

Corporate Parenting Panel

Report Subject	Corporate Parenting Panel (CPP) – Theme Setting
Meeting date	6 June 2016
Cabinet Portfolio	Councillor Nicola Greene, Education and Children’s Services and Deputy Leader of the Council
Corporate Lead	Jane Portman, Executive Director Adults and Children and Deputy Chief Executive
Service Director	Sue Ross, Service Director, Children’s Social Care
Status	Public
Classification	For decision
Key Decision	No
Impacts on Key Policy Framework	No
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Executive summary	<p>The Corporate Parenting Panel has been reconstituted as per the decision of Full Council on 19 April 2016. The reconstitution was in part a response to the LGA Peer Review that looked at the progress being made by the Council since the last OFSTED inspection of services for Children in Need of Help and Protection, Children Looked After and Care Leavers. That report highlighted the need for a CPP to be more distinct from the Children’s Services Overview and Scrutiny Panel and for it to have a more consistent approach to considering the views, wishes and feelings of young people.</p> <p>As part of the reconstitution of the Panel it was decided by Full Council that to further strengthen the leadership role the Panel will play in driving issues relating to Corporate Parenting the Panel would have meetings based on themes. This would allow for all relevant stakeholders around a theme to be brought together to collaborate and influence with each other to</p>

	<p>achieve the best outcomes for Looked After Children and Care Leavers and to use the themed sessions to look in more depth at critical areas of influence in the lives of children, young people and their parents.</p> <p>Therefore at the inaugural meeting of the reconstituted Corporate Parenting Panel there is a need for the Panel to discuss and decide on what themes they will look at over the coming meetings and how they wish to operate their meetings. This will enable planning and preparations to take place, particularly with children and young people themselves and to find ways to participate in and contribute to the consideration of matters being discussed.</p>
Recommendations	<p>It is recommended that:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The Panel discuss and decide on what key themes will be added to the Panel's Work Programme. 2. The Panel discuss how they wish to best operate their meetings and conduct business in ways which enable the participation and influence of children, young people, their parents and carers.
Reasons for recommendations	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. It is for panel members to agree the workplan and decide on the basis of this report which themes and aspects relating to those themes they wish to add to their workplan. 2. Given that the Panel has been reconstituted and is meeting for the first time there is an opportunity for the panel to consider how it wishes to operate some or all of its meetings.

Background detail

1. The Council invited an LGA Peer Review to look at the progress being made by the Council since the last OFSTED inspection of services for Children in Need of Help and Protection, Children Looked After and Care Leavers. The Peer Review was undertaken in November 2015 and the final report of the review highlighted the need for the CPP to be more distinct from the Children's Services Overview and Scrutiny Panel and to seek to find more effective ways to enable the participation of children and young people and their parents and carers in the discussions which affect them.
2. As a result of the Peer Review Officers undertook to look at how the CPP was operating and how it could be taken forward to respond to the recommendations of the LGA Peer Review. The Officer's report was taken through the decision-making process and culminated in the Full Council

decision on the 19th April. The report is linked to as a background paper to this report.

3. The report proposed revised membership and functions – attached at appendix 1 to this report. The drive behind the proposed membership and functions was to strengthen the focus of the CPP and move away from any duplication of scrutiny already being undertaken by the Children’s Services Overview and Scrutiny Panel. It further proposed a thematic style of operation specifically to allow for a more strategic overview of Corporate Parenting which would help the Panel to take up the mantle of a leadership role in the area, as recommended by the LGA Peer Review. Crucially it is believed that this thematic approach will be better able to engage the interest of, and engagement from children and young people themselves – enabling their ‘voice’ to be more authentically heard as part of the deliberations.
4. The Panel therefore needs to decide on what themes it wishes to add to its work plan. It is proposed that the workplan should cover the following meetings:
 - 5 September 2016
 - 28 November 2016
 - March 2017 - Date tbc
5. It was proposed that every fourth meeting of the panel could be used as a review meeting for the work of the panel over the previous year to see what impact and affect its work has had as well as offering an annual opportunity to re-assess what priorities the panel should hold for the forthcoming year.

Key Themes for Consideration

6. These are given as options only so CPP members can give consideration to their considered priorities and the importance of these in the lives of children, young people, their parents and carers. They are seen as being some of the most significant for looked after children. These themes include :

EDUCATION

7. Educational outcomes for young people in the care system are nationally some of the poorest. There are many factors impacting on young people entering or remaining in care which can undermine the quality of educational experience they receive and lead to poorer educational outcomes which affect their prospects. It is suggested that a themed panel looking at some of the difficulties young people in care experience at schools and colleges, getting some views and suggestion from care leavers and/or their families and carers and exploring some ways in which the Council might seek to better support the education attainment of looked after children and young people and enhance their experiences in the education system. The session would also need to seek the views of teachers, educational psychologists and other professionals who are working with educationally disadvantaged young people.

HEALTH

- 8.** Children and young people in the care system access health services for a variety of reasons sometimes directly related to their status as a looked after child. Medicals for example and medical examinations can be particularly difficult for some children and young people and whilst significant attempts are made by all agencies dealing with children at risk, Police, social workers, health visitors, GP's, hospital doctors etc to minimise trauma, nevertheless the experience of children and young people can be unsatisfactory. Similarly young people in care sometimes find talking to a trusted adult about sensitive health matters is particularly difficult.
- 9.** If this theme were to be explored, views could be gathered from young people themselves and from their carers and social workers about their experience of the accessibility and sensitivity of health services for looked after children. This would enable CPP members to consider whether there are areas of improvement which could improve the quality of support to LAC in accessing health services in general or in particular areas such a sexual health, mental health, oral health etc.

TRANSITION TO LEAVING CARE

- 10.** It is widely acknowledged that a young person's transition into adulthood is beset with many challenges in the modern world. For young people leaving care or transitioning from children's services to adult services support there are some particular areas of difficulty. Again the authentic views of young people could enliven this discussion and the CPP panel members could give significant consideration to the way transitions protocols and procedures across the Council and with its partners, help or hinder smooth transition into adulthood.

FINANCES

- 11.** Young people in the care system are often heavily dependent for financial support and for financial guidance and help on the support workers. If this there were to be explored consideration could be given as to how the Council can ensure young people get the best advice and support to sustain themselves financially as they approach independence. It may be that some of Bournemouth's financial institutions may be willing to offer some tailored support to assist the work with LAC if their problems were able to be carefully articulated through consideration by the CPP. Similarly it may be that some detailed consideration of the needs of looked after children in financial matters might lead to a more consistent approach to encouraging financial sustainability for looked after children.

CONCLUSIONS

- 12.** The above themes are proposed for consideration. They have been discussed with the young people's participation worker who is clear that if she is clear about the panel's wishes and intentions in advance of the discussion, she will seek to canvass a wide range of views of children and young people to contribute to the discussion and ensure their authentic 'voices' are heard by the Panel members.
- 13.** As well as deciding on what themes the panel wishes to look at the panel should also take the opportunity to consider how it wishes to operate. The opportunity is there, given the themed nature of the workplan, for the panel to meet at different locations suitable to a particular meeting, for example meet at a GP surgery for a Health themed meeting.
- 14.** Setting themes in advance also allows for more pre-work to be done on feeding in the views of the Council's Looked after Children – LAC - and Care Leavers. The panel should take the opportunity to discuss allowing the use of new media to bring the views of a range of LAC and Care Leavers to the panel. For example CPP could declare itself open to the use of video for views to be fed in to the panel's discussion.
- 15.** The inaugural meeting obviously offers a good opportunity to set the framework for meetings but arrangements can be reviewed on an ongoing basis.

Consultation

Options

1. The panel needs to decide what it will look at as part of its work programme and it has many options open to it in this pursuit.
2. The configuration of the work programme is up to the panel. This report hopes to help inform their decision.

Summary of equalities and diversity impact

An Initial EINA Screening Assessment was undertaken in relation to the review of CPP, in consultation with the Equality and Diversity Team, which indicated that a full EINA is not necessary. This report is an extension of the review report and as such no further EINA screening assessment has been undertaken.

Summary of risk assessment

Background papers

Local Government Association Peer Review –

<http://www.bournemouth.gov.uk/CouncilDemocratic/CouncilMeetings/CommitteeMeetings/ChildrensServicesOverviewScrutinyPanel/2016/01/20/Reports/item-8.-lga-peer-review.pdf>

CPP Review Report –

<http://www.bournemouth.gov.uk/CouncilDemocratic/CouncilMeetings/CommitteeMeetings/Cabinet/2016/03/23/Agenda/agenda-and-reports-portfolio.pdf>

Appendices

Appendix 1 – Membership and Functions of the Corporate Parenting Panel

Appendix 1

Details of the Corporate Parenting Panel

a. **Role** To act as a strategic leadership forum in conjunction with partners and on behalf of the Council to ensure that all Council services are conscious of the wishes and needs of Looked After Children, and the particular risks and challenges they face and take these into account when providing services/planning services.

b. **Functions** Details of the functions of the Corporate Parenting Panel are contained in the Functions Scheme.

c. **Membership**

- Cabinet Member with the relevant portfolio for Children's Services who will be the Chair.
- A representative of the Children's Services Overview & Scrutiny Panel (excluding the Chair and Vice-Chair of the Panel)
- Member Champion for Children & Young People
- Community Overview & Scrutiny Panel Representative
- Fostering or Adoption Panel Representative
- Service Director for Children's Social Care
- Care Leavers, In Care Krew Representatives
- Looked After Children Participation Worker
- Other Council staff and partners from other agencies and groups as required on a temporary or permanent basis to be determined by the Panel.

This panel does not have to be politically balanced. Voting rights are reserved for Elected Members only.

d. **Meetings** The Panel will meet four times a year and at least three of these will be thematically constructed.

Proposed Functions

1. To develop and undertake consultation, listening and engagement with looked after children and care leavers however this is most appropriate and productive to monitor and improve services provided to them.

2. To develop and undertake consultation, listening and engagement with relevant partners who are involved in providing care and services to looked after children and care leavers however this is most appropriate and productive to

monitor and improve services provided to looked after children and care leavers.

3. To give an Annual Report, via any appropriate method, to Full Council outlining the work the Panel has done over the year and highlighting emerging priorities.

4. To take a strategic overview of key themes affecting the lives of looked after children and care leavers.

5. To raise the profile of the needs of Looked After Children and Care Leavers through a range of actions so that there is a cross-council responsibility for Looked After Children and Care Leavers and that their needs are reflected in key plans, policies and strategies.

6. To improve the life chances of Looked After Children in line with their peers. To encourage, protect and support the Council's Looked After Children and Young People in order that the children can grow up to contribute and participate as healthy citizens within their community.

7. To ensure that services provided to Looked After Children and Care Leavers are of a high standard in order that they are empowered to build their adult lives and be constructive and productive members of society.

8. To raise awareness by promoting the role of members as corporate parents.