

CORPORATE PARENTING BOARD TERMS OF REFERENCE

Purpose of the Corporate Parenting Board

Worcestershire County Council looks after approximately 700 children who are unable to remain in the care of their parents. When a child becomes 'looked after' the tasks of their parents become the corporate responsibility of the County Council.

This is known as 'corporate parenting' and it is the collective responsibility of the council to prioritise the needs of children in care and seek for them the same outcomes any good parent would want for their own children.

There are three defining themes for achieving better outcomes for children in care and their families through excellent corporate parenting. These are high aspirations, stable relationships and taking time to listen to the voice of the child.

The Corporate Parenting Board is designed to provide the necessary leadership that drives an ambitious and multi-agency approach to improving outcomes for children in care and care leavers. It will oversee satisfactory completion of actions identified within the Board's strategy and will promote the pledges within the Children in Care Charter in a way that becomes meaningful to corporate parents and officers who work with children in care and care leavers. In order to undertake these functions well it must work in a way that ensures the voice of children and young people is influential in decision making.

1. Role and Remit of the Corporate Parenting Board

The Corporate Parenting Board was established by the County Council's Cabinet in July 2004 in order to develop a Corporate Parenting Strategy and progress the Corporate Parenting agenda.

The Board is a cross-party advisory body to the Council's Executive and others and is chaired by the Cabinet Member with Responsibility for Children and Families (as appointed by the Leader of the Council from time to time).

The Board does not take executive decisions but provides leadership and a governance structure for corporate parenting in order to drive forward the outcomes for Looked After Children and Care Leavers.

The Board will:

- Make sure that the whole council and partner agencies commit to the principles of excellent corporate parenting.

- Set high expectations and seek to improve long term outcomes for all children in care – their happiness, wellbeing, educational success and future prospects
- Make sure that the voice of the child and young person in care influences both policy and the services that they receive, and that young people are engaged with any action intended to develop and improve services or to recruit key staff members
- Ensure that there is a good understanding of current and proposed government expectations regarding the services to Looked After Children and Care Leavers.
- Receive reports on qualitative and quantitative information about services and outcomes and review the progress of the Children and Young People's Plan with regards to Looked After Children and Care Leavers.
- Lead on the development, review and promotion of the Corporate Parenting Strategy across the Council and involve partners in order to improve services and respond to changing needs.
- Celebrate the successes of children in care and care leavers
- Develop an informed view of County Council provision and services through a programme of well-planned visits and feedback from Board members.
- Link as appropriate with the Children and Families Overview and Scrutiny Panel.
- Develop a relationship with Worcestershire Safeguarding Children Board and Worcestershire Safeguarding Adult Board for sharing information.

2. **Membership of the Corporate Parenting Board**

County Councillors (voting)

- Cabinet Member with Responsibility for Children, Families and Communities (Chair).
- 2 further Conservative Members
- 1 2013 Group Member
- 1 Labour Member
- 1 IA Member.

(Representative of the political groups will be as nominated by their respective Group Leaders from time to time.)

District Councils (voting)

- 1 representative from each of the 6 District Councils within Worcestershire (i.e. Bromsgrove, Malvern Hills, Redditch, Worcester City, Wychavon and Wyre Forest) as nominated by each District Council with the expectation that the nominee will be the Children and Young People's Champion for that particular Council.

Children in Care and Care Leavers representatives (Co-opted non-voting)

- 2 representatives from Children in Care and Care Leavers (Attendees to be nominated by a representative of the Director of Children, Families and Communities)

Family/carer representatives (Co-opted non-voting)

- 2 representatives from families and carers (Attendees to be nominated by a representative of the Director of Children, Families and Communities)

Attendance by Others (Non-voting)

- The Board will be supported by the Director of Children, Families and Communities and/or her staff.
- Representatives of Health bodies.
- Appropriate Cabinet Members with Responsibility, other elected members, officers of the Councils (County and/or districts) or any other individual or organisation may be invited by the Board or the Chair to attend Board Meetings as guests e.g. when relevant to their portfolios or office are considered. Such attendees are not members of the Board but may address the Board or respond to its questions at the discretion of the Chair. Reasonable notice of an invitation will be provided to such invitees.

3. Frequency of Meetings and Items of Business

- A Vice-Chairman will be appointed from amongst the County Council membership of the Board at the first meeting following the County Council elections. The Vice-Chairman shall not be a member of the County Council administration. The term of office will be for the life of the Council unless that Member ceases to be a member of the Board
- The Corporate Parenting Board will meet at least 6 times a year at County Hall.
- Agendas and reports for the Board will be sent out by or on behalf of the Director of Children, Families and Communities at least one week prior to

each meeting (based on a forward planning process of agenda items). If a report is unavailable at the time of despatch of the agenda then it will be circulated as soon as it becomes available.

- Urgent agenda items which are not on the agenda may only be considered with the consent of the Chair. In the absence of the Chairman, the Vice-Chairman be authorised to give consent to urgent items.
- Urgent meetings of the Board may be called by the Chair.
- The Board will not meet in public.
- The Board will endeavour to operate by consensus. Should the Board need to take a decision other than by consensus, then each member of the Board present shall have one vote, and in the event of a tie the Chair may exercise a second or casting vote.
- A meeting is only a quorum if three elected members of the Board are present.
- Substitutions should not be appointed.
- Informal sub-groups can be established by the Board as and when required in relation to particular subject matters. The size and membership of the sub-group will be determined by the Board. The sub-group would report their findings back to the Board.

4. Objectives

The Corporate Parenting Board will oversee the implementation of the Corporate Parenting Strategy and the link into Worcestershire's Children and Young People Plan.

5. Reporting

The Corporate Parenting Board will produce an Annual Report in March each year on their work and findings over that year. This will be presented to the Cabinet Member with Responsibility for Children, Families and Communities, the Director of Children, Families and Communities and the Chief Executive of the County Council, and reported through the Health and Well-being Board, the Children and Families Overview and Scrutiny Panel and the Children in Care Council. The Cabinet Member with Responsibility for Children, Families and Communities will make reference to the Annual Report in his/her report to Council. District Council representatives will report to their Councils as appropriate.

6. Scrutiny

The Board is not a statutory Scrutiny body. If there is a specific need for informal Scrutiny on an issue related to Looked After Children, individual (non-Cabinet) members of the Corporate Parenting Board could be co-opted to carry out the

Scrutiny as part of a Scrutiny Task Group reporting back to the Children and Families Scrutiny Panel or Overview and Scrutiny Performance Board as required.

SL - September 2016