

Corporate Parenting Forum Terms of Reference

Council Priorities

Corporate Parenting highlights the collective responsibility of Councils, their elected members and their partners for all children and young people in their care and constitutes the formal and local partnerships needed between all local authority departments and services, and associated agencies, who are responsible for working together to meet the needs of looked after children and young people.

Statutory Responsibility

The Children Act 1989 and the Children Act 2009 set out the duty of a local authority to safeguard and promote the welfare of looked after children. This duty is exercised through the role of the corporate parent to children who are looked after. The term 'looked after' refers to any child or young person for whom the authority has, or shares, parental responsibility, or for whom the authority provides care and accommodation to the child or young person on behalf of their parent.

Aims and Principles

The Corporate Parenting plays a key role in ensuring that the Council is effectively discharging its duty, as corporate parent, to safeguard and promote the welfare of looked after children. To achieve this Councilors need to have a clear understanding and awareness of the 'pledge' they have made to Looked After Children in Derby City so that they can ensure that their responsibilities as corporate parents are reflected in all aspects of the work of the Council. In addition to this all service divisions should have their services audited to improve their ability to deliver to the corporate parenting agenda, and have mechanisms in place to continually monitor and review the means by which their services contribute to positive outcomes for looked after children; specifically, each division will develop and promote:

In accordance with requirements of the Care Matters Time For Change document, the main aim of the Forum is to oversee the and ensure Derby City Council has provided the following for children and young people in it's care:

- Ensure children are provided with safe and stable environment where they can develop positive and caring relationships with adults and children.
- Achieve the highest possible standard of education, wherever possible in mainstream schools.

- Ensure that they helped to be emotionally and physically as fit and healthy as possible.
- Understand their needs and ensure they have realistic aspirations, self determination , confidence and resilience to achieve what they want to achieve.
- Support and assist their transition to adulthood and promote their economic prospects.
- Ensure children are consulted and influence decisions and plans that affect them individually

To achieve this, the Forum will ensure services are in are in place to

- Match children to placements that will need there assessed needs.
- Work with children and young people to resolve and problems they may experience.
- Work with other agencies to ensure the children in our care benefit from the services they provide.
- Children leave care with support and when they are ready.
- To receive regular reports on the provision of leaving care, housing and training services for Care-Leavers.
- Celebrate their achievements and successes
- Listen to their views and ensure they influence policy plans and practice
- Support families to enable them to contribute to the care of their children.
- Engage with education, employment and training opportunities.
- Respect and promote their cultural identity.
- Encourage them to become active citizens within their communities.

Meetings and Membership

The Forum will meet every two months. The agenda and minutes will be circulated prior to the meeting.

The lead member will chair the Forum and the Vice Chair will be the Strategic Director of Children's Services. The lead Officer will be Service Director , Specialist Services.

Membership will consist of:

- Senior representatives of all strategic directors of the council
- Cross-party representation of Councillors
- Children and Young Peoples' Engagement Officer
- Representative from of Derby City Carers
- Representative from Connexions/ Schools
- Representative from Health Services
- Representative from Derby Foster Carers
- Representatives from Children Services Department

Corporate Parent Forum members agree to take into account the needs of Looked After Children at every opportunity and will champion the needs of this group in their respective service settings.

Corporate Parent Forum meetings will be themed around the Every Child Matters outcomes within the Care Matters Time for Change document and the children's 'Pledge.'

The objectives of the forum will be closely monitored and reviewed. A progress report will be presented at each Forum

Governance

Corporate Parent Forum will report annually to

- Children's Trust Board
- Derby City Partnership
- Derby Management Team
- Cabinet
- Full council
- Children in Care Council

Corporate Parent Forum will invite the Chief executive and the Lead Member of the council to one meeting a year.

Views of Children and Young People

The Forum will ensure that the views of children and young people are represented. The Children and Young Peoples' Engagement Officer will be a Forum member. Evidence of how and where children and young peoples views have influenced policy and practice will be incorporated in the work of the Forum.

The forum will report back to the Children in Care Council when invited to do so.

Involvement of Elected Members

The Corporate Parenting forum relies on cross party involvement and commitment. It is expected that Members will raise the profile of Looked After Children in their respective service areas and political groups and settings

It is expected that Elected Members on the Forum will have participated in the dedicated training events for members relating to Corporate Parenting, Looked After Children and Safeguarding.

Examples of where and how elected members can actively promote the needs of Looked After Children:

- Engagement with the work of the Children in Care Council and the project worker
- Jointly undertaking Regulation 33 inspections
- Arranging to visit Children's Homes and talking to the children who live there about their experience of care.
- Attend events and ceremonies celebrating the success of Looked After Children
- Act as a mentor for individual Looked After Children
- Visit service areas in Social Care and Safeguarding
- Promote and champion Looked After Children within the formal and informal political arena.

Duties of Officers and Co-opted Forum attendees

All members of the Forum have a responsibility to:

- Raise the profile of Looked After Children through work and developments in their divisions.
- Act as champions for the needs and rights of Looked After Children
- Prioritise the needs of Looked After Children – e.g. in developing apprenticeships.
- To identify resources for Corporate Parenting and use these to good effect – e.g. leisure facilities for Looked After Children and their carers.
- To ensure children in care are able to participate in plans for their care and developments for service planning and delivery.

The Terms of Reference will be reviewed in June 2012

Andrew Bunyan
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(Children and Young People's Services)

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