

North Tyneside Council

Report to Cabinet

Date: 9 May 2016

ITEM 6(c)

Title: Corporate Parenting Strategy 2016-2019

Portfolio(s): Children, Young People and Learning

Cabinet Member(s): Cllr Ian Grayson

Report from Service Area: Health, Education, Care and Safeguarding

Responsible Officer: Jacqui Old

Tel: (0191) 643 7317

Wards affected: All

PART 1

1.1 Executive Summary:

The Children Act 1989 gives all local authorities the statutory responsibility to act as corporate parent to children whose parents or family can not provide appropriate care for them.

The Authority seeks to meet these responsibilities through the development and implementation of a Corporate Parenting Strategy. The current Corporate Parenting Strategy is due to be renewed, so a new strategy and accompanying action plan has been drafted.

This report explains how the strategy and action plan have been developed and seeks Cabinet's approval to implement them.

1.2 Recommendation:

It is recommended that Cabinet approve the Corporate Parenting Strategy 2016-2019 set out in Appendix 1 of this report.

1.3 Forward Plan:

Twenty eight days notice of this report has been given and it first appeared on the Forward Plan that was published on 4 April 2016.

1.4 Council Plan and Policy Framework

1.4.1 This report relates to the following priorities in the 2016/19 Our North Tyneside Plan:

- (1) Our people will be listened to, and involved by responsive, enabling services.
- (2) Our people will be ready for school.
- (3) Our people will be ready for work and life.
- (4) Our people will be healthy and well.
- (5) Our people will be cared for and safeguarded if they become vulnerable.

(6) Our places will offer a good choice of quality housing appropriate to need, including affordable homes.

1.4.2 It also relates to the following priority in the Children and Young People's Plan 2014-18

Improved outcomes for Looked After Children.

Through which the Children and Young People's Partnership seek to ensure that 'looked after children receive the same opportunities and outcomes as their peers'.

1.5 Information:

1.5.1 Background

1.5.2 The Authority's current Corporate Parenting Strategy is due for renewal; therefore a new strategy and action plan covering the period 2016-19 has been developed.

1.5.3 The strategy sets out the Authority's vision and plans for fulfilling its moral and legal responsibilities as corporate parent for all looked after children and care leavers in North Tyneside; and, in line with the Promise to Children in Care and Care Leavers, reaffirms our commitment to act for each child in the same way as any responsible parent would.

1.5.4 As shown in section 1.4 of this report, meeting the needs of the borough's looked after children and care leavers is integral to the delivery of the Council Plan. However, in line with the Target Operating Model, the Authority recognises that it has additional responsibilities towards those children and young people for whom it acts as corporate parent. Moreover, as these children and young people fall within the top 5% (tier 3 of the Target Operating Model) extra care, support and opportunities are required to help them overcome the challenges they have experienced and achieve their full potential. The action plan that accompanies the strategy explains how this will be achieved.

1.5.5 Strategy development

1.5.6 The strategy has been developed following a review of its legal and policy context, and of the findings from recent consultation with looked after children and care leavers in the borough. The findings from the review were shared in a workshop with members of the Corporate Parenting Committee and the next steps in the development of the strategy, its structure and priorities were discussed prior to consideration and agreement by Senior Leadership Team in January 2016.

1.5.7 Analysis of national and local research on the experiences and views of looked after children and young people was then completed and profiling and performance data on North Tyneside's looked after children and care leavers gathered. Following further consultation with managers from Health, Education, Care and Safeguarding, this information was used to identify the overarching outcomes or priorities of the strategy:

- Our children achieve their educational and employment potential.
- Our children have a stable home and are safe.
- Our children are healthy and well.
- Our children build positive relationships.
- Our children are listened to and respected.

1.5.8 These outcomes were broken down into a series of draft statements that describe the Authority's aspirations for its looked after children and care leavers in more detail. These

were shared and prioritised at a workshop with the Children in Care Council and Corporate Parenting Committee members and the feedback used to develop the first year of a three year rolling action plan.

1.5.9 To meet the aspirations for the Corporate Parenting Strategy, a Looked After Children Sufficiency Strategy has been developed to ensure a whole system approach to commissioning related services and support.

1.5.10 The Sufficiency Strategy identifies the following as the key focus for future commissioning activities:

- Delivering sufficient placements and ensuring that the mix of accommodation meets needs and offers choice.
- Managing the performance and quality of placements and services.
- Realising value for money through collaborative commissioning with other local authorities.
- Transforming Children's Services to achieve better outcomes for young people.

1.6 Decision options:

The following decision options are available for consideration by Cabinet:

Option 1

Cabinet approves the Corporate Parenting Strategy 2016-19 and the implementation and review of the strategy's action plan in accordance with the recommendations at paragraph 1.2 above.

Option 2

Cabinet does not approve the Corporate Parenting Strategy 2016-19.

Option 3

Cabinet recommends amendments to the Corporate Parenting Strategy and Action Plan.

Option 1 is the recommended option.

1.7 Reasons for recommended option:

Option 1 is recommended for the following reasons:

Approval of the strategy will enable the Authority to meet and evidence its moral and legal responsibilities to act as corporate parents to the Borough's looked after children and care leavers.

1.8 Appendices:

Appendix: Our Children: North Tyneside's Corporate Parenting Strategy 2016-2019.

1.9 Contact officers:

Russell Pilling, Safeguarding Operations Manager, tel. (0191) 643 7317
Alison Campbell, Senior Business Partner, tel. (0191) 643 7038

1.10 Background information:

The following background papers/information have been used in the compilation of this report and are available at the office of the author:

- (1) [Looked After Children Placement Sufficiency Strategy 2015-18](#)

PART 2 – COMPLIANCE WITH PRINCIPLES OF DECISION MAKING

2.1 Finance and other resources

It is anticipated that the proposals included in the Corporate Parenting Strategy 2016-2019 action plan can be delivered within existing resources. Any actions which give rise to additional financial resources will be brought back to Cabinet / Council, as appropriate, for a decision before any costs are incurred.

2.2 Legal

2.2.1 The Children Act 1989 confers on local authorities and their partners the responsibility of being corporate parents and of safeguarding and promoting the welfare of each child they look after. Amendments made by the Children (Leaving Care) Act 2000 requires local authorities to assess the needs of eligible children to determine appropriate advice, assistance and support both whilst the child is looked after and when they cease to be looked after.

2.2.2 Other key legislation includes the Children Act 2004, Children and Young Persons Act 2008 and the Children and Families Act 2014.

2.2.3 The Corporate Parenting Strategy 2016-2019 and Corporate Parenting Strategy Action Plan 2016/17 complies with the duties and responsibilities placed on the Authority in the above legislation.

2.3 Consultation/community engagement

2.3.1 Internal Consultation

The strategy and action plan was developed in consultation with Corporate Parenting Committee, Children in Care Council, staff from Health, Education, Care and Safeguarding, and from Commissioning and Investment.

Both the Senior Leadership Team and Cabinet Members have also been consulted.

2.3.2 External Consultation/Engagement

Colleagues from external organisations are members of the Corporate Parenting Committee and have been involved in the drafting of the strategy

2.4 Human rights

The strategy and action plan are compatible with the European Convention on Human Rights.

2.5 Equalities and diversity

The strategy seeks to ensure that our children in care and care leavers receive the care, support and opportunities they need to reach their full potential. Equality impact assessment of actions within the action plan will be undertaken as appropriate as the action plan is rolled out.

2.6 Risk management

The action plan will be delivered and any risks managed through the Corporate Parenting Committee.

2.7 Crime and disorder

There are no crime and disorder implications directly arising from this report.

2.8 Environment and sustainability

There are no environment and sustainability implications directly arising from this report.

PART 3 - SIGN OFF

- Deputy Chief Executive x
- Head(s) of Service x
- Mayor/Cabinet Member(s) x
- Chief Finance Officer x
- Monitoring Officer x
- Head of Corporate Strategy x