

# Cabinet Meeting

## 9 December 2015

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| <b>Report title</b>                            | Corporate Parenting Strategy                       |  |
| <b>Decision designation</b>                    | Amber  |  |
| <b>Cabinet member with lead responsibility</b> | Councillor Val Gibson<br>Children and Young People |  |
| <b>Key decision</b>                            | Yes  |  |
| <b>In forward plan</b>                         | No   |  |
| <b>Wards affected</b>                          | All  |  |
| <b>Accountable director</b>                    | Linda Sanders, People                              |  |
| <b>Originating service</b>                     | Looked After Children                              |  |
| <b>Accountable employee(s)</b>                 | Emma Bennett                                       | Service Director, Children and Young People  |
|  | Alice Vickers                                      | Corporate Parenting Officer  |
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| <b>Report to be/has been considered by</b>     | Corporate Parenting Board                          | 1 July 2015  |
|  | People Leadership Team                             | 23 November 2015   |
|  | Strategic Executive Board                          | 24 November 2015   |

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### Recommendation(s) for action or decision:

The Cabinet is recommended to:

Refer the report to Full Council with a recommendation that it:

- i. Approves the Corporate Parenting Strategy 2015 -2017.
- ii. Endorse the Council's corporate commitment to the needs of Looked After Children and Care Leavers.
- iii. Pledges personal commitment to raising the profile and support offered to Wolverhampton's Looked After Children and Care Leavers.

## 1.0 Purpose

- 1.1 That Cabinet considers and approves the Corporate Parenting Strategy 2015-2017 for Looked after Children (LAC) and Care Leavers (CL) and endorses its use across the Council and its partners in order to prioritise the needs of this vulnerable group of children and young people.

## 2.0 Background

- 2.1 Care Matters 2007 established an expectation that every local authority would have a strategy to support its children in care. Previous strategies have highlighted key priorities and these priorities have been continually monitored and measured against progress made. Some developments to note is that corporate parenting responsibilities are included in all new job descriptions for the City of Wolverhampton Council employees. There are now strengthened links with Youth Council and other participation forums for the Children in Care Council (CiCC). These areas of focus continue to be important and need to be continued to develop in order to meet the needs of children and young people in care and the council's commitment to Corporate Parenting. Further key requirements have been developed as a result of consultation and feedback from Wolverhampton's LAC and CiCC in June 2014 and May 2015. This consultation highlighted the strategy on four areas of focus which incorporates all of the key requirements laid down by the CiCC.

## 3.0 Progress

- 3.1 Previous strategies have highlighted key priorities and these priorities have been continually monitored, measured and progress made. These priorities continue to be important developments for meeting the needs of Children and Young People in Care and the council's commitment to Corporate Parenting. Further key requirements have been developed as a result of consultation and feedback from LAC and the CiCC in June 2014 and May 2015. This consultation highlighted four areas of focus which incorporate all of the key requirements identified by the CiCC.

| Areas of Focus                     | Key requirements   |
|------------------------------------|--|
| Education, Employment and Training | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Help young people to make achievements</li><li>• Encourage young people to be involved in making choices about school</li><li>• Maximise access to work experience and apprenticeship opportunities for LAC and Care Leavers including a specific dedicated programme within the City of Wolverhampton Council</li></ul> |
| Health and Wellbeing               | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Share more information and support about sexual health</li><li>• Develop partnerships between health and education to offer cohesive and knowledgeable support for LAC especially in relation to health appointments and recorded absence</li></ul>  |

|                               |  |
|-------------------------------|--|
| Social Skills and Development | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Ensure LAC are able to access universal services enabling them to spend time with children who aren't in care</li><li>• Keep siblings together &amp; encourage more contact with siblings</li><li>• Strengthen care leavers' preparation for independence, teaching independence skills from an earlier age and increasing access to life story work</li><li>• Make placements changes more positive, by preparing young people about what the family and the community might be able to offer</li></ul> |
| Corporate Responsibilities    | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Ensure services understand LAC and Care Leavers better and support offered reflects their needs</li><li>• Strengthen the social work workforce to ensure that they are skilled, knowledgeable and stable in order to meet the needs of our LAC population</li><li>• Focus on the positive things we do</li></ul>   |

#### **4.0 Financial implications**

4.1 There are no financial implications as a result of this report.  
[NM/19112015/V]

#### **5.0 Legal implications**

5.1 The relevant legislation is referred to in the body of this report and in the background papers. There are no immediate legal implications arising from this report.  
[RB/22112015/R]

#### **6.0 Equalities implications**

6.1 An initial equalities screening has been completed on this strategy and action plan, this has highlighted that equality implications have been addressed within both documents.

#### **7.0 Environmental implications**

7.1 There are no specific environmental implications.

#### **8.0 Human resources implications**

8.1 There are no specific implications on Human Resources.

#### **9.0 Corporate landlord implications**

9.1 There are no specific implications as a Corporate Landlord

#### **10.0 Schedule of background papers**

10.1 There are no background papers.