

Proposal for the delivery of a sub-group approach to the business of the Corporate Parenting Board.

1. Introduction.

The priorities of the Corporate Parenting Board (CPB) have previously been delivered through various iterations of a MALAP (Multi-agency Looked After Partnership) approach. These groups have not been as effective or had the necessary traction required to make a sufficient or sustained impact, despite efforts to review and improve the ways of working.

At the time of writing we are out for consultation on a redesigned Corporate Parenting Strategy which will be completed by the end of October 2020. This provides an opportunity to consider the arrangements for the work of the Board and any sub-groups which sit underneath it. It is a key function of the CPB to deliver against the Corporate Parenting Strategy and provide the necessary challenge to the services across the partnership.

2. The Corporate Parenting Strategy.

The Corporate Parenting Strategy outlines the vision and intentions for delivering services and outcomes for children in care and care leavers. It is made up of the overall strategy and also combines the separate strategies for permanency and sufficiency.

The principles of the strategy are outlined below. These principles have been developed in consultation with children and young people through 'guiding principle workshops' delivered by 'The Care Leaders' within the Middlesbrough Children Matter activity over the summer period 2020.

The principles of the strategy are:

- Your home.
- Your friends and family.
- Your education and employment.
- Your health and well-being.
- Your adult life.
- Your voice and influence.
- Your needs and wishes.

The priorities identified in the strategy and supported by our improvement plan are:

- Prevention and the edge of care.

- Sufficient and stable placements.
- Voice, participation and influence.
- Education, employment, health and well-being.
- Permanency planning.
- Maximising demand and maximising resources for children in care.

3. New ways of working for the sub-group structure of the Corporate Parenting Board.

The Chair and Vice Chair of the Corporate Parenting Board are fully committed to delivering against the principles and priorities outlined in the strategy and are proposing a new sub-group arrangement which will replace the previous MALAP structure. It is suggested that task and finish groups would be a way to take forward these priorities and any other issues which emerge locally or nationally which we need to be sighted on and responsive to. This approach would be committed to taking a partnership approach to solutions and also to using best practice to inform how we work with children in care and care leavers in Middlesbrough. It would be collaborative and seek out learning from other local authorities who deliver good or better services and achieve good or better outcomes as Corporate Parents.

Some early suggestions for areas of focus which fit within the priorities and principles are as follows:

- The role of members in Corporate Parenting.
- Young people delivering training to Corporate Parents.
- Life story work.
- Meeting children and young people's health needs and improving performance in health assessments.
- Children who are placed at a distance from the town.
- The offer to Care Leavers (to link with Care Leavers Week).

These suggestions are not exclusive and for further discussion and agreement at the CPB. Following agreement with CPB, priorities could form a forward plan for the coming year.

It is proposed that the first task and finish group will be:

Exploring good practice, the role of members in Corporate Parenting Boards.

This task and finish group will involve Cllr Hellaoui, Cllr Higgins, Cllr White and Cllr Garvey and will involve an outward facing approach to exploring good practice in other Local Authorities who have services to looked after children and care leavers which are rated good or better by Ofsted. The aim of the task and finish group will be to seek out good practice in relation to Corporate

Parenting Boards and consider where learning can be used to develop the work of Middlesbrough's CPB.

All task and finish groups will be well supported by officers, with Terms of Reference developed for each group to ensure a focused and structured approach to the task. Reporting back to CPB will be through a 'Spotlight Report'. A suggested template for the report (below) would allow feedback to CPB in a consistent way.

This was the issue:
This is what we did:
This is what we found out:
This is what we did differently:
This is the impact:

4. Conclusion and recommendations.

The approach outlined will deliver against the principles and priorities in the Corporate Parenting Strategy and allow for a task and finish approach to the work we need to do for children in care and care leavers in Middlesbrough. It will be explorative and professionally curious in its approach. It will also be a continuous process, be responsive and adapt to emerging issues both locally and nationally. It will be accountable for reporting back through the 'Spotlight' reporting and also through the performance management and quality assurance processes already in place.

The Chair and the Vice Chair are hoping that members of the Board are fully engaged, participate in an enthusiastic way and work through the critical priorities to ensure we are all good Corporate Parents who aspire for the best outcomes for the children in our care.

The report recommends that board members consider the proposal.

**Councillor Alma Hellaoui
Chair of Corporate Parenting Board.
October 2020.**