

Date:

Friday 9 October 2026 at 10.00 am

Venue:

Council Chamber, Dunedin House, Thornaby, TS17 6BJ

Cllr Lisa Evans (Chair)

Cllr Carol Clark (Vice-Chair)

Cllr Clare Besford, Cllr Mick Moore, Cllr Hilary Vickers, Cllr Sally Ann Watson and Cllr Jack Miller

Agenda

1. Live Streaming

This meeting will be filmed for live and / or subsequent broadcast on the Council's website. The whole of the meeting will be filmed, except where there are confidential or exempt items, and the footage will be on the website for 12 months. A copy of it will also be retained in accordance with the Council's data retention policy.

If you attend and make a representation to the meeting, you will be deemed to have consented to being filmed. When admitted to the Council Chamber you are also consenting to being filmed and to the possible use of those images and sound recordings for livestreaming and / or training purposes. If you do not wish to have your image captured, please contact Democratic Services prior to attending the meeting.

If there are any technical difficulties with the livestreaming, the meeting will still proceed.

2. Evacuation Procedure (Pages 7 - 10)

3. Apologies for Absence

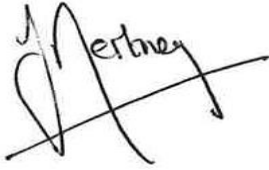
4. Declarations of Interest

5. Minutes (Pages 11 - 14)

To approve the minutes of the last meeting held on 12 June 2026

6. Corporate Parenting: Developing Our Future Governance Arrangements(Pages 15 - 20)

7. Let's Take Action funding through Core Memories briefing note (Pages 21 - 22)



Jonathan Nertney
Head of Democratic Services
Date Not Specified

Members of the Public - Rights to Attend Meeting

With the exception of any item identified above as containing exempt or confidential information under the Local Government Act 1972 Section 100A(4), members of the public are entitled to attend this meeting and/or have access to the agenda papers.

Persons wishing to obtain any further information on this meeting, including the opportunities available for any member of the public to speak at the meeting; or for details of access to the meeting for disabled people, please.

Contact: Senior Democratic Services Officer, Michael Henderson on email rachel.harrison@stockton.gov.uk

Key – Declarable interests are :-

- Disclosable Pecuniary Interests (DPI's)
- Other Registerable Interests (ORI's)
- Non Registerable Interests (NRI's)

Members – Declaration of Interest Guidance

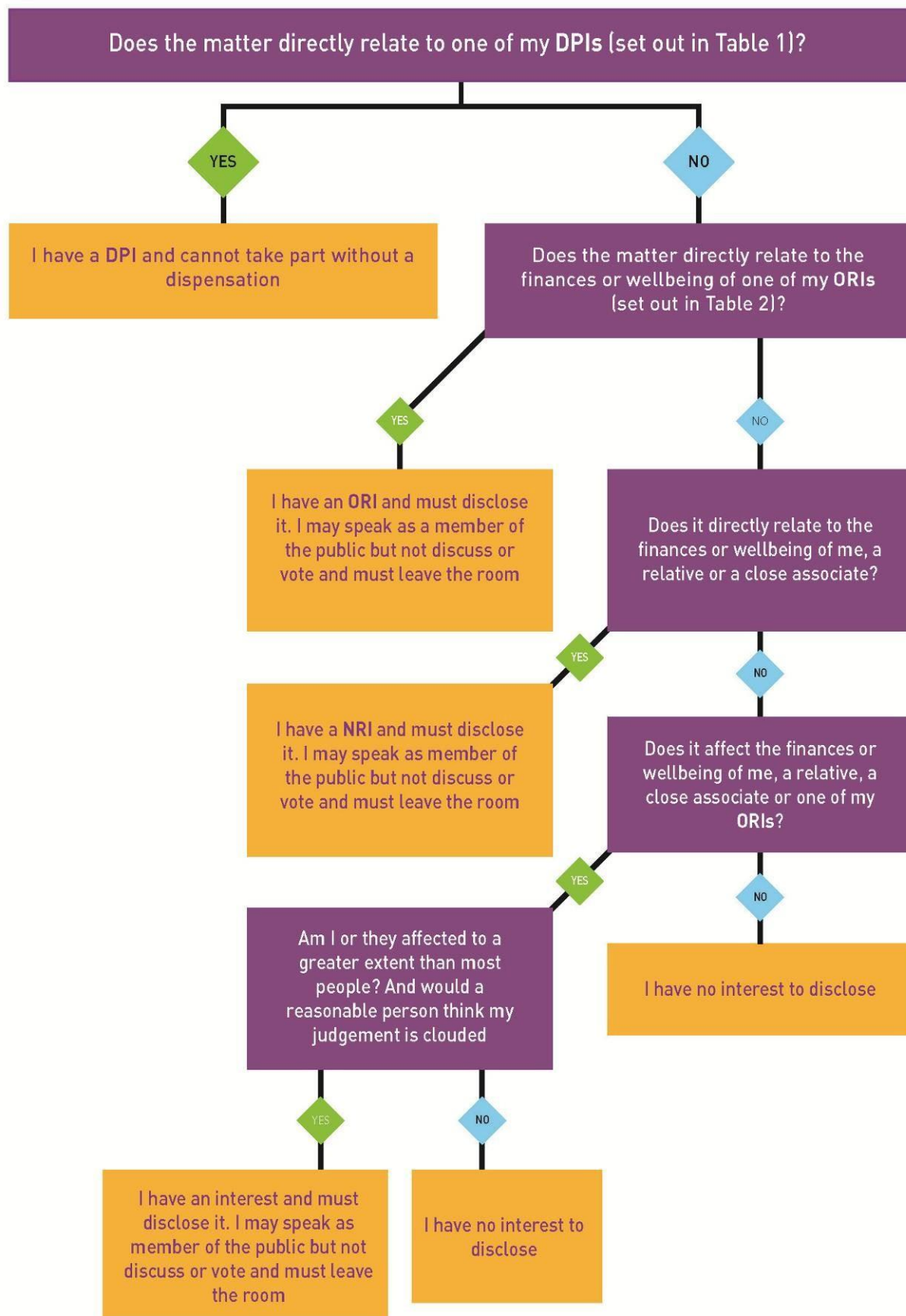


Table 1 - Disclosable Pecuniary Interests

Subject	Description
Employment, office, trade, profession or vocation	Any employment, office, trade, profession or vocation carried on for profit or gain
Sponsorship	Any payment or provision of any other financial benefit (other than from the council) made to the councillor during the previous 12-month period for expenses incurred by him/her in carrying out his/her duties as a councillor, or towards his/her election expenses. This includes any payment or financial benefit from a trade union within the meaning of the Trade Union and Labour Relations (Consolidation) Act 1992.
Contracts	Any contract made between the councillor or his/her spouse or civil partner or the person with whom the councillor is living as if they were spouses/civil partners (or a firm in which such person is a partner, or an incorporated body of which such person is a director* or a body that such person has a beneficial interest in the securities of*) and the council — (a) under which goods or services are to be provided or works are to be executed; and (b) which has not been fully discharged.
Land and property	Any beneficial interest in land which is within the area of the council. 'Land' excludes an easement, servitude, interest or right in or over land which does not give the councillor or his/her spouse or civil partner or the person with whom the councillor is living as if they were spouses/ civil partners (alone or jointly with another) a right to occupy or to receive income.
Licences	Any licence (alone or jointly with others) to occupy land in the area of the council for a month or longer.
Corporate tenancies	Any tenancy where (to the councillor's knowledge)— (a) the landlord is the council; and (b) the tenant is a body that the councillor, or his/her spouse or civil partner or the person with whom the councillor is living as if they were spouses/ civil partners is a partner of or a director* of or has a beneficial interest in the securities* of.
Securities	Any beneficial interest in securities* of a body where— (a) that body (to the councillor's knowledge) has a place of business or land in the area of the council; and (b) either— (i) the total nominal value of the securities* exceeds £25,000 or one hundredth of the total issued share capital of that body; or (ii) if the share capital of that body is of more than one class, the total nominal value of the shares of any one class in which the councillor, or his/ her spouse or civil partner or the person with whom the councillor is living as if they were spouses/civil partners have a beneficial interest exceeds one hundredth of the total issued share capital of that class.

* 'director' includes a member of the committee of management of an industrial and provident society.

* 'securities' means shares, debentures, debenture stock, loan stock, bonds, units of a collective investment scheme within the meaning of the Financial Services and Markets Act 2000 and other securities of any description, other than money deposited with a building society.

Table 2 – Other Registrable Interest

You must register as an Other Registrable Interest:

a) any unpaid directorships

b) any body of which you are a member or are in a position of general control or management and to which you are nominated or appointed by your authority

c) any body

(i) exercising functions of a public nature

(ii) directed to charitable purposes or

(iii) one of whose principal purposes includes the influence of public opinion or policy (including any political party or trade union) of which you are a member or in a position of general control or management

Council Chamber, Dunedin House Evacuation Procedure & Housekeeping

Entry

Entry to the Council Chamber is via the Council Chamber entrance indicated on the map below.



In the event of an emergency alarm activation, everyone should immediately start to leave their workspace by the nearest available signed Exit route.

The emergency exits are located via the doors to the left of the raised seating area at the front of the Council Chamber and the rear of the Council Chamber.

Fires, explosions, and bomb threats are among the occurrences that may require the emergency evacuation of Dunedin House. Continuous sounding and flashing of the Fire Alarm is the signal to evacuate the building or upon instruction from a Fire Warden or a Manager.

The Emergency Evacuation Assembly Point is in the overflow car park located across the road from Dunedin House.

The allocated assembly point for the Council Chamber is: D2

Map of the Emergency Evacuation Assembly Point - the overflow car park:



All occupants must respond to the alarm signal by immediately initiating the evacuation procedure.

When the Alarm sounds:

1. **stop all activities immediately.** Even if you believe it is a false alarm or practice drill, you MUST follow procedures to evacuate the building fully.
2. **follow directional EXIT signs** to evacuate via the nearest safe exit in a calm and orderly manner.
 - do not stop to collect your belongings
 - close all doors as you leave
3. **steer clear of hazards.** If evacuation becomes difficult via a chosen route because of smoke, flames or a blockage, re-enter the Chamber (if safe to do so). Continue the evacuation via the nearest safe exit route.
4. **proceed to the Evacuation Assembly Point.** Move away from the building. Once you have exited the building, proceed to the main Evacuation Assembly Point immediately - located in the **East Overflow Car Park**.
 - do not assemble directly outside the building or on any main roadway, to ensure access for Emergency Services.

5. await further instructions.

- **do not re-enter the building under any circumstances without an “all clear”** which should only be given by the Incident Control Officer/Chief Fire Warden, Fire Warden or Manager.
- do not leave the area without permission.
- ensure all colleagues and visitors are accounted for. Notify a Fire Warden or Manager immediately if you have any concerns

Toilets

Toilets are located immediately outside the Council Chamber, accessed via the door at the back of the Chamber.

Water Cooler

A water cooler is available at the rear of the Council Chamber.

Microphones

During the meeting, members of the Committee, and officers in attendance, will have access to a microphone. Please use the microphones, when invited to speak by the Chair, to ensure you can be heard by the Committee and those in attendance at the meeting.

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Corporate Parenting Board

A meeting of Corporate Parenting Board was held on Friday, 12 June 2026.

Present: Cllr Lisa Evans (Chair), Cllr Clare Besford, Cllr Carol Clark, Cllr John Coulson, (Sub for Cllr Hilary Vickers), Cllr Jack Miller, Cllr Sally Ann Watson

Officers: Junita Agyapong, Jane Smith, John Devine, Michael Henderson, Debbie Farrow, Laura Fenwick, Janet Wilson, Coral Pape, Chris Renahan, Majella McCarthy

Also in attendance: Molly Larkin, Alan Turner

Apologies: Cllr Mick Moore, Cllr Hilary Vickers, Lisa Robinson,

CPB Declarations of Interest **/25**

There were no declarations of interest.

CPB Minutes **/25**

The minutes of the meetings held on 13 February 2026 were approved as a correct record.

CPB Fostering Friendly **/25**

The Board received a presentation from the Fostering Service on the recruitment and retention of foster carers and the role of corporate parents in encouraging local employers to become Fostering Friendly.

Members were advised that there was a national shortage of foster carers and that Stockton was experiencing similar pressures. At the time of the presentation, 618 children were in the Council's care, including 208 living with kinship carers, 113 with in-house mainstream foster carers, 105 with independent fostering agency carers and 78 in residential provision. The shortage of fostering families contributed to reliance on external placements and residential provision, including for some younger children.

The Board noted the decline in approved mainstream foster carers and the increase in kinship arrangements. Although new approvals were beginning to increase, this was being offset by resignations and retirements. Members welcomed work to enable children to remain within their wider family networks where this was safe and appropriate, whilst recognising the continuing need for mainstream carers.

The presentation outlined the range of fostering opportunities, including emergency, short-term, long-term and respite care, parent and baby placements and supported lodgings. Members were advised that misconceptions about eligibility remained a barrier to recruitment, particularly assumptions that people could not foster if they worked, were single or had children of their own.

The Board heard about regional recruitment activity through Foster with North East, including advertising campaigns and a refer-a-friend incentive. Local activity included information sessions, recruitment stands, Council

communications and attendance at community events. The service intended to attend the Teesside Expo in September and was planning a business breakfast event to promote Fostering Friendly arrangements.

Members were advised that the Fostering Network's Fostering Friendly scheme was free and open to employers of all sizes. It encouraged organisations to promote fostering and support staff through flexible working and at least five days' paid leave for fostering responsibilities. Template policies could be provided to assist employers. Nearly 40 per cent of foster carers nationally combined fostering with other work, making employer support particularly valuable.

Stockton-on-Tees Borough Council was already a Fostering Friendly employer. Its policy provided eligible employees with paid time off for assessment and initial training, approval panels, reviews and training, together with the opportunity to apply for flexible working in connection with long-term placements.

Members discussed the reasons for the reduction in foster carers and how the trend could be reversed. Officers highlighted the retirement of existing carers, the need to attract a new generation and the importance of challenging misconceptions. The Board also noted improvements to the Council's fostering package, including professional fees, training and support, and continuing regional work to strengthen recruitment.

The Director of Children's Services highlighted the positive experiences shared by children at the annual foster carers' awards ceremony. Members recognised the value of communicating the difference fostering could make to children's lives and the rewarding nature of the role.

Discussion took place regarding the experience of prospective foster carers during assessment. Officers acknowledged that assessment needed to be thorough to safeguard children and explained that Stockton's approach emphasised openness about the process, supportive relationships and helping applicants overcome barriers.

The Board discussed how partners and councillors could promote fostering through their workforce communications, events, social media and business networks. Specific follow-up offers were made:

Regeneration would link the Fostering Service with the Economic Development Team and offer an opportunity to present to the Stockton Business Ambassadors' Group.

The NHS representative would link with the Integrated Care Board's HR, neighbourhood and communications contacts to explore Fostering Friendly status and awareness-raising opportunities. She would also link the service with a senior contact at Tees hospitals to explore promotion through hospital events and staff spaces.

The fostering leaflet, together with a short summary of the presentation, would be circulated by email to all councillors to share through their contacts and networks.

The Chair thanked the presenters and welcomed the offers of support from members and partners.

RESOLVED that the presentation be noted and the follow-up actions identified during the discussion be taken forward.

CPB
/25

Forward Plan

Members discussed and agreed the Forward Plan.

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AGENDA ITEM

REPORT TO CORPORATE PARENTING BOARD

DATE 9th October 2026

REPORT OF DIRECTOR OF CHILDREN'S SERVICES

CORPORATE PARENTING : DEVELOPING OUR FUTURE GOVERNANCE ARRANGEMENTS

PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

Corporate Parenting Board is asked to consider and endorse proposals to strengthen and evolve its governance arrangements through the establishment of a Corporate Parenting Partnership, replacing the current committee structure set out within the Council's Constitution. The proposal reflects the Board's ambition to further embed the voices of children in our care and care leavers, strengthen partner ownership of corporate parenting responsibilities and build on the significant progress made in developing an effective corporate parenting approach.

Subject to endorsement by the Board, a recommendation will be presented through the Council's governance processes for consideration and approval by Council.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Corporate Parenting Board is requested to:

1. Endorse the principle of transitioning from a constitutional committee arrangement to a Corporate Parenting Partnership.
2. Support the development of a revised governance model centred on co-production, partnership ownership and lived experience.
3. Consider potential chair/vice chair arrangements.
4. Support the development of revised Terms of Reference and membership arrangements to strengthen partner accountability and participation.
5. Agree that the proposals be progressed through the Council's decision-making arrangements, including Cabinet and Full Council, to seek approval for the cessation of the Corporate Parenting Board as a Council committee and the consequential amendments to the Council's Constitution.
6. Support the development of revised Terms of Reference and membership arrangements to strengthen partner accountability and participation.

BACKGROUND AND CONTEXT

1. The Corporate Parenting Board plays a vital role in ensuring that the Council and its partners fulfil their collective responsibilities to children in our care and care leavers. It provides strategic leadership, oversight and challenge whilst ensuring that the voices and experiences of children and young people influence priorities, decision making and service improvement.

2. Over recent years the Board has undertaken a significant programme of development to strengthen its effectiveness. Following the Council's 2023 ILACS inspection, additional focus has been given to corporate parenting leadership, partner engagement and the involvement of children and young people. This has included corporate parenting training for elected members, the development of the Stockton-on-Tees Corporate Parenting Strategy and Commitments and the introduction of bi-monthly informal young person-led meetings.
3. As a result, the Board has made significant progress in strengthening its corporate parenting approach. Partner engagement has increased, opportunities for participation have expanded and there is now stronger alignment between strategic priorities and the issues identified by our children and young people. This progress has been recognised through feedback from the Department for Education National Implementation Advisor for Care Experienced and through the Local Government Association's (LGA) review and development work with the Board.
4. In May 2026, Board members, partner organisations and care experienced young people participated in a development session facilitated by the Local Government Association to review progress against the Corporate Parenting Strategy and identify priorities for the next phase of development. The session concluded that while significant progress had been made, there was an opportunity to further strengthen participation, partnership ownership, accountability and delivery arrangements.
5. One of the key messages emerging from the session was the ambition to evolve the existing arrangements into a partnership model that better reflects the shared responsibility of all corporate parents and provides greater opportunities for children and young people to shape the work of the Board. Participants also highlighted the importance of retaining young people-led sessions, introducing themed partnership groups aligned to priority areas and strengthening accountability for delivery across the wider partnership.

RATIONALE

6. The proposed change to a partnership model is intended to build on the progress already achieved and support the next phase of development for corporate parenting in Stockton-on-Tees, by:

PLACING CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE AT THE CENTRE

7. Children and young people tell us that meaningful participation is about more than being consulted. It is about influencing decisions, shaping priorities and seeing evidence that their views lead to change.
8. The Board has already strengthened its approach by introducing young people-led meetings and enabling a young people's representative to attend formal Board meetings. These developments represent an important shift towards co-production and have become a valued part of the Board's work.
9. The LGA led development session highlighted a shared ambition to further strengthen the role of lived experience within governance arrangements. Participants agreed that future arrangements should create greater opportunities for children and young people to shape agendas, influence priorities and provide leadership within the Board itself.

10. The proposal for care experienced young people to co-chair the Board alongside senior political leadership demonstrates a commitment to shared leadership and reinforces the principle that the voices of children and young people should sit at the heart of corporate parenting.

STRENGTHENING PARTNERSHIP OWNERSHIP

11. Corporate parenting responsibilities extend beyond Children's Services and elected members. Improving outcomes for children in our care and care leavers requires coordinated action from partners across housing, education, health, community safety, employment, the voluntary and community sector and wider council services.
12. The May development session recognised the significant progress made in bringing more partners around the table but also identified opportunities to strengthen partner representation, ownership and accountability. Participants emphasised the importance of ensuring that all organisations see themselves as active corporate parents with a shared responsibility for improving outcomes.
13. A partnership-based Board would better reflect this collective responsibility and create a stronger platform for joint leadership, collaboration and shared accountability.

INCREASING FOCUS ON DELIVERY AND IMPACT

14. During the development session, Board members and attendees considered progress against each of the Corporate Parenting priorities and identified opportunities to strengthen delivery arrangements. Whilst the Board provides strategic oversight, there was recognition that some priority areas would benefit from dedicated forums bringing together relevant partners, practitioners and young people to drive improvement activity between Board meetings.
15. The establishment of themed priority sub-groups would enable deeper focus on key areas of work, strengthen accountability and ensure that progress against agreed priorities remains visible and measurable.
16. This approach reflects recognised good practice by creating clear links between strategic oversight, partnership delivery and improved outcomes for children and young people.

STRENGTHENING THE INFLUENCE OF LIVED EXPERIENCE

17. The Board's young people-led meetings have become an important mechanism for understanding the experiences of children in our care and care leavers and ensuring their voices directly inform strategic planning and design and delivery of services.
18. The development session strongly supported retaining these sessions as a core feature of future arrangements. Participants also identified opportunities to strengthen feedback mechanisms through a formal "You Said, We Did" approach, ensuring children and young people can clearly see how their views have influenced strategic decisions and service improvements.
19. Maintaining dedicated young people-led sessions alongside strategic business meetings will ensure that lived experience remains a central and visible part of the Board's work.

PROPOSAL

20. Subject to approval through the Council's governance processes, it is proposed that the current Corporate Parenting Board transitions to a Corporate Parenting Partnership.

21. The proposed partnership model would include the following key elements:

- Partnership-Based Governance - the Corporate Parenting Partnership would operate as a partnership forum rather than a formal committee of the Council. This would better reflect the shared responsibilities of all corporate parents whilst retaining strong arrangements for strategic oversight, challenge and accountability.

Elected members would continue to fulfil their responsibilities as corporate parents and formal reporting arrangements would continue through existing Council governance structures.

- Chairing Arrangements – to be discussed at the Board meeting.
- Retention of Young People-Led Sessions - the current approach of alternating strategic business meetings with informal young people-led sessions would continue. These sessions provide valuable opportunities for children and young people to share experiences, identify issues that matter to them and contribute directly to discussions about service improvement. It is proposed that future arrangements would strengthen the connection between these sessions and formal Board business through regular reporting and a strengthened "You Said, We Did" framework.
- Establishment of Themed Priority Sub-Groups - a series of themed partnership sub-groups would be established aligned to the Corporate Parenting Commitments and strategic priorities. These groups would bring together relevant organisations, practitioners and care experienced young people to drive improvement activity, monitor progress and develop solutions to challenges identified by the Board. The groups would report regularly to the Corporate Parenting Partnership, strengthening accountability and ensuring clear oversight of delivery.
- Strengthened Partner Representation - membership arrangements would be reviewed to reflect the partnership model and ensure appropriate representation from those agencies identified through the development session as having an important contribution to improving outcomes for children in our care and care leavers.
- Performance and Impact Reporting - the Partnership would continue to receive regular performance and outcome information and would be supported by strengthened reporting arrangements including annual reporting on progress against priorities and the impact of corporate parenting activity.

SUMMARY

22. The Corporate Parenting Board has made significant progress in strengthening its approach to corporate parenting over recent years. This progress provides a strong foundation for the next stage of development.

23. The proposed partnership model seeks to build upon existing strengths whilst further embedding participation, strengthening partnership ownership and providing greater

focus on delivery and impact. The proposals recognise that effective corporate parenting is achieved through strong relationships, shared accountability and meaningful involvement of children and young people in shaping services and support.

24. The proposed model of a partnership co-chaired with care experienced young people, themed sub-groups and continued young people-led sessions represents a strengthened approach to corporate parenting whilst maintaining robust oversight and accountability.

NEXT STEPS

25. With agreement from the Board, the following actions are proposed:

- Preparation of a report seeking approval of the proposals through Cabinet and Full Council.
- Development of Terms of Reference and governance arrangements for the Partnership, in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Children and Young People and the Director of Corporate Services.
- Development of themed priority sub-groups and associated delivery plans.
- Review of Board (Partnership) membership arrangements.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

There are no financial implications from this proposal

LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

The Council has statutory responsibilities towards children in its care and care leavers, including the corporate parenting principles. These responsibilities rest with the Council but it is not a requirement for the Council to maintain a Corporate Parenting Board as a formal committee.

The current Corporate Parenting Board forms part of the Council's committee arrangements. The proposed Corporate Parenting Partnership would instead operate as a partnership and advisory forum, providing strategic oversight, challenge, partnership engagement and the involvement of children and young people. It would not exercise functions.

As the proposal involves the cessation of an existing Council committee and therefore amendment of the Council's Constitution, the final decision will require approval by Full Council. Subject to the Corporate Parenting Board endorsing the proposals in this report, the necessary governance changes will therefore be progressed through the Council's decision-making arrangements, including consideration by Cabinet and a recommendation to Council.

The report to Council will identify the consequential amendments required to the Constitution.

Terms of Reference for the Corporate Parenting Partnership will be developed as detailed above and will be agreed and maintained by the Partnership

The establishment of the Partnership will not alter the Council's statutory corporate parenting responsibilities.

Implementation of the new arrangements will take effect following Full Council approval.

RISK ASSESSMENT

The proposal is considered to be low risk as it supports the Local Authority to meet its statutory duties for care experienced children and young people.

CONSULTATION INCLUDING WARD/COUNCILLORS

Consultation has taken place with Corporate Parenting Board members and attendees and care experienced children and young people to develop this proposal.

Name of Contact Officer: Jane Smith, Head of Service – Children’s Strategy and Commissioning

Email Address: jane.smith@stockton.gov.uk

Corporate Parenting Board Brief Overview Report

Stronger Together: Sport, Wellbeing and Lifelong Memories Project

A funding application has been developed seeking **£7,500** to deliver a sport, wellbeing and enrichment programme for **care leavers and unaccompanied asylum-seeking young people aged 14-25**. The total project value is **£8,500**, with up to **£1,000 match funding** provided through Let's Take Action.

The programme has been designed in response to the significant challenges faced by many care-experienced young people, including social isolation, poor mental health, low confidence, trauma, and limited opportunities to participate in positive recreational activities.

Key Objectives

The project aims to:

- Improve emotional wellbeing and mental health.
- Reduce loneliness and social isolation.
- Increase participation in physical activity.
- Build confidence, resilience, and self-esteem.
- Strengthen peer relationships and support networks.
- Promote community integration and belonging.
- Create positive life experiences and lasting memories.

Proposed Activities

Young people will co-design a programme of activities, which may include:

- Football, basketball, volleyball and cricket.
- Kayaking, paddleboarding and swimming.
- Yoga, mindfulness, boxing fitness and running clubs.
- Trampolining, ice skating, bowling and golf.
- Sports festivals and team-building events.

Expected Impact

The programme is expected to directly benefit **25-30 young people**, providing opportunities to develop new skills, build friendships, improve wellbeing and access experiences they may not otherwise have had. A key focus is the creation of positive

memories and experiences that contribute to young people's confidence, identity and long-term resilience.

Corporate Parenting Relevance

This initiative aligns strongly with the Corporate Parenting commitment to ensure care-experienced young people have access to the same opportunities as their peers. It supports priorities around health and wellbeing, participation, inclusion, relationship building, and positive transitions into adulthood. By investing in opportunities that promote belonging and achievement, the project seeks to improve outcomes and enhance the lived experience of care leavers and unaccompanied asylum-seeking young people across Stockton-on-Tees.