

# Corporate Parenting Board

A meeting of Corporate Parenting Board was held on Friday, 6th December 2024.

**Present:** Cllr Lisa Evans (Chair), Cllr Pauline Beall, Cllr Mick Moore, Cllr Hilary Vickers, Cllr Jack Miller, Cllr Sally Ann Watson

**Officers:** Michael Henderson, Sarah Bowman Abouna, Jane Smith, Debra Farrow, David Ripley, Molly Larkin, Lisa Robinson, Janet Wilson, Alan Turner, Helen Brunskill

**Also in attendance:** Ryan Davis

**Apologies:** Cllr Carol Clark

## **CPB /24**      **Declarations of Interest**

There were no declarations of interest.

## **CPB /24**      **Minutes**

The minutes of the meeting held on 11 October 2024 were confirmed as a correct record.

## **CPB /24**      **Virtual School Head Teacher's Annual Report 2023/2024**

Members considered the Virtual School Head Teacher's Annual Report 2023/2024. A presentation highlighting the main issues in the report was also provided together with case studies.

With regard to the case studies, there was discussion around problems and delays that presented when children in our care were placed in accommodation outside the area, and in privately run homes. It was suggested that when a looked after child was in a council run home, then the council had much more control. It was explained that the council had rigorous processes, in place, to ensure out of area placements and private children's homes met their responsibilities and the council's standards.

It was felt that a comprehensive picture of the numbers, and types, of children's homes in the Borough would be helpful. It was explained that high level data could be compiled and shared.

It was agreed that the Sufficiency Strategy would be presented to the next Board meeting, which included details of work being undertaken to build capacity around placements and how the Council was working with private providers, whilst also pursuing in house provision.

Further discussion and key points:-

- Public Health would link with Children's Services to ensure pathways for children in our care were working well e.g. in terms of vaccinations, sexual health etc.
- It was important to reinstate regular links with Post 16 Education, such as colleges and universities.

- Members were informed of primary and secondary hubs where children and young people in care were brought together to do an activity, however, it was noted that attendance was dropping and would be reviewed.
- Any educational concerns that the virtual school had about a child placed out of area would result in significant scrutiny of the educational offer being made available. This was likely to involve visits to the educational establishments concerned.
- Resources in the Virtual School were limited and there was always concern around funding.
- The Virtual School had previously looked at taking on an apprentice, who was care experienced, but capacity had been an issue at the time. However, they would consider it in the future.

RESOLVED that the Annual Report and discussion be noted and actioned as appropriate.

**CPB  
/24**

### **Corporate Parenting Strategy and Commitments priorities and strategy development**

The Board considered the Corporate Parenting Strategy and the design of the Corporate Parenting commitments, document.

Three options for the commitments was provided.

Production of a video associated with the strategy and commitments was being considered.

Discussion:

- The page orientations of the strategy's cover and content needed to be the same.
- Use of the words 'council officers' should be reconsidered.
- It was important to ensure that we heard the voice of all children in our care and care leavers, including those placed outside the area.
- Stockton on Tees related watermarks could be placed on the pages.
- Public Health to provide Children's Health with some wording relating to young people being able to maximise their health and wellbeing.

Members considered the commitment designs and agreed on the icons included on design number 1 with the colour (lilac) and font of design number 2

RESOLVED that

1. the Corporate Parenting Strategy be approved, subject to the relevant changes, raised during discussion, being made.
2. the Commitments document design be approved, as detailed above
3. that the Director of Children's Services, in consultation with the Chair of the Board be given delegated authority to sign off the changes suggested, during discussion at the Board, together with any minor amendments, necessary.

## **Forward Plan**

The Board considered the Forward Plan and agreed to add items, for a future meeting on

- Transformation work around Early Intervention and Prevention.
- Special Guardianship Orders
- Health Assessments (April)

During discussion reference was made to:

Railway 200 and linking with the No Limits Hub

Social Mobility work

Sign up to care leavers covenant

Hearing the carers voice at various meetings

The book tree and use of vouchers