

## Report to the Cabinet

Meeting to be held on Monday, 3 December 2018

### Report of the Interim Executive Director of Education & Children's Services

#### Part I

Electoral Division affected:  
(All Divisions);

### Corporate Parenting Strategy 2018 - 2022

(Appendices 'A' and 'B' refer)

Contact for further information:

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#### Executive Summary

When a child comes into care, the county council becomes their corporate parent. Put simply, the term 'corporate parent' means the collective responsibility of the council, elected members, employees, and partner agencies, for providing the best possible care and protection that would be expected of a good parent. In fulfilling this role, the critical question that should be asked, is: "would this be good enough for my child?"

The draft Corporate Parenting Strategy 2018 - 2022, attached at Appendix 'A', sets out how we intend to fulfil our corporate parenting responsibilities to all children in our care and care leavers, putting them at the centre of improvements in the planning, delivery and evaluation of our services. The strategy has been developed in partnership with the Corporate Parenting Board. Lancashire's Promises to Children in Care and Care Leavers, attached at Appendix B, informs the core principles of this Corporate Parenting Strategy.

This is deemed to be a Key Decision and the provisions of Standing Order C19 have been complied with.

#### Recommendation

Cabinet is asked to:

- (i) Approve the draft Corporate Parenting Strategy 2018 - 2022 and Promises to Children in Care and Care Leavers, as set out at Appendices 'A' and 'B' respectively.
- (ii) Authorise the Executive Director of Education and Children's Services, in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Children, Young People and

Schools, to approve the final version of the Corporate Parenting Strategy and Promises to Children in Care and Care Leavers.

## **Background and Advice**

Every good parent wants the best for their child; to see their child flourish with good health, to be safe and happy, to do well at school and to enjoy good relationships with their peers and to make the most of leisure opportunities, hobbies and interests. As young people enter adulthood, they need to be equipped to lead independent lives and to make their way in higher education, have good careers and jobs and financial security.

Lancashire County Council has the same ambitions and goals for the children it looks after, as those of every good parent, and takes seriously the moral as well as legal responsibility, for enabling the children in its care and care leavers to experience happy and fulfilling lives.

The Corporate Parenting Strategy 2018 - 2022 has taken account of what children and young people have told us about their experiences of being in our care. The Children in Care Councils (LINX and POWAR), together with our care leaver apprenticeships, have a strong voice representing children and young people, helping us to understand what needs to change and providing ideas and advice about how best to do this. The county council values the experiences of children and young people in care and we are committed to involving them in all decisions that affect their lives.

'Lancashire's Promises to Children in Care and Care Leavers' is based on these commitments, and the promises inform the core principles of this Corporate Parenting Strategy.

Children looked after and care leavers can face challenges as they grow older and move to independence. In order to make this journey as smooth as possible, and to ensure they go on to fulfil their potential, it is vital that elected members and services across the council, along with our partners, work together in their interests. The strategy provides a framework for us to work collaboratively in fulfilling our roles as corporate parents.

The Corporate Parenting Strategy 2018 - 2022 is based on the principles of good corporate parenting and has nine key objectives that will improve the support we provide to children and young people in the future.

- Objective 1: children and young people have a voice in the way we deliver our services.
- Objective 2: children and young people can remain safely at home.
- Objective 3: care leavers in Lancashire will have a 'Local Offer'.
- Objective 4: children and young people will be supported in their education, employment and training.
- Objective 5: children and young people will have a suitable place to live and be cared for.

- Objective 6: the health and wellbeing of our children and young people in care and care leavers will be a priority for Lancashire County Council.
- Objective 7: children and young people will receive appropriate financial support.
- Objective 8: children and young people are protected from harm and risk of exploitation.
- Objective 9: children and young people in our care and care leavers' achievements are celebrated.

The Local Offer, which sets out the support available to care leavers in Lancashire was launched during National Care Leavers Week, which took place the week beginning 24 October 2018. The Local Offer will continue to be developed as each agency contributes different offers and services. The Core Offer is standard and linked to young people's rights and entitlements as care leavers, with support provided in the locality area where they reside.

### **Consultations**

The Corporate Parenting Strategy 2018 - 2022 has been developed in consultation with children, young people and partner agencies in line with our statutory responsibilities for children looked after and care leavers. It was a requirement of The Children and Social Work Act 2017, that each local authority publish information about the services they offer to care leavers. The draft strategy will be shared with wider partners including the district councils and their feedback sought before being finalised. Our Local Offer was launched during National Care Leavers' Week.

### **Implications:**

This item has the following implications, as indicated:

The Corporate Parenting Strategy 2018 - 2022 describes our ambitions and key priorities for how we will work with children in our care and care leavers, their carers and our partners, to ensure they receive the best possible care and protection, and are supported to achieve their full potential. The strategy will also help us to deliver the recommendations from our recent Ofsted inspection and, together with our Children's Services Improvement Plan, will ensure that all care leavers consistently receive timely, accessible and responsive support that meets their individual needs.

### **Financial Implications**

There are no specific financial implications arising from this report.

### **Risk management**

A strategic action plan will sit behind the Corporate Parenting Strategy 2018 - 2022 and will be used to track progress against the objectives within the strategy, with regular reporting to the Corporate Parenting Board.

## List of Background Papers

Paper	Date	Contact/Tel
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None

Reason for inclusion in Part II, if appropriate

N/A