

**TITLE OF REPORT: Corporate Parenting Partnership Group**

**REPORT OF: Caroline O'Neill, Strategic Director, Children and Families**

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## **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

This report provides the context of the Corporate Parenting Plan and Corporate Parenting Partnership Group and the actions required in order for the Council to be a 'good corporate parent'.

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### **Introduction**

1. Gateshead Council has a unique responsibility to children who are cared for by the authority and care leavers as their 'corporate parents'. As such, the Council has legal and moral responsibilities towards them and as a corporate parent should carry out many of the roles a parent would. We must aspire to provide everything a loving parent does and should still be able to provide our children and young people with the best possible support and care so they can achieve good outcomes in life.
2. For the Council to be a good corporate parent, we need to have the highest ambitions for our children and young people looked after and have a 'whole council' approach to their care and upbringing, involving staff, carers, Elected Members and partner organisations alike. We will encourage everyone to do as much as they can to make sure that children and young people feel in control of their lives and able to overcome the barriers they face.
3. Gateshead Council has a strong commitment to corporate parenting, making it a priority for everyone as if they were our own children and young people.
4. The concept of Corporate Parenting was introduced by the Government in 1998 as part of a drive to improve the lives of children who are looked after by the local authority. The Corporate Parenting responsibility was reinforced in 2007 with the release of the White Paper 'Care Matters – Time for Change' and the underpinning legislation, Children and Young People Act 2008. The Children and Social Work Act 2017 now compels local authorities to evidence how they meet the seven Corporate Parenting Principles, as they are statutory in relation to looked after children and care leavers.
5. Whilst specific corporate parenting responsibilities do not apply to partner agencies, the Statutory Guidance to the Act (2018) notes that councils with the highest ambitions for looked after children and care leavers will seek to engage other agencies in meeting the needs of their young people.

### **The Corporate Parenting Principles**

6. The Corporate Parenting Principles set out seven fundamental requirements for looked after children and care leavers, as follows:
  - To act in the best interests, and promote the physical and mental health and wellbeing, of those children and young people
  - To encourage those children and young people to express their views, wishes and feelings
  - To take into account the views, wishes and feelings of those children and young people
  - To help those children and young people gain access to, and make the best use of, services provided by the local authority and its relevant partners
  - To promote high aspirations, and seek to secure the best outcomes, for those children and young people
  - For those children and young people to be safe, and for stability in their home lives, relationships and education or work
  - To prepare those children and young people for adulthood and independent living

### **The Role of Partners**

7. The Corporate Parenting Partnership Group will promote a strong corporate parenting ethos and consider how services can be delivered differently to meet the needs of the care population as effectively as possible. Gateshead Council alone cannot meet the needs of Looked After Children and Care Leavers and needs to work effectively with partners to implement the statutory Corporate Parenting Principles.

### **The Partnership Group**

8. The Corporate Parenting Partnership Group is made up of colleagues from the Council, Health Services, Education, the Voluntary Sector and other relevant organisations. This group is chaired by the Assistant Strategic Director – Social Work and the Service Manager – Looked After Children is the vice chair.
9. The group will take forward issues and decisions arising from the Corporate Parenting Board which require the engagement of operational services in and outside the council. The actions and recommendations agreed by this group will be shared with the Corporate Parenting Board.

### **Conclusion**

10. Every year of the three-year Corporate Parenting Strategy, consultation will take place to ensure the relevance and development of the operational plan that supports it. This consultation will be with children and young people in or leaving care and a sample of their corporate parents.
11. Every good parent wants the best for their child, and the Corporate Parenting Operational Plan 2021-2024 sets a clear commitment from Gateshead Council to its children and young people in or leaving care.

**Corporate Parenting Governance Chart**

CORPORATE PARENTING BOARD

CORPORATE PARENTING  
PARTNERSHIP

**Chair:** Assistant Strategic Director Social  
Work  
**Vice Chair–** Children and Families and  
Service Manager – Looked After Children

**ARTS, LEISURE &  
CULTURE  
WORKSTREAM**

**VACANT**

Rebecca Pedlow  
Chris Myhill  
Julie Nicholson  
Gavin Bradshaw  
Chris Hulme  
Valerie Ender  
Lynn Littler  
Karolynne Hart  
Steve Jinski (ext)  
Wendy Smith (ext)  
Vikas Kumar (ext)  
Martin Hylton (ext)  
Annie Bedford (ext)  
Steve Sullivan (ext)  
Anne Fountain  
(ext)

**EDUCATION,  
TRAINING &  
EMPLOYMENT  
WORKSTREAM**

**Jean Thompson**

Danny Meek  
Karen Ruddick  
Lauren Collinson  
Sonia Anderson  
Emma Blackwell  
Danny Meek  
Beverley Hunter-  
Smith  
Martin McDonald

**HEALTH  
WORKSTREAM**

**Linda Hubbucks  
Ellen Robinson**

Jon Gaines  
Moiria Richardson  
Jackie Ingram  
Shauna Garrett  
Clare Cavanagh  
Maxine Duffy  
Jean Hubble  
Dawn Harvey  
Susan Walker

**PARTICIPATION  
WORKSTREAM**

**Chris Hulme**

Laura Cassin  
Jackie Ingram  
Lucy Peart  
Beverley Hunter-  
Smith  
Martin Hanson

**PLACEMENTS &  
ACCOMMODATION  
WORKSTREAM**

**Andi Parker**

Jennifer Neill  
Martin Hanson  
Jill Little  
Martin Hanson  
Joanne Waters  
Julie Young  
Penny St Bernard  
Kathryn Reeve  
Paul Kelly  
Jane Skittrall  
Ben Van  
Wagtendonk  
Emma McManus

**CARE LEAVERS  
WORKSTREAM**

**Beverley Hunter-  
Smith**

Kate Sheldon  
Care Leaver

**PERFORMANCE  
WORKSTREAM**

To be agreed in  
2021

**Corporate Parenting Workstreams**

All workstreams will be underpinned by the principles of:

- Co-production with children, young people, carers and other stakeholders
- Focusing on the impact of any actions on the lives of children and young people in care, and Care Leavers
- Proactive solution focused approaches

Workstream	Three Key Priorities for 2021	
<b>Education, Training &amp; Employment</b>	5.1a	Ensure that all Gateshead children have an effective, high quality PEP
	5.2a	Develop a process to ensure that all post-16 young people have a written career plan
	5.2b	Ensure the consistency of engagement of post-16 young people with EET and to achieve 90% attendance
<b>Health</b>	4.1a 4.1b	Recovery – return to face to face health assessments and access to health services including dental and identifying health needs of care leavers. Monitoring compliance with statutory timeframes via score card.
	4.1b	Strengthen provision of emotional & mental health support to meet local need and ensure that children placed at distance receive the service they require. Strengthen assessment of mental health needs on entering care.
	4.1c	Improve support and advice to reduce unplanned pregnancies and the number of babies of care leavers coming into the care system.
<b>Participation</b>	1.1a	Planning session for CSCMT to be delivered by young people so that they understand the current challenges faced by children and young people.
	1.1b	Voice of the Child Audit to highlight areas for development to strengthen the voice of the child in LAC reviews and explore styles of recording, consultation documents and how the IROs code participation in the process.
	1.1c	Organisation of a virtual celebration event to recognise and reward the achievements of our children and young people during the difficult pandemic period.
<b>Placements &amp; Accommodation</b>	2.1e	Look at specific provision to enable CYP to reside in or return to Gateshead. This may increase Gateshead provision or work alongside it
	5.1g	Ensure work to bring CYP back into Gateshead dovetails with active work on alternative education provision

	2.1e	Develop the Shared Lives offer to work with CYP from 16yrs as an alternative to fostering and residential placements.
<b>Care Leavers</b>	6.1a	Develop a multi agency Care Leavers group to consult with young people and inform and improve service delivery
	6.1a	Consult with young people regarding their transition to the Leaving care team, accommodation and the SAILS panel process.
	6.1c	Consult with young people in relation to their awareness of their entitlements as care leavers.

### **Recommendation**

It is requested that the Corporate Parenting Board note the contents of this report

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