

CORPORATE PARENTING BOARD – 31st MARCH 2014

Title of paper:	Children in Care and Care Leavers Strategy 2014 – 2016	
Director(s)/ Corporate Director(s):	Helen Blackman, Director – Safeguarding	Wards affected: ALL
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Other colleagues who have provided input:		
Date of consultation with Portfolio Holder(s) (if relevant)	18th March 2014	

Relevant Council Plan Strategic Priority:

Cutting unemployment by a quarter	<input type="checkbox"/>
Cut crime and anti-social behaviour	<input type="checkbox"/>
Ensure more school leavers get a job, training or further education than any other City	<input type="checkbox"/>
Your neighbourhood as clean as the City Centre	<input type="checkbox"/>
Help keep your energy bills down	<input type="checkbox"/>
Good access to public transport	<input type="checkbox"/>
Nottingham has a good mix of housing	<input type="checkbox"/>
Nottingham is a good place to do business, invest and create jobs	<input type="checkbox"/>
Nottingham offers a wide range of leisure activities, parks and sporting events	<input type="checkbox"/>
Support early intervention activities	<input type="checkbox"/>
Deliver effective, value for money services to our citizens	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

Summary of issues (including benefits to citizens/service users):

In order to fulfil it's obligation as set out in Annex A of Ofsted's 'Framework and evaluation schedule for the inspection of services for children in need of help and protection, children looked after and care leavers' (2013), local authorities are required to produce a strategic plan for looked after children that includes corporate parenting objectives.

In January 2014, six proposed Strategic Priority Statements were presented to the Corporate Parenting Board ('Board'). The Board was given the opportunity to provide comments regarding the content of the strategy. Where possible, received comments (and suggestions) would be incorporated into the final draft of the strategy and returned to the Board.

The purpose of this report is to fulfil this requirement and again recommend that the Board accepts the Strategic Priority Statements as 'corporate parenting objectives'.

Recommendation(s):

1	To agree the Strategic Priorities and corresponding Strategic Priority Statements (SPS). By doing so, the Corporate Parenting Board will accept the Strategic Priority Statements as 'corporate parenting objectives'.
2	To endorse the 2014 – 2016 Nottingham City Children in Care and Care Leavers Strategy.

1. REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

- 1.1 As Corporate Parents we are responsible for ensuring children, who come into our care, experience safe and positive parenting, are helped to achieve their full potential, and obtain the best possible outcomes.
- 1.2 It is acknowledge that in order for our children to achieve the best possible outcomes, all agencies involved in caring and supporting children in care and care leavers must work together effectively. This in-turn requires a multi-agency strategy that clearly states the areas that require improvement (i.e. strategic priorities) and the activities that must be undertaken to achieve the necessary improvements.
- 1.3 Imperative to the success of the strategy is its endorsement by the Board. The Board will play an important role in the success of the strategy by fulfilling it's function to raise the profile of children in care, and by acting as a champion for the needs and rights of children in care in the Council's various service areas, political groups and settings.

2. BACKGROUND (INCLUDING OUTCOMES OF CONSULTATION)

- 2.1 Comments and suggestions made at, and subsequent to the January Corporate Parenting Board meeting have been noted, and where possible incorporated into the strategy document. Comments and suggestions included the following;

§ **To extend Strategic Priority 11 to include 'volunteering and work experience.'**

Strategic Priority 11 has been extending accordingly – see the table included in section 2.3 of this report. An additional action has also been include to reflect the broadening of the Strategic Priority – see page 20 of appendix one.

§ **To do as much as possible to prevent young people returning to environments of domestic violence, abuse and neglect.**

It should be noted that preventing young people from returning to environments where domestic violence, abuse and neglect exists is an implicit function of the Safeguarding Directorate. Ensuring that young people are not returned to these environments is achieved through robust risk assessments. Further scrutiny is achieved in part through the Edge of Care Panel and the Placement Panel.

The action plan that supports SPS 1 now makes reference to work that will be undertaken to identify ways in which young people can be prepared for healthy relationships and consider the impact of domestic violence – see page 17 of appendix one.

§ **To consider the feasibility of 'foster grandparents' to help support SPS 2 (Permanency) and SPS 3 (Resilience and Independence).**

Support networks, which will include family members when appropriate, are identified as children prepare for transition into independence to as part of the pathway planning progress. Monitoring the completion and quality of Pathway Plans is a task currently undertaken and is referred to on page 19 of appendix one.

It should also be acknowledged that the feasibility of using family members to support permanency is frequently assessed through the Core Assessment process, and is discussed at both the Placement and Permanency panels. Both Panels are convened on regular basis as stated in appendix one – see page 18.

- § **To reconsider the wording used for SPS 4, Educational Attainment, to provide a stronger statement.**

In an attempt to make SPS 4 more comprehensive, reference is made to work experience and voluntary opportunities.

- § **Minor grammatical changes were also suggested. These amendments have been made but not highlighted.**

2.3

Strategic Priority		Strategic Priority Statement (SPS)	
1	Reduce substance misuse.	1	To reduce young pregnancy and substance misuse. In addition to ensuring the timely completion of health checks, dental checks, immunisations, and SDQs.
2	Reduce young pregnancy.		
3	To ensure the timely completion of health checks, dental checks, immunisations, and SDQs (Strengths and Difficulties Questionnaires).		
4	To reduce delays in securing permanency through adoption, special guardianship, residence orders and long term fostering.	2	NCC believes that all children should grow up with their birth families. Where this is not able to happen we will secure permanency through adoption, special guardianship, residence orders or long term fostering.
5	Provide safe environments and stability in placement.		
6	Ensure children in care and care leavers are better able to deal successfully with significant changes in their lives.	3	To ensure children in care and care leavers are better able to deal successfully with significant changes in their lives. This includes improving transition into independence, and ensuring there are consultation and participation opportunities.
7	Improve transition into independence.		
8	Continue to seek the wishes and feelings of children in care and care leavers, and use this information to influence the care and support they experience.		
9	Ensure children in care know about the Advocacy, Independent Visitor, and Complaints service.		
10	Improve educational attainment.	4	To improve the educational attainment of children in care and to ensure care leavers engage in employment, education or training, including voluntary and work experience opportunities.
11	Support children in care and care leavers into employment, training, work experience and volunteering.		
12	Ensure care leavers have access to suitable accommodation and support.	5	To ensure care leavers have access to suitable accommodation and support.
13	Reduce offending behaviour.	6	To reduce offending behaviour through strong collaborative partnership work.

Table to show the 2014 – 2016 Strategic Priorities and corresponding Strategic Priority Statements (SPS)

3. OTHER OPTIONS CONSIDERED IN MAKING RECOMMENDATIONS

3.1 As previously stated, as an Authority we are required by Ofsted to produce a document that sets out our strategic plan for looked after children. Therefore no other options have been considered when making the recommendation presented in this report.

4. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS (INCLUDING VALUE FOR MONEY/VAT)

4.1 None.

5. RISK MANAGEMENT ISSUES (INCLUDING LEGAL IMPLICATIONS AND CRIME AND DISORDER ACT IMPLICATIONS)

5.1 None.

6. EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT

6.1 An Equality Impact Assessment has not been carried out as this report does not include proposals for new or changing policies, services or functions.

7. LIST OF BACKGROUND PAPERS OTHER THAN PUBLISHED WORKS OR THOSE DISCLOSING CONFIDENTIAL OR EXEMPT INFORMATION

7.1 None.

8. PUBLISHED DOCUMENTS REFERRED TO IN COMPILING THIS REPORT

8.1 None.