

# Corporate Parenting Board

## 25 May 2016

<b>Report title</b>	Corporate Parenting Strategy Update	
<b>Cabinet member with lead responsibility</b>	Councillor Val Gibson Children and Young People	
<b>Wards affected</b>	All	
<b>Accountable director</b>	Emma Bennett,	
<b>Originating service</b>	Children and Young People	
<b>Accountable employee(s)</b>	Alice Vickers	Corporate Parenting Officer
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<b>Report to be/has been considered by</b>		

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### Recommendations for noting:

The Corporate Parenting Board is asked to note:

1. Consider and comment on the developments of the Corporate Parenting Strategy since April 2015 and the progress of the action plan.

#### 1.0 Purpose

- 1.1 That the Corporate Parenting Board considers the developments over the past year of Corporate Parenting Strategy and action plan.

#### 2.0 Background

- 2.1 The City of Wolverhampton Council approved a new two year strategy in December 2015. An action plan to look at four areas of focus, which are the main commitments laid down in the strategy, has been developed and implemented throughout the year.

2.2 The aim of this report is to feedback on progress.

### 3.0 Progress, options, discussion, etc.

3.1 The Strategy was approved and endorsed by The City of Wolverhampton Council's Cabinet in December 2015. It is important to note that although the strategy wasn't signed off until December the areas of focus had begun to be progressed from April 2015.

3.2 The areas of focus are Education, Employment and Training, Health, Social Skills and Corporate Responsibilities. This report will focus on each area in turn and highlight key progress and discuss any areas of challenge. These areas of challenge will influence the 2016/2017 action plan.

### 3.3 Education, Employment and Training

The key requirements in this area of focus are:

- Help young people to make achievements.
- Encourage young people to be involved in making choices about school.
- Maximise access to work experience and apprenticeship opportunities for Looked after Children (LAC) and Care Leavers (CL).

In order to address these key requirements an Education, Employment and Training action group has been set up with colleagues from Social Care, the Virtual School, Connexions, Business Education and Enterprise, Procurement, the Voluntary Sector (The Children's Society, Talent Match), Wolverhampton University, and colleges. From these meetings targeted LAC and CL opportunities have been highlighted and developed. These include:

- 12 places for young people have been reserved to receive "Aspire to University" coaching. "Aspire to University" access to work placements had been delivered through the Creating Chances Charity linked to this programme
- Support package for training opportunities for LAC is also being prepared by Trowers and Hamlyn.
- Three trainee places are also being made available for LAC and Care Leavers within the Council and in service areas that match the career aspirations of the candidates.
- Placements for work experience at the City of Wolverhampton Council for LAC have also been approved recently by the People Leadership Team.
- It is now mandatory in all Wolverhampton Procurement exercises exceeding £164,000, that 10% of the overall scoring module is evaluated on Social Value. In association with The City of Wolverhampton Charter; *Develop and grow a skilled workforce* – we have the ability to ensure all contracted suppliers provide commitment to supporting opportunities for LAC and Care Leavers.
- A handbook for managers in relation to work experience placements for LAC has been developed.

- An E-learning module for colleagues has been developed to support LAC and CL in work experience opportunities within the council and will be available to partners
- Joint work has been further developed with the Connexions Service with regard to the hard to reach, not in employment, education or training LAC.
- 20% of the last LAC year 11 cohort have achieved 5 A\* - C grade at GCSE.

### 3.3 Health

The key requirements in this area of focus are:

- Share more information and support about sexual health.
- Develop partnership between Health and Education to offer cohesive and knowledgeable support for LAC especially in relation to health appointments and recorded absence.

The Corporate Parenting Officer regularly attends the LAC Health Steering group which is a partnership group between the LA (Local Authority), CCG (Clinical Commissioning Group), RWT (Royal Wolverhampton Trust) and BCPFT (Black Country Partnership Foundation Trust)

Sharing information and support about sexual health is now part of the LAC Health Steering group agenda and information on contact details for the LAC nurse are also now on the webpage [www.wolverhamptonlac.co.uk](http://www.wolverhamptonlac.co.uk). Monitoring the numbers of LAC/CL accessing sexual health services will be explored for next year's plan as the service is now using a marker to show whether service users are LAC or CL.

Drop in sessions for CL are now arranged to take place at The Way on Friday afternoons.

Total Respect (TR) training has been delivered to the CCG designated Dr and Nurse and an awareness raising session has also been delivered to Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service (CAMHS) in order to raise the profile of the needs of LAC/CL.

Work is being explored by the CCG and Public Health in understanding health needs of our LAC/CL and is now set as an agenda item on the LAC Health Steering group to inform service delivery and commissioning of services.

The CCG and RWT are committed to provide out of hours appointments for LAC health reviews and CAMHS appointments. They are currently looking at the Gem Centre's governance protocols and liabilities to extend opening hours.

The Corporate Parenting Officer has met with the Designated Teacher forum who has agreed to mark LAC absence for health related appointments as educated off site when it is not possible for these to be arranged outside of school hours. This has been included into the Model School Policy. This policy will be signed up to by all of the schools in Wolverhampton by the end of July 2016.

### 3.4 Social Skills and Development

The key requirements in this area of focus are:

- Encourage LAC to spend time with children who aren't in care .
- Keep siblings together and encourage more contact between siblings.
- Strengthen Care Leavers' preparation for independence, teaching independence skills from an earlier age and increasing access to life story work.
- Make placement changes more positive, by preparing young people about what the foster family or residential home and the local community might be able to offer.

A webpage for LAC and CL has now been published. [www.wolverhamptonlac.co.uk](http://www.wolverhamptonlac.co.uk)  
Part of the content of this webpage are links to Wolverhampton and neighbouring authorities' statutory children and families services which highlight universal and specialist provision for Children and Young People.

The requirement to look at keep siblings together and encouraging more contact between siblings, requires further work and will be included on the action plan for 2016/17.

The Care Leavers' Forum (CLF) has been launched as part of the New Belongings Project.

The CLF has been meeting at the Way, and are utilising services there alongside other young people, members of the forum are also accessing a preparing for independence group.

Links to local provision and events are posted on the Webpage and highlighted through the LAC and CL Facebook page. Options for communicating this information to foster carers are being explored for next year's action plan; along with developing an email based Corporate Parenting newsletter for Independent reviewing Officers (IRO's), social workers and foster carers updating them on opportunities and progress of the strategy.

A 12 month work plan has been set to deliver mandatory training for foster carers on Total Respect, Corporate Parenting and preparing for independence.

Two Children in Care Council (CiCC) members are now sitting on the Youth Council.

### 3.5 Corporate Responsibilities

The key requirements in this area of focus are:

- Ensure services understand LAC better.
- Strengthen the social work workforce to ensure that they are skilled and knowledgeable to meet the needs of our LAC population.
- Focus on the positive things LAC do.

This year we have a council commitment to ensure all reports for The Corporate Parenting Board (CPB) are initially presented to the CiCC for comment and consultation. There will be two joint meetings with the CiCC, CLF and Corporate Parenting Board (CPB) to look at matters of joint interest.

11 Councillors attended a special Total Respect training session. It is now part of the induction for new councillors joining the Cabinet.

An E-Learning module on the roles and responsibilities of Corporate Parenting for all colleagues has been designed with the young people and will be ready to launch early May. The young people on the CiCC have completed exercises and video content for this.

The Councillors' guide has been updated and an induction presentation for new Councillors completed. This is disseminated to those accessing Councillor induction sessions.

A programme of workshops on Total Respect for council colleagues has been set for school holidays to ensure young people's availability.

### 3.7 Feedback from the CiCC

This report was presented to the CiCC on 27 April 2016 and was warmly received. The features of the report that were comment on are:

- There were concerns why the figure was only 20% of young people achieving A-Cs – meaning 80% were not achieving this rate and the CiCC want to know what is being done to address this.
- One member informed the group that he had an appointment on a Saturday at the Gem centre for his Review Health Assessment.
- There were concerns that schools out of the City where LAC attend were not part of Wolverhampton's Model School Policy.
- The group discussed the Pupil Premium and how this was spent. It was felt young people were unable to challenge this in the Personal Education Plan (PEP) meeting.
- The CiCC also asked that the issues highlighted at the last Corporate Parenting Board meeting are included in the next year's action plan. This includes: young people's savings and benefit thresholds, and the practicalities of managing financial matters.
- CiCC members also requested that additional work be carried out on a guide for foster carers, including guidance such as what age it is appropriate for a young

person to have a mobile phone, and what age a young person should catch a bus on their own.

### 3.8 Conclusions

The action plan has been effective in developing partnerships and opportunities for LAC and CL. The main area of success has been the development of all procurement contracts for the Council to include evaluating all completed tenders in their response to how they can support and provide opportunities to LAC and CL as part of fulfilling their contract with the Council. Two contracts in this reporting timeframe have been awarded in this period: Trowers and Hamlin (Solicitors' firm) and Spellar Metcalf (building contractors). Trowers and Hamlin are designing a bespoke package of support for LAC and Care Leavers which will include work experiences. Work is still continuing to develop Spellar Metcalf offer.

Following consulting with the CiCC on this report, recommendations for the next 2016/2017 action plan are:

Areas of Focus	Key requirements
<b>Education, Employment and Training</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Help young people to feel able to challenge and share their views in the Personal Education Plan (PEP)</li> <li>• Raise Aspirations of LAC and CL and professionals supporting them</li> <li>• Maximise access to work experience and apprenticeship opportunities for LAC and Care Leavers</li> </ul>
<b>Health and Wellbeing</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Develop health passports for LAC and CL</li> <li>• Develop partnership between health and education to offer cohesive and knowledgeable support for LAC especially in relation to health appointments and recorded absence</li> </ul>
<b>Social Skills and Development</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A guide for foster carers such as what age to have a mobile phone, and what age to catch a bus by yourself.</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, with a focus on budgeting and money matters</li> <li>• Make placement changes more positive, by preparing young people about what the family and the community might be able to offer</li> </ul>

<b>Corporate Responsibilities</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Ensure that Young People's savings are protected and do not effect benefits</li><li>• Ensure services understand LAC better.</li><li>• Strengthen the social work workforce to ensure that they are skill and knowledgeable in meeting the needs of our LAC population</li><li>• Focus on the positive things we do</li></ul>
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#### **4.0 Financial implications**

4.1 There are no financial implications as a result of this report.

[NM/18052016/S]

#### **5.0 Legal implications**

5.1 There are no legal implications arising from this report. TC/18052016/S

#### **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.

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

9.1 Corporate Parenting Strategy 2015-2016