

Decision pathway – Report Format

Title: Corporate Parenting Strategy	
Ward(s):	Citywide
Author: Ann James	Job title: Head of Service, Permanency and Specialist Services
Cabinet lead: Helen Godwin	Director lead: John Readman / Jacqui Jenson
Proposal origin: Choose an item.	
Decision maker: Mayor	
Decision forum: Cabinet and to be presented to Full Council	
Timescales: Cabinet: 09-Jan-2018 Present at Full Council: 20-Mar-2018	
Purpose of Report: Bristol last published its Corporate Parenting Strategy in 2015. It's time to consider progress and refresh our priorities and actions for the future. The Corporate Parenting Strategy sets out how the local authority will meet its statutory duties and improve outcomes for children in care and care leavers.	
<p>1. Evidence Base: Context and back ground information</p> <p>1.1 In November 2015 Bristol launched the current Corporate Parenting Strategy and Pledge to Children in Care and Care Leavers. The Strategy is designed for Bristol City Council and our partners and the Pledge for children and young people.</p> <p>1.2 The Corporate Parenting Strategy was developed as part of the Council's response to the 2014 Ofsted Inspection of Bristol's services for children in need of help and protection; children looked after and care leavers. It set out our vision as an effective, caring and ambitious corporate parent with 9 objectives and 19 actions outlining how we aimed to improve outcomes for children in care and leavers. Governance arrangements were established with Bristol's Corporate Parenting Panel and Strategic Boards to monitor and support delivery against the strategic objectives.</p> <p>1.3 Progress against the objectives set out in the Corporate Parenting Strategy 2015 are captured on pages 5-7 of the new strategy. It includes reduction in the number and rate of children in care as well as improving outcomes for care leavers, an area where services had previously been judged inadequate. For care leavers, service remodelling has delivered reduced caseloads for leaving care personal advisers enabling improved levels of contact, suitable accommodation and education, employment and training. Participation has improved and the voice of young people strengthened by employing care leaver ambassadors and by working in partnership with Barnardo's to develop a care leaver participation group.</p> <p>1.4 For children in care, long term placement stability has improved, as has the percentage of children placed in foster care compared to other placement types. In 2016 in all these areas, Bristol performed above the national average and above most core cities and statistical neighbours.</p> <p>1.5 In other areas, most notably health assessments and education outcomes for children in care at Key Stage 4, our performance has yet to evidence significant improvement. Appendix B provides a more detailed overview of progress against key performance indicators.</p> <p>2. Setting out the plan to refresh the Corporate Parenting Strategy and Pledge to Children in Care and Care Leavers.</p> <p>2.1 There are three reasons to refresh:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Whilst there has been significant improvement in some areas, in others challenges remain. We want to re-engage the wider council and partners across the city to build on our strengths, to be ambitious and to do more to make a difference for children in care, care leavers and their carers. • There have been changes in legislation and national policy, most notably the Children and Social 	

Work Act 2017 has enshrined seven Corporate Parenting Principles in law. It also requires local authorities to publish an offer to care leavers including extending the provision of a leaving care personal adviser and leaving care support to age 25 for all those who want it.

- To hear from children and young people and respond to what they tell us about how we're doing and what's important. We know that over 90% of children and young people are involved in their plans and take part in their reviews and we hear from young people through the Children in Care Council and Care Leavers United group. In 2015 we undertook a survey of all children in care and care leavers to ascertain their views and priorities. What they told us directly informed the current Pledge and Strategy. 18 months on from that we have asked again. Young people's views matter and what they have said has informed our new Strategy and will inform the production of a new Pledge.

3. Governance

3.1 Bristol's Corporate Parenting Panel consists of a group of cross-party elected members, officers and other partners and has responsibility for ensuring that the City Council effectively discharges its role as corporate parent. In recognition of the cross-cutting nature of the council and city's role as corporate parent and to strengthen the city's leadership in delivering improved outcomes for children in care and care leavers, the following multiagency boards will take responsibility for ensuring that the relevant Corporate Parenting Strategy priorities will be achieved:

Board	Area of Responsibility	Strategic Priorities
Children and Families Partnership Board	Early Help	Priority 1 - Families receive the help they need when they need it (right response, right assessment, right help, right time).
Safeguarding Children Board	Safeguarding	Priority 2 - Children are supported to live safely within their families or with people who know them best. When this is not possible, children move to a permanent family or care placement without delay.
		Priority 3 - Children and young people tell us what's important to them and this influences what we do and the way we design and develop our services.
		Priority 4 - Being in care is an enriching experience that equips children for a successful life.
		Priority 5 - Deliver good quality care placements and move on accommodation for care leavers locally.
Learning City Board	Education, training and employment	Priority 6 - Hold high aspirations and close the attainment gap for children in care and increase the percentage of care leavers in education, training and education.
Health and Wellbeing Board	Health	Priority 7 - Improve health and well-being by ensuring high quality health services and information are provided to children, young people and carers.

4. Pledge to Children in Care and Care Leavers

4.1 Using feedback from recent consultations and data from the Pledge survey 2017, Bristol will revise its existing Pledge to Children in Care and publish its Local Offer to Care Leavers as required by the Children and Social Work Act 2017. The Pledge and Local Offer to Care Leavers will set out how Bristol will deliver on its strategy.

Cabinet Member / Officer Recommendations:

- Approve the priorities and actions as set out in the draft Corporate Parenting Strategy 2018 (Appendix A) and finalise the Strategy on that basis.
- Note the progress on the delivery of Bristol's Corporate Parenting Strategy 2015
- Support the presentation of the new Strategy at Full Council

Revenue Cost: £	Source of Revenue Funding: <i>Insert specific service budget</i>
Capital Cost: £	Source of Capital Funding: <i>e.g. grant/ prudential borrowing etc.</i>
One off cost <input type="checkbox"/> Ongoing cost <input type="checkbox"/>	Saving Proposal <input type="checkbox"/> Income generation proposal <input type="checkbox"/>
Finance Advice: This reports sets out ways in which available resources could be used better to enhance the role of the Corporate Parent for Looked After Children and Care Leavers. Commissioning services over the next few years of this plan will be exceptionally challenging, given the continued downward pressure on public finances. Nevertheless, Bristol City Council and partners are collectively committing to maintain strong and effective provision, and improve outcomes for the most vulnerable children in the city, while at the same time managing the effect of reducing public finances.	
Finance Business Partner: David Tully, Interim Finance Business Partner	

Corporate Strategy alignment: The Corporate Parenting Strategy is supported by the Council's overarching [Corporate Strategy 2018-23](#), in particular, the 'Wellbeing' and 'Empowering and Caring' themes and the key commitment to be 'great corporate parents and safeguard children and vulnerable adults, protecting them from exploitation or harm'.

Legal Considerations: The Children and Social Work Act 2017 (the Act) is intended to improve support for looked after children and care leavers, promote the welfare and safeguarding of children, and make provisions about the regulation of social workers. The Act sets out corporate parenting principles for the council as a whole to be the best parent it can be to children in its care. The Act requires local authorities to publish their support offer to care leavers and to promote the educational attainment of children who have been adopted or placed in other long term arrangements.

The Corporate Parenting Strategy 2018 is in line with the Act and reflects changes to national policy.

Legal Team Leader: Oliver Moore – Senior Childcare Solicitor

City Benefits: The Corporate Parenting Strategy outlines how we will improve outcomes for and meet our duties in regard to children in care and care leavers, two of the most vulnerable groups in the City.

Consultation Details: The Strategy has been subject to wide ranging consultation with members, partner agencies, third sector partners, children and young people and council officers.

DLT Sign-off	John Readman	08-Nov-2017
SLT Sign-off	John Readman	21-Nov-2017
Cabinet Member sign-off	Councillor Helen Godwin	04-Dec-2017
For Key Decisions - Mayor's Office sign-off		05-Dec-2017

Appendix A – Further essential background / detail on the proposal <i>Corporate Parenting Strategy</i>	YES
Appendix B – Details of consultation carried out - internal and external	YES
Appendix C – Summary of any engagement with scrutiny	NO
Appendix D – Risk assessment	NO
Appendix E – Equalities screening / impact assessment of proposal	YES
Appendix F – Eco-impact screening/ impact assessment of proposal	NO

Appendix G – Financial Advice	NO
Appendix H – Legal Advice	NO
Appendix I – Combined Background papers	NO
Appendix J – Exempt Information	NO