewed following and during Covid-19, to ensure that they remain on track to achieve their outcomes	All children in care will have the PEP reviewed within the first 4 weeks of returning to education following Covid-19 Children transitioning to a new school or new to care will have the initial PEP within 10 days. All other children will continue to have a PEP reviewed within the first half term and signed off by the social worker and designated teacher A RAG rated system will determine the quality of the PEP and recommend improvements where required.	September 2020 and ongoing	Chair of the Education and Employability Group
	Identify and assess SEN for children in care at the earliest point	Where it is identified that the child is not progressing there will be early communication with the school to consider any SEN needs and request for EHCP assessment where appropriate	September 2020 and ongoing	

	Ensure all children in care are engaged in and attending suitable educational provision that meets their assessed needs	All children in care have an achievable and aspirational educational package Children in care continue in or are supported to return to a suitable educational package following Covid-19	September 2020 and ongoing	
	Develop further access to sympathetic employers and bespoke apprenticeships Revise incentives and support to encourage young people to engage with and remain in education, employment and training	Increased number of Care Leavers are in Education, Employment and Training. Increased number of Care Leavers are accessing Higher Education/University	March 2021	
Connected	Develop the use of the You Say Who model with both children in care and care leavers Obtain feedback from children and families in relation to the model Obtain feedback from professionals and carers in relation to the model	Consultation on the You Say Who model to take place by the end of 2020 The use of You Say Who consistently identified within case audits Action plan / learning delivered following consultation	January 2021 January 2021 March 2021	Service Lead – Social Work
	Ensure Care Leavers have access to Wi-Fi	All care leavers are able access the online world	September 2020	Strategic Lead - ICT Communications & Facilities
Connected	Develop and improve links for children in care and care leavers with the North Lincolnshire Youth Offer	Increased take up of community based positive activities	November 2020	Lead Officer: Community Participation and Wellbeing
	Ensure all children in care and care leavers have access to the advocacy service	Increased take-up of advocacy support	October 2020	Service Manager Commissioning

	Increase access to Independent Visitors for children in care	Increased take-up of Independent Visitors	October 2020	Service Manager Commissioning
	Review of the role of the Independent Reviewing Service in overseeing and reviewing Pathway Planning	Increase in the proportion of Care Leavers Pathway Plans that are overseen and reviewed by an Independent Reviewing Officer	November 2020	Head of Service – Early Help and Protection
Well	All Care Leavers have a health passport and are registered with local health services in their community.	100% of care leavers have a health passport	November 2020	Chair of the CiC Health Group
	Review the access to therapeutic services and support Review and refresh the Emotional Well-Being Meetings with CAMH services and partners	All children in care and care leavers have timely access to therapeutic support in line with their assessed needs	January 2021	Chair of the CiC Health Group
Safe	Equip staff with the knowledge and skills to build on relationship-based models of practice including restorative and solution focused practice	Increase in the number of workers trained in restorative practice Increased number trained in relational approaches	February 2021	Head of Service – Early Help and Protection
	Build on and develop the use of the Family Solutions Approach to supporting foster families	Improved stability within foster placements	November 2020	Service Lead, Resources

Appendix 4: 2020 – 2022 Sufficiency Delivery Plan

Key Development	Action(s)	Milestones / target	When by?	Lead/Lead Group
Strengthen the 'edge of care' offer through the One Family Approach	Development of a One Family Approach Hub including a second registered children's home	Dedicated staffing capacity to deliver the OFA Hub Approval of the proposed development of the hub with agreement to progress	March 2021	Head of Service, Early Help and Protection / Project Lead and KFL
	Integration of the existing residential teams alongside targeted help staff	Subject to the above – designation of staffing teams to the new hub	October 2020	Head of Service, Early Help and Protection / Project Lead and KFL
	Create a core offer based on the One Family Approach	Core offer in place Core offer communicated with staff and families	September 2020 October 2020	Head of Service, Early Help and Protection / Project Lead and KFL
Recruitment and retention of foster carers	Annual targeted recruitment campaign	Recruitment plan in place	June 2020	Service Lead, Resources / Project Lead and KFL
		Increase in the number of enquiries relation to target groups Increased proportion progressing to assessment / approval	July 2020 November 2020	
Re-design web pages and develop foster carer portal		Updated web page in place	October 2020	Service Lead, Resources
		Consultation / feedback from prospective carers regarding the accessibility and use of web page	January 2021	
		Increased number of carers who use web-page and access the portal	March 2021	

	Establish marketing role to enhance foster carer recruitment	Post in place and appointed to	October 2020	Service Lead, Resources
	Develop and build Supported Lodgings within fostering service including increased staffing capacity	Supported Lodgings established within fostering service	May 2020	Service Lead, Resources
	Increase Recruitment Officer capacity in fostering service	Post established within fostering service	October 2020	Service Lead, Resources
Continued Focus on Improving Stability	Review and develop support offer to foster carers utilising 'Family Solutions' approach	Increased use of Family Solutions Meetings to support and increase stability	November 2020	Service Lead, Resources / Service Lead, Social Work
Development of the Integrated Service for Care Leavers	Develop leaving care service 'in-house' provision	Leaving care provision of accommodation and support established as 'in-house' to the Council	July 2020	Group Manager - Environmental Health and Housing / Service Lead, Social Work
	Implementation of dynamic housing model Establish accommodation pathway with colleagues across the Council	Model established and agreed with partners	October 2020	Group Manager - Environmental Health and Housing / Service Lead, Social Work
		Implementation of integrated model Increase in availability and choice of high-quality accommodation for care leavers	December 2020 March 2021	
Review and refresh Care Leavers Offer		Updated offer in place and agreed with partners	September 2020	Service Lead, Social Work
		Updated offer published and shared with care leavers	October 2020	

	Build capacity within the Leaving Care Service	Review and revise staffing capacity within the service New structure agreed and implemented	September 2020 November 2020	Service Lead, Social Work
	Further review of the current Pathway Planning practices to create a tiered approach	Review of existing Pathway Planning process undertaken including engagement and feedback from care leavers New approach developed and agreed New approach implemented and embedded within practice	October 2020 November 2020 January 2021	Service Lead, Social Work