

Bristol Health & Wellbeing Board

Corporate Parenting Strategy 2018	
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Date of meeting	13 th December 2017
Report for Decision	

1. Purpose of this Paper

- a) To seek endorsement of the Corporate Parenting Strategy from the Health and Wellbeing Board before the Strategy is considered by Cabinet in January 2018.
- b) To seek agreement for the Health and Wellbeing Board to lead on Priority 7, to Improve health and well-being by providing high quality services and information to children, young people and carers.

2. Executive Summary

Children in care and care leavers are amongst the most disadvantaged children and young people in our society. Bristol's new, draft Corporate Parenting Strategy sets out our Vision, Values, Priorities and actions that will to enable us, as a city, to improve the lives and life chances of improvements for children in care and care leavers.

The draft strategy is attached as Appendix A.

3. Context

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 work with partners to meet statutory duties and improve outcomes for children in care and care leavers.

4. Main body of the report

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.

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.

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.

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.

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.

Setting out the plan to refresh the Corporate Parenting Strategy and Pledge to Children in Care and Care Leavers.

There are three reasons to refresh:

- 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.

Governance

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 providing high quality services and information to children, young people and carers.

Pledge to Children in Care and Care Leavers

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.

5. Key risks and Opportunities

6. Implications (Financial and Legal if appropriate)

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.

7. Evidence informing this report.

The JSNA Steering Group has led the development of the JSNA Chapter for Children in Care and Care Leavers. A range of partners have been involved in informing and validating this needs assessment through a multi-agency focus group and the Joint Health Outcomes Challenge Group of the Children and Families Partnership Board. This Chapter is now pending sign off from the JSNA Steering Group.

The data and evidence within the JSNA has informed the priorities and actions outlined in the strategy.

Local performance management data has also been used to develop an understanding of the issues and to help determine the actions required.

The Strategy has also been subject to wide ranging consultation with members, partner agencies, third sector partners, children and young people and council officers, via the following:

- Corporate Parenting Panel
- Children and Families Partnership Board
- Learning City Learning in Education Challenge Group
- Bristol Safeguarding Children Board
- Bristol Homes Board, Early Intervention and Preventing Homelessness Challenge Group
- Primary and Secondary School Heads forums
- Special School Heads Group
- Children in Care Health Strategy Group
- Voscur Children and Young People's Network
- Bristol City Council 'Management Brief'
- SLT and Exec Board

- Avonside Foster Care Association

Direct work with Children and Young People

- Care Leavers United Bristol
- Children in Care Council
- Pledge Survey: Online and printable questionnaire open to all children in care and care leavers

8. Recommendations

- Consider and agree the priorities and actions as set out in the draft Corporate Parenting Strategy 2018 (Appendix A)
- Note the progress on the delivery of Bristol's Corporate Parenting Strategy 2015
- Health and Wellbeing Board agree to lead on Priority 7, to improve health and well-being by providing high quality services and information to children, young people and carers.

9. Appendices

Appendix A: Draft Corporate Parenting Strategy 2018v9

Style

Title: Arial 16 Bold

Headings: Arial bold (no underlining, minimum 14 point)

Body text: Arial (minimum 12 point)

Use 'open punctuation' eg. NHS and not N.H.S.

The first time an acronym is used, put its meaning in full eg Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG)

The abbreviation for the Health and Wellbeing Board is HWB