

Full Council



Report of: Ann James – Director for Children and Families Services, People Directorate

Title: Corporate Parenting Panel Annual Report 2018

Ward: Citywide

Member Presenting Report: Councillor Helen Godwin, Cabinet Member for Women, Children and Young People, and Lead Member for Children and Families Services. Chair of the Corporate Parenting Panel.

Recommendation

That Council

1. Note the progress, summarised in the annual report at Appendix A, on the delivery of Bristol's Corporate Parenting Strategy overseen by the Corporate Parenting Panel.
2. Agree the Priorities for 2019

Summary

In July 2018 Bristol launched a refreshed Corporate Parenting Strategy and Pledge to Children in Care and Care Leavers. Informed by children and young people, it sets out an ambitious agenda for achieving our aspiration to be an excellent corporate parent and to engage the city in being the best extended family to children and young people in and leaving care.

The Corporate Parenting Strategy identified 7 priority areas of work required to deliver on our vision for children in care and care leavers. This annual report outlines progress being made against these and includes examples of steps being taken to ensure continued improvement.

This work is overseen by the Corporate Parenting Panel which is chaired by Councillor Helen Godwin, Cabinet Member for Women, Children and Young People, and Lead Member for Children and Families Services and comprises of councillors, senior council officers and partner agencies.

Policy

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'.

Consultation

The Strategy was consulted on when it was developed in 2018. The report includes examples of ongoing involvement of children and young people in our work.

Wider consultation is not relevant for the Corporate Parenting Annual Report.

Context

In July 2018 Bristol launched a refreshed Corporate Parenting Strategy and Pledge to Children in Care and Care Leavers. Informed by children and young people, it sets out an ambitious agenda for achieving our aspiration to be an excellent corporate parent and to engage the city in being the best extended family to children and young people in and leaving care.

Corporate Parenting Strategy vision:

Bristol is committed to being an effective, caring, and ambitious corporate parent. Children and young people are at the heart of everything we do. We will do everything we can to make sure that children in our care and care leavers are set up for life.

We will care about children in care and care leavers and not just for them and will ensure the same standard of care as any good parent. This means we have high aspirations for our children and will be strong advocates for them. We will do everything we can to equip the children and young people in our care and care leavers with the skills needed to live a fulfilling, successful, and rewarding life.

The Strengthening Families programme has also been driving significant system-wide transformation of children's services in Bristol. The Programme was intended to make cost savings whilst holding our ambition of improving outcomes, commissioning and delivering quality services, and keeping children and families at the heart of what we do. The aims of the programme have been closely linked to our Corporate Parenting Strategy objectives.

The Corporate Parenting Strategy identified 7 priority areas of work required to deliver on our vision for children in care and care leavers. This report outlines progress being made against these and includes examples of steps being taken to ensure continued improvement.

Governance

The Corporate Parenting panel has been appointed by Full Council to oversee and scrutinise how the Council is discharging its Corporate Parenting duties and reports back to Full Council.

The Terms of Reference of the People Scrutiny Commission include Scrutiny of corporate plans and other major plan priorities within its remit and works collaboratively with the Panel to do this and also with the Executive Director of the People Directorate.

The Corporate Parenting Panel works closely with other strategic partnerships in the city to deliver good outcomes for children in care and care leavers. Local partnership arrangements for safeguarding and community safety have been undergoing transformation work in the past year. Soon, work previously covered by both Safeguarding Boards (Children's and Adult's), our Community Safety Partnership (Safer Bristol) and the Children and Families Partnership Board will be encompassed delivered by the Keeping Bristol Safe Partnership (KBSP) Board. The Police, Clinical Commissioning Group and Bristol City Council have statutory duties to deliver and are joint and equal partners in these arrangements.

In addition to the three partners the KBSP has representation from a number of other key organisations including from education and voluntary sectors. The Local Arrangements for Bristol will be published in July 2019.

Proposal

1. That Council note the progress, summarised in the annual report at Appendix A, on the delivery of Bristol's Corporate Parenting Strategy overseen by the Corporate Parenting Panel.
2. Agree the Corporate Parenting Panel Priorities 2019 as follows:

Corporate Parenting Strategic Priority	Within 12 months Corporate Parenting Panel will have	Outcome
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.	Initiated a project to support children in our care and care leavers to build life-long links with family and friends	Tackle isolation and loneliness and support emotional health and well-being (our young people have asked us to make this our top priority) Our goal is to enable young people to live successful, happy home and family lives.
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.	Built on the success of Corporate Parenting twilight sessions with young people we will: - take steps to widen participation - ensure children and young people set the agenda and are supported to hold us to account	Young people's voices shape our services, get to know us and build trusted, confident relationships with their corporate parents
Being in care is an enriching experience that equips children for a successful life.	Corporate Parenting Panel will track and champion all our year 10-11s, ensuring they each have opportunities for work experience, mentoring and access to high quality education, training and apprenticeships.	All our young people are enabled to achieve their potential.
Being in care is an enriching experience that equips children for a successful life.	Delivered a shared event between corporate parenting panel and the HOPE Governors to set out how we will achieve our shared goals and aspirations for young people and demolishes reference to 'minimum standards'	Young people are supported to succeed and reach their full academic potential.
Deliver good quality care placements and move on accommodation for care leavers locally.	Promoted fostering in our communities and through the media. Our foster carers will know they are the city's VIPs.	Bristol is the fostering agency of choice locally. Our children have a choice of excellent fostering families that reflects the diversity and vibrancy of the city in which we live.

Other Options Considered

Not applicable

Risk Assessment

Not applicable

Public Sector Equality Duties

- 8a) Before making a decision, section 149 Equality Act 2010 requires that each decision-maker considers the need to promote equality for persons with the following “protected characteristics”: age, disability, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex, sexual orientation. Each decision-maker must, therefore, have due regard to the need to:
- i) Eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct prohibited under the Equality Act 2010.
 - ii) Advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and those who do not share it. This involves having due regard, in particular, to the need to --
 - remove or minimise disadvantage suffered by persons who share a relevant protected characteristic;
 - take steps to meet the needs of persons who share a relevant protected characteristic that are different from the needs of people who do not share it (in relation to disabled people, this includes, in particular, steps to take account of disabled persons' disabilities);
 - encourage persons who share a protected characteristic to participate in public life or in any other activity in which participation by such persons is disproportionately low.
 - iii) Foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and those who do not share it. This involves having due regard, in particular, to the need to –
 - tackle prejudice; and
 - promote understanding.
- 8b) An Equality Impact Assessment (EQIA) was undertaken on the Corporate Parenting Strategy in 2018. The Strategy and Action Plan include a broad range of work including distinct projects and commissioning processes. Whenever relevant an EQIA is undertaken on these proposals and mitigating or proactive actions are taken in response to findings.

Legal and Resource Implications

Legal

The report sets out how the Council is meeting the Statutory requirement under S1 of the Children and Social Work act 2017 and associated statutory guidance in relation to looked after children and care leavers, to have regard to the Corporate parenting principles set out in that act:-

- (a) to act in the best interests, and promote the physical and mental health and well-being, of those children and young people;
- (b) to encourage those children and young people to express their views, wishes and feelings;

- (c) to take into account the views, wishes and feelings of those children and young people;
- (d) to help those children and young people gain access to, and make the best use of, services provided by the local authority and its relevant partners;
- (e) to promote high aspirations, and seek to secure the best outcomes, for those children and young people;
- (f) for those children and young people to be safe, and for stability in their home lives, relationships and education or work;
- (g) to prepare those children and young people for adulthood and independent living.

The report also outlines how the Council is complying with other statutory duties in relation to children in care and care leavers including provision of sufficient local placements (Sufficiency Duty, Children Act 1989), and the requirement to publish a local offer to care leavers (Children and Social Work Act 2017)

Nancy Rollason

Head of Legal Services

3rd July 2019

Financial

(a) Revenue

The recommendations within this report would be implemented within resources available to the Children and Families Service. The Corporate Parenting Panel has had regular updates during the year on the financial context of the service changes arising from the Strengthening Families programme. In both 2017/18 and 2018/19, the Children and Families Division operated within their budget provision.

(b) Capital

No financial implications noted.

David Tully, Finance Business Partner People.

Land

Not applicable

Personnel

Not applicable

Appendices:

Corporate Parenting Panel Annual Report 2018

LOCAL GOVERNMENT (ACCESS TO INFORMATION) ACT 1985

Background Papers:

Bristol's Corporate Parenting Strategy and Pledge to Children in Care and Care Leavers is accessible here:

<https://www.bristol.gov.uk/policies-plans-strategies/plans-and-policy-for-children-in-or-leaving-care>