

APPENDIX 3

CORPORATE PARENTING COMMITTEE

TERMS OF REFERENCE

Southampton City Council is committed to improving the outcomes for Children in Care.

The Corporate Parenting Committee acts to assist the Council in continuing to fulfil its legal obligations and responsibilities towards children looked after (CLA) and leaving care, under the Children Act 1989 and Children (Leaving Care) Act 2000.

The Corporate Parenting Committee acts strategically to ensure that children looked after and care leavers are effectively supported to reach their potential through the provision of excellent parenting, high quality education, opportunities to develop their talents and skills, and effective support for their transition to adulthood.

The Corporate Parenting Committee has a responsibility to monitor and review the quality and effectiveness of services for CLA delivered by Corporate Parents; the council, partner agencies and commissioned services; to ensure that every child and young person looked after is supported to be safe, happy, healthy and to achieve their full potential. In addition, it has a key role in listening to the voice of children and young people looked after and leaving care.

1. Legislation and guidance that guides these Terms of Reference:

- Section 27 of the Children's Act 1989, amended 2006, places a duty on Housing, Education and Health Authorities to assist with Corporate Parenting;
- Section 22(3) Children's Act 1989/2004
- Quality Protects 1998, DfES 2003 – Councillor's Guide to being a Corporate Parent and the Duty on Local Authorities to Promote the Educational Achievement of Children in Care
- Children (Leaving Care) Act 2000 To increase support to young people leaving care;
- Promoting the Health Care needs of Looked After Children, Nov 2002;
- Adoption and Children's Act 2002;
- Guidance on the Education of Children and Young People in Public Care 2000.
- Care Matters: Transforming the lives of children and young people. Green Paper 2006
- Children and Young People Bill 2008

2. Membership of the Committee

The Corporate Parenting Committee is chaired by the Lead Member for Children's Services. Membership is from councillors, officers and organisations who are responsible for providing services directly to children looked after and/or care leavers.

The membership and involvement of young people from Southampton's Children in Care Council (CiCC) is a crucial element of the Committee to ensure young people looked after meet directly with key decision-makers and influence the priorities, decisions and service developments.

Elected Member's Membership:

- Six Councillor representatives from across all political parties including the Lead Member for Children and Young People

Service User Membership:

- Chair and Deputy Chair of the Children in Care Council
- Southampton Foster Carer's Association
- Youth Option

Officer Membership:

- Director People
- Head of Safeguarding
- Head of Education
- Virtual Headteacher
- Senior Manager Children Looked After
- Service Manager Children Looked After
- Named Nurse Children Looked After
- Head of Housing Services
- Clinical Commissioning Group
- Principal Officer Quality Assurance

The quorum is two councillors and two senior officers (Head of Service and above).

3. Meetings

- The Corporate Parenting Committee will meet on a bi-monthly basis.
- This body is serviced administratively by Democratic Services and supported by the Corporate Parenting Team.
- The Committee agrees an annual work programme setting out its key priorities and areas for action, and records outcomes of these actions.
- The chair of the Committee meets with the Director of People, Corporate Parenting Team Manager and Chair of the Children in Care Council separately before each Committee meeting to agree the agenda and review actions and progress.

4. Reporting Mechanisms:

- The Corporate Parenting Committee will not be a formal committee of the Council under either the Local Government Act 1972 or the Local Government Act 2000. The Committee will not have a formal decision making role but will support the Cabinet Member for Children's Services and the Director of People in the execution of their statutory decision making functions. Any actions required arising from deliberations, which are not within the delegations to the Director of People, would be the subject of a report to the appropriate decision making body.
- The Committee is required to submit an Annual Corporate Parenting report to Full Council and require Elected Members to endorse their commitment to Southampton City Council's Pledge to Children and Young People in Care.
- Minutes of the Committee are to be sent to the Director of People, Head of Children's Services and the Council's Management Team.
- The Committee has a requirement to submit an Annual Corporate Parenting report to the following bodies:
 - Southampton Safeguarding Children's Board
 - People Directorate DMT Service
 - Children's Trust Board

5. The Corporate Parenting Committee has a Responsibility:

- To oversee the implementation of the Southampton City Council Corporate Parenting Strategy and Action Plan and monitor the quality and effectiveness of services to ensure they fulfil the council's responsibilities and achieve good outcomes for LAC
- To monitor and evaluate progress of relevant legislation and government guidance and its implementation in Southampton to ensure services are responsive to the needs of LAC in line with the national agenda.
- To monitor and review the quality and effectiveness of services across the council, partner agencies and commissioned services to achieve continuing improvements in outcomes for looked after children and care leavers.
- To ensure that the voice and opinions of as wide a range as possible of children looked after and care leavers are heard and that their views are used to shape policy and monitor performance.
- To directly receive the views of children and young people looked after and leaving care via the Children in Care Council mechanisms and annual consultation to ensure their views and experiences directly influence decisions made at this level.
- To receive reports on all aspects of children looked after and care leavers' welfare as required from the local authority and partner agencies in sufficient detail to enable it to undertake its strategic responsibilities for planning, monitoring and evaluation.

- To monitor the performance of the Council by receiving progress reports on the score card of key performance indicators relating to children looked after and care leavers.
- To monitor Southampton's whole authority commitment to joint-working arrangements between council departments and partner agencies and examine ways in which holistic, integrated and cross-cutting practice can be further embedded and priorities and objectives agreed.
- To maintain a strategic overview on the development of all new policies, procedures and initiatives to ensure these are in line with local and national priorities and objectives including the Corporate Parenting Strategy; and that they will effectively meet the needs of children looked after.
- To make recommendations to decision makers in Southampton City Council and its strategic partners as it deems appropriate to fulfil its Corporate Parenting duty.
- To consider recommendations from internal and external inspections and reviews, for example Ofsted inspection, to agree the actions needed to address any issues identified and to evaluate the implementation of any plan agreed.