

**Open Report on behalf of Debbie Barnes OBE, Executive Director of Children's Services**

Report to:	<b>County Council</b>
Date:	<b>14 September 2018</b>
Subject:	<b>Corporate Parenting Strategy</b>

**Summary:**

The Council has a legal Corporate Parenting responsibility to all of its looked after children and care leavers. The attached Strategy is a document designed to help embed the notion of Corporate Parenting across the council ensure the responsibility of parenting our children and care leavers is at the forefront of our thinking when making decisions and designing services.

The Corporate Parenting Strategy will be presented at the full council meeting on 14 September 2018 to ensure full member wide commitment to our responsibilities

**Recommendation(s):**

That the Council support the Corporate Parenting Strategy and work to support the process of embedding Corporate Parenting into the Council's culture.

## **1. Background**

An effective Corporate Parent makes sure that looked after children and young people and care leavers have the same care, nurture, health and well-being, and life chances as any other child or young person. As one would expect and want for one's own child, the Corporate Parent must act as a responsible parent. We believe that good, responsible parenting involves, but is not limited to:

- 1) Making sure that children and young people have a strong sense of belonging, that they are cared about as well as cared-for.
- 2) Supporting children and young people through school, college or work, being ambitious for them and helping them develop a sense of aspiration and self-belief.
- 3) Making sure children and young people are safe.

- 4) Making sure children and young people are healthy, and health-aware, and are offered the very best parenting.
- 5) Making sure children and young people have the best start in life and opportunities to thrive and grow.
- 6) Making sure children and young people are actively listened to, respected and valued, encouraging them to develop and participate as citizens now, not simply as 'citizens in waiting'.
- 7) Encouraging and supporting children and young people to form and sustain a range of healthy relationships, developing how they manage their feelings and behaviours, and understanding those of others.
- 8) Ensuring young people have a sense of belonging, know who they are, where they have come from and know that they belong to a wide and diverse community.

An essential part of getting our parenting right in Lincolnshire is to develop our Councillors' understanding of their roles and responsibilities as Corporate Parents. This strategy aims to ensure our elected members have the very best understanding of their role and duties and how they can ensure every looked after child and care leaver has the very best opportunities in life.

The strategy helps ensure elected members:

- Understand their roles and responsibilities as Corporate Parents, and scrutinise and challenge how the Local Authority performs in delivering its services as a Corporate Parent.
- Engage effectively, with energy, clarity and confidence with children and young people.
- Support children and young people themselves to engage in activities that support and inform scrutiny and challenge, enabling them to be able to contribute to shaping how our services can be harnessed to deliver the best outcomes for them.

Understand that children and young people can hold them to account.

## **2. Legal Issues:**

### Equality Act 2010

Under section 149 of the Equality Act 2010, the Council must, in the exercise of its functions, have due regard to the need to:

- \* Eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct that is prohibited by or under the Act

\* Advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it

\* Foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it.

The relevant protected characteristics are age; disability; gender reassignment; pregnancy and maternity; race; religion or belief; sex; and sexual orientation

Having due regard to the need to advance equality of opportunity involves having due regard, in particular, to the need to:

\* Remove or minimise disadvantages suffered by persons who share a relevant protected characteristic that are connected to that characteristic

\* Take steps to meet the needs of persons who share a relevant protected characteristic that are different from the needs of persons who do not share it

\* Encourage persons who share a relevant protected characteristic to participate in public life or in any other activity in which participation by such persons is disproportionately low

The steps involved in meeting the needs of disabled persons that are different from the needs of persons who are not disabled include, in particular, steps to take account of disabled persons' disabilities

Having due regard to the need to foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it involves having due regard, in particular, to the need to tackle prejudice, and promote understanding

Compliance with the duties in section 149 may involve treating some persons more favourably than others

The duty cannot be delegated and must be discharged by the decision-maker. To discharge the statutory duty the decision-maker must analyse all the relevant material with the specific statutory obligations in mind. If a risk of adverse impact is identified consideration must be given to measures to avoid that impact as part of the decision making process

No adverse impacts of this strategy have been identified. The strategy relates to all Looked After Children and all those young people who request a Leaving Care Service. As a statutory function the focus is essential

#### Joint Strategic Needs Analysis (JSNA) and the Joint Health and Wellbeing Strategy (JHWS)

The Council must have regard to the Joint Strategic Needs Assessment (JSNA) and the Joint Health & Well Being Strategy (JHWS) in coming to a decision

This strategy feeds directly into the JHWS around improving the health and social outcomes for this group of young people. Looked After children and care leavers are some of the most vulnerable young people in the community, and supporting them supports this objective of the JSNA

## Crime and Disorder

Under section 17 of the Crime and Disorder Act 1998, the Council must exercise its various functions with due regard to the likely effect of the exercise of those functions on, and the need to do all that it reasonably can to prevent crime and disorder in its area (including anti-social and other behaviour adversely affecting the local environment), the misuse of drugs, alcohol and other substances in its area and re-offending in its area

The entire strategy is designed to ensure members focus on improving the life chances for our Looked After Children and young people. By offering our young people the chance to become more stable, healthy, well connected and supported young people, they are far less likely to slip into criminality.

### **3. Conclusion**

Lincolnshire is in a very strong position and we continue to demonstrate our commitment to Looked After Children and Care Leavers. Members are asked to support this strategy and ensure every elected member and officer knows of our responsibilities to our children and young people.

### **4. Legal Comments:**

The Report invites all councillors through the meeting of the full Council to approve the Corporate Parenting Strategy as the way in which the Council and individual councillors will fulfil their corporate parenting role.

The decision is lawful and within the remit of the full Council.

### **5. Resource Comments:**

There are no additional financial implications arising from acceptance of the recommendation in this report.

### **6. Consultation**

#### **a) Has Local Member Been Consulted?**

Yes

#### **b) Has Executive Councillor Been Consulted?**

Yes

#### **c) Scrutiny Comments**

This strategy was considered by the Children and Young People Scrutiny Committee held on 8 June 2018, and the following was agreed:

- That the Corporate Parenting Strategy be received and that endorsement be given to the process of embedding Corporate Parenting into the Council's culture. That Officers look into how the Strategy was to be presented to the Council meeting on 14 September 2018.
- That Corporate Parenting refresher training be arranged, to include the changes in legislation that had come into force on 1 April 2018, relating to providing support to Care Leavers up to the age of 25.

**d) Have Risks and Impact Analysis been carried out??**

Yes

**e) Risks and Impact Analysis**

An impact assessment has been carried out and there will be no negative impacts. All young people eligible for the service can have LAC and leaving care service regardless of any protected characteristic.

**7. Appendices**

These are listed below and attached at the back of the report	
Appendix A	Corporate Parenting Strategy

**8. Background Papers**

No background papers within Section 100D of the Local Government Act 1972 were used in the preparation of this report.

This report was written by Andrew Morris, who can be contacted on 01522 553916 or [andrew.morris@lincolnshire.gov.uk](mailto:andrew.morris@lincolnshire.gov.uk).

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