
Children and Young People Cabinet Member Briefing
Corporate Parenting Board

23 September 2020
30 July 2020

Name of Cabinet Member:

Children and Young People Councillor Pat Seaman

Director Approving Submission of the report:

Director for Children's Services

Ward(s) affected:

None

Title:

Corporate Parenting Board- activity report 2019-20

Is this a key decision?

No - although the proposals affect more than two electoral wards, the impact is not expected to be significant.

Executive Summary:

This report documents the activity of the Corporate Parenting Board for 2019 to 2020 and the impact it has had to improve outcomes for Coventry's looked after children.

Recommendations:

The Cabinet Member is requested to:

- 1) Note the content of the report and endorse the work of the Corporate Parenting Board from 2019 to 2020.

List of Appendices included:

The report of the Corporate Parenting Board in 2019-2020 is attached.

Background papers:

None.

Other useful documents

None.

Has it been or will it be considered by Scrutiny?

No.

Has it been or will it be considered by any other Council Committee, Advisory Panel or other body?

Yes –this report has been considered by the Corporate Parenting Board on 30 July 2020.

Will this report go to Council?

No.

1. Context (or background)

- 1.1 The Corporate Parenting Board is constitutionally required to oversee the outcomes of children and young people who are looked after by Coventry City Council. It is the place where voices of children can be heard about the services they receive, and work goes on with partners to make sure that looked after children in Coventry get the best possible outcomes. This report is the opportunity for members of the public to see these improvements.

2. Options considered and recommended proposal

3. Note the content of the report and endorse the work of the Corporate Parenting Board from 2019 to 2020.

4. Results of consultation undertaken

- 3.1 Children and young people are an active part of the Corporate Parenting Board. In addition, the Participation Team reports back on the work that children and young people have undertaken with organisations. They are given an opportunity to ask questions of managers and promote their views on how to improve looked after services further. Questions are always given a written reply.

5. Timetable for implementing this decision

- 4.1 The work of the Corporate Parenting Board will continue and a work programme for 2020 to 2021 has already been approved.

6. Comments from Director of Finance and Director of Law and Governance

6.1 Financial implications

There are no financial implications as a result of this report.

6.2 Legal implications

There are no legal implications as a result of this report.

7. Other implications

7.1 How will this contribute to the Council Plan (www.coventry.gov.uk/councilplan/)?

This work contributes to the Council Plan in the following ways:

- Globally connected- the Corporate Parenting Board looks at how to improve the employment opportunities for looked after children and care leavers. It also makes sure that it facilitates routes into work including apprenticeships for care leavers, paid at the living wage
- Locally connected- The Corporate Parenting Board ensures that educational outcomes for looked after children are improved. It also promotes links with health colleagues to see that children get the best health opportunities they can, which includes their mental

wellbeing. The partnership arrangements available through the Board makes sure that looked after children get the best possible start in life

- Delivering our priorities with fewer resources- the Corporate Parenting Board and its partners work with looked after children and care leavers to develop services that meet their needs. It is part of an innovative system that works together to resolve problems for looked after children.

7.2 How is risk being managed?

There are no identified risks to this work at the current time.

7.3 What is the impact on the organisation?

None

7.4 Equality and Consultation Analysis (ECA)

Children young people and care leavers are key to the Corporate Parenting Board. Their views are canvassed on a very regular basis and contribute to the drive to improve the services they are offered.

7.5 Implications for (or impact on) climate change and the environment

None.

7.6 Implications for partner organisations?

All the key partner agencies take an active part in the Corporate Parenting Board. A One Coventry approach is taken by the Board.

Report author(s):

Name and job title: Paul Smith Strategic Lead- looked after children

Service: Looked After Children

Tel and email contact: 02476 976 744 paul.smith2@coventry.gov.uk

Enquiries should be directed to the above person.

Contributor/approver name	Title	Service	Date doc sent out	Date response received or approved
Contributors:				
Usha Patel	Governance Services Officer	Law and Governance	11.09.2020	11.09.2020
Paul Smith	Strategic lead – looked after children			27 July 2020
Other members				
Names of approvers for submission: (officers and members)				
Finance: Tina Pinks	Lead accountant			8 September 2020
Legal: Julie Newman	Director of Law and Governance			10 September 2020
Director: John Gregg	Director of Children's Services			27 July 2020
Members: Councillor P Seaman	Cabinet Member			5 August 2020

This report is published on the council's website:

www.coventry.gov.uk/councilmeetings

Appendices



Corporate Parenting Board- activity report 2019-20

Introduction

The Corporate Parenting Board (CPB) is an advisory panel to Cabinet that operates to inform the Council about all aspects of the welfare of the children that it looks after. It consists of 7 Members and is supported by officers and partners. The voices of children in care are a key feature of the Board. This year has seen a consistent membership attending all meetings. Unfortunately, the December meeting had to be cancelled due the scheduling of a general election on the night of the meeting. The CPB is a cornerstone to improving services for Coventry's looked after children and care leavers.

Changes in the CBP

The CPB has seen further improvements in the way that it has worked this year. The meeting of the Board meetings have now moved to a twilight session. This has meant that young people who could not attend due to education or work commitments are now able to come and represent the views of looked after children and care leavers.

Colleagues from the virtual school now attend each CPB. This has extended the partnership arrangements and makes sure that there is always a reference point to looked after children's education.

You said: we did

Issues raised by looked after children and care leavers have been considered by the CPB which has made sure that the issues have been resolved:

- Young people and foster carers asked for clarity around the looked after children savings scheme to make it fairer for all looked after children. A new scheme has been drawn up and agreed by the Board. This means that all looked after children will get the same amount saved whilst they are in care, regardless of whether they live with foster carers, in a children's home or in supported accommodation
- Young people asked for meetings that were more friendly to allow their views to be heard. The CPB meetings have now moved to a twilight session and food and refreshment is now arranged. Preparatory meetings take place before the Board with Through Care staff and young people meeting with Voices of Care to look at agenda items and reports. They

have an opportunity to prepare views and ask questions in a safe space before the formal meeting. Young people's questions are responded to in writing

- Young people raised concerns about how Adult Services were involved if they needed support as they become adults. As a result, the board has reviewed transition arrangements including those children with disabilities and those with mental health issues
- Through the CPB, young people requested a review of independence workshops so that they better meet their needs as they grow up. This has happened and the independence workshop programme has now been improved in conjunction with young people
- Young people asked for an improved range of apprenticeship options in the Council that pay the living wage and do not focus exclusively on administrative work. Action has taken place between Council departments and there is now a range of opportunities for looked after apprenticeships and work experience in all departments across the Council. All pay the living wage
- Young people asked for easy information to show them how to access health services. Health colleagues have worked with young people and 'grab guides' on topics such as having injections and registering with a dentist have been launched.

Additional activity

In addition to the items identified for action by our young people, the Board has undertaken other work as part of its role. Members of the Board have:

- Gained an understanding of adolescent development including how brain development can impact on behaviour
- Received feedback and commented on the visit by Mark Riddell from the DfE who looked at care leaver services
- Reviewed feedback and commented on Ofsted's focused visit in February 2019
- Considered performance reporting
- Had a focus on health transition tools
- Reviewed the annual adoption report including an understanding of how adoption work has changed with the setting up of the Regional Adoption Agency (ACE). The Board assured itself that outcomes for adopted children continue to improve
- Been involved in the development and sign off of Coventry's Corporate Parenting Strategy for 2019-2021
- Reviewed the education and celebrated the achievements of looked after children
- Reviewed the support offered to looked after children in custody.

Voice of Looked After Children

The voice of looked after children is critical to the CBP. Children's voices are heard through the children's champion who supports some young people to attend and offers support to Voices of Care. The chair of Voices of Care attends the Board. In addition, Through Care staff have also supported young people to attend the Board. Young people identify items for the board and meet before to consider agenda items and ask questions for members of the Board to answer.

Looked after children feature across the service as a whole and some examples of how they have been involved are:

- Recruitment and selection of staff across the entire looked after service

- Have been involved in consultations such as the redesign of hospital reception areas, tender bids and a new complaints procedure
- Have been able to test Go Ape and The Wave prior to public opening
- Have developed a board game 'Who Cares Wins' for staff to use to understand issues pertinent to looked after children
- Have offered a development session to social work students on what they want and expect from a social worker
- Produced a Makaton video to Katy Perry's 'Roar'
- Established a Little Voices for 8-11-year-old looked after children
- Developed a young people's guide to fostering
- Bid for and secured additional external funding for the group.

This has been a very successful year for looked after children and care leavers.

Next steps

The CPB has had a very successful year. It has expanded the voice of looked after children in the Board. There has been a focus on improving outcomes for children and care leavers, taking account of what is important to them. The CPB will continue to use this approach with a view to making the board completely relevant to children and young people.

Paul Smith

Strategic lead- looked after children

June 2020