

# Corporate Parenting Board

16 March 2017

<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, Service Director, Children and Young People	
<b>Originating service</b>	Children and Young People	
<b>Accountable employee(s)</b>	Alice Vickers Tel Email	Corporate Parenting Officer 01902 553010 Alice.Vickers@wolverhampton.gov.uk
<b>Report to be/has been considered by</b>		

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## Recommendations for action or decision:

The Corporate Parenting Board is recommended to:

1. Consider and comment on the developments of the Corporate Parenting Strategy since March 2016 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.
- 3.2 The City of Wolverhampton Council's (CWC) pledge to Looked after Children (LAC) and Care Leavers (CL) focuses on four areas; these are Education Employment and Training, Health, Social Skills and Corporate Responsibilities. The Senior Officers Group, which consists of Heads of Service from CWC and lead officers from partner agencies monitor the progress of the Action Plan and Strategy. A fifth area was added by the group; prevention of criminalisation for LAC and Care Leavers. This report will focus on each area in turn and highlight key progress and discuss any areas of challenge.
- 3.3 Education, Employment and Training

The key requirements in this area of focus are:

- Help young people to feel able to challenge and share their views in the Personal Education Plan (PEP).
- Raise Aspirations of LAC and CL and professionals supporting them.
- Maximise access to work experience and apprenticeship opportunities for LAC and Care Leavers.

With the partnership of the Senior Officers Group and the Employment, Education and Training (EET) Action Group the key requirements for EET have been delivered and the following achievements have been actioned:

- An electronic PEP has been designed to ensure the voice of the child in being captured.
- Mind of My Own (MOMO) application has been procured and implemented for LAC and CL with a specific statement for young people to share their thoughts on their PEPs.
- A designated workshop has been planned with the Children in Care Council (CiCC) and Virtual Head, this will be to design a leaflet for young people on the online PEP

form and e learning module, this has been slightly delayed due to the roll out of e pep still at pilot stage.

- The needs of CL and LAC feature in the WV skills model of delivery for Council Work experiences, apprenticeships, traineeships, and internships. The WV Skills module includes the use of the Growth Pledge for employers and the Workbox (the online platform for work based opportunities). A package of support for employers, educators, and trainers has now been developed ratified by the end of the March - April 2017.
- Care Leavers Forum (CLF) annual report has been written and will be launched on 26 January to raise the profile further following the success of CLF.
- Work experience, Apprenticeship and traineeship opportunities are being monitored on the types of opportunity and the number of those accessing these opportunities.
- Develop foster carer training on accessing education, training and employment opportunities.
- Trowers and Hamlin Solicitors are putting on Aspirational workshops for young people on 5 May 2017.

### 3.4 Health

The key requirements in this area of focus are:

- Develop health passports for LAC and CL.
- 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 with the LAC nurse in attendance.

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) to raise the profile of the needs of LAC/CL.

A CCG business case has been approved, The Royal Wolverhampton Trust (RWT) is now recruiting for the position.

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, BCFPT and RWT are committed to providing 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 most of the schools in Wolverhampton.

### 3.5 Social Skills and Development

The key requirements in this area of focus are:

- A guide for foster carers such as what age to have a mobile phone, and what age to catch a bus by yourself.
- 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, with a focus on budgeting and money matters.
- 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 Foster Care Handbook has been developed which includes guidance for foster carers on the issues raised by CiCC and is out for consultation.

A pilot of Independence training for CL has been devised and is delivered by the Way, three young people to date have completed the course, these participants will support the new cohort attending the next round of training 12 months of dates have now been set for 2017.

Raising the profile of the webpage which has information for young people living out of borough, information has been sent to all out LAC aged 10 to 18 years old in the post. Attendance at the Foster Carer Conference to promote the webpage and Facebook promotion has also been completed.

The requirement to look at keeping siblings together and encouraging more contact between siblings requires further work and will be included on the action plan for 2017-18.

### 3.6 Corporate Responsibilities

The key requirements in this area of focus are:

- Ensure that Young People's savings are protected and do not effect benefits.

- 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.

The Corporate Parenting ELearning that was developed by the CiCC is mandatory for all CoWC employees and a paper copy has also been produced for partner agencies. To date 1,296 colleagues have completed this training and we have been approached by Walsall council to use this training with their staff.

The CoWC has exempt CL from council tax. This was ratified in November 2016, but back dated to April 2016.

11 Councillors attended a special Total Respect training session. It is now part of the induction for new councillors joining the Cabinet. The Corporate Parenting Board will be having a bespoke session on 26 April 2017.

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

### 3.7 Prevention of Criminalisation of LAC and CL

The key requirements in this area of focus are:

- To raise the understanding of frontline officers on the experiences of LAC and CL's and understand Corporate Parenting.
- To ensure those leaving custody are aware of the support and their entitlements.
- To ensure that the police are viewed more positively with our LAC and CL.
- To ensure that there is strategic support for CL and LAC with the Police and that they feel supported.

This is a new area of focus being implemented since December 2016 and therefore work on this has only just begun.

Total respect information has been sent to the police and a plan for frontline officers to complete the training has been agreed.

Meetings have taken place with Her Majesty's Prison Service (HMPS) Brinsford to look at the knowledge of CL and there is a plan in place to develop a document to prepare CL's leaving custody to equip them with the knowledge of the level of support they are entitled to from CoWC.

To enable LAC and CL to have a more positive rapport with the Police and not just see them as a negative presence, Chief Inspector Beth Bridges from Wolverhampton Neighbourhood Policing Unit will be presenting an award at the I awards on 3 March 2017.

To ensure a joint approach and shared understanding for the benefit of LAC and CL both the Head of Service for Youth Offending, Chief Inspector of Wolverhampton Neighbourhood Policing Unit and HMPS Brinsford will be attending future senior office Group meetings for Corporate Parenting.

#### **4.0 Financial implications**

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

4.2 Any costs associated with developing the strategy and implementing the action plan will be found from existing budgets within the Children and Young People's Service.

[NM/07032017/C]

#### **5.0 Legal implications**

5.1 There are no legal implications arising from this report.

LO/07032017/A

#### **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 2015-2017.