

Somerset County Council

County Council
– 22nd January 2020

Corporate Parenting Board Annual Report 2018 - 2019

Cabinet Member: Cllr Frances Nicholson, Cabinet Member for Children and Families Division and Local Member: Jill Johnson OBE, Chair of Corporate Parenting Board
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1. Summary

- 1.1.** The Corporate Parenting Board continues to function effectively with reports from officers and partners showing clear progress against the 7 Principles of Corporate Parenting and our Ofsted Improvement programme. This report highlights the high quality of delivery that our front-line staff undertake daily and the Board's ability to influence this delivery through its direct contact with operational leads in its subgroups. Nevertheless, in our evaluation of this year's achievements, we have identified further areas of development that are ambitious for the overall outcomes for the 800+ children and young people in our care.

2. Recommendations

2.1. The Corporate Parenting Board requests:

- **That Council invites District Councillor representation on the Corporate Parenting Board to provide support on housing and leisure issues**
- **That Council extend its thanks to the young people on the Care Councils for all the hard work that they undertake.**
- **That Council recommends that Councillors appointed to the Corporate Parenting**

3. Background

- 3.1.** The role of the Somerset Corporate Parenting Board (CPB), is to ensure that Somerset County Council (SCC), together with the five District Councils, fulfil their duties towards children looked after (CLA), corporately and in partnership with other statutory agencies, including the NHS and Police. The existing Corporate Parenting Strategy and Terms of Reference (TOR), including membership, of the Corporate Parenting Board were agreed by Council in 2017.

The Corporate Parenting Board has met bi-monthly throughout the year, receiving regular updates from officers, partners and the Somerset In Care Council (SiCC) and Somerset Leaving Care Council (SLCC) who are a representative group of young people looked after or leaving care and are supported to meet by participation workers. The voice of the child is a key aspect of the Strategy and the Board has continued to engage with young people, both through their representation on the Board, and through SiCC and SLCC which is well established and has an effective and regular link with the Board.

The overall aim of the Corporate Parenting Strategy 2016 - 2019 is to strengthen good practice through a whole council approach to corporate parenting and a strong and effective approach to partnership working, thus improving the achievement, life chances and opportunities for all children looked after and care leavers.

The Corporate Parenting Strategy and annual action plan, aligns with and actively promotes Somerset's Plan for Children and Young People (CYPP), and the current Sufficiency Statement

This report provides an update of the function and impact of the Board over the past 12 months.

4. 2018 – 2019 Achievements

- 4.1.** The Board has approved a move to quarterly meetings and reporting commencing 2019. This brings the Corporate Parenting reports in line with CYPP reporting and gives a greater awareness to the Somerset Children's Trust.
- 4.2.** The chair also recommended to the Group leaders to review the regular attendance of their members on the Board.
- 4.3.** The chair especially wishes to highlight the many positive outcomes from the work of the Board and sub-groups especially:
 - No Somerset child is placed in an inadequate residential provision and no Somerset residential provision is judged as Inadequate
 - For the fifth consecutive academic year no CLA has been permanently excluded
 - An improved data monitoring set has been developed to include part time timetables, children missing education and persistent absenteeism
 - The Virtual School has aligned to the SiCC and SLCC priorities on a longer-term project regarding the issues CLA face in school
 - The Local Offer for Care Leavers launched November 2018
 - More information in place around reasons for lack of timely initial health assessments

- Refreshed Corporate Parenting Strategy and The Pledge co-produced with SiCC and SLCC
- Better monitoring and interventions of care leavers who are not in education, employment and training (NEET)
- Project work to determine extent and risk of children from other local authorities placed in Somerset.

4.4. SiCC & SLCC update: Despite the long-term absence of the Engagement & Participation Worker this year the work of the In-Care Council's (SiCC & SLCC) has not been impacted; due to the excellent support from staff and volunteers and the young people themselves. Particular thanks should be noted to elected members who raised funds and donated gifts for the Summer Away Day and Christmas Party.

5. Areas for Development

- 5.1.** A focus regarding children and young people's health by applying appropriate interventions following Strengths & Difficulties Questionnaires and the timeliness of initial health assessments and out of county health assessments.
- 5.2.** To increase the participation of Children Looked After to participate via the use of the Mind of My Own app.
- 5.3.** Develop capacity of Route One advocacy to better support the voice of the child in child protection conferences
- 5.4.** Engage with and support the launch and communication of Our Plan – The Somerset Plan for Children, Young People and Families 2019-2022 in April 2019
- 5.5.** Refresh and launch the Corporate Parenting Strategy 2019 – 2022 and terms of reference
- 5.6.** Commence quarterly performance and monitoring reports from sub groups to the board from April 2019
- 5.7.** A focus on improving education attainments and improving attendance at school.
- 5.8.** Develop a better understanding of the safeguarding of other Local Authorities Children Looked After placed into Somerset
- 5.9.** More focus on CLA and CL who are able and available for, but not engaged in, education, training or employment (ETE)

6. Background Papers

- 6.1.** Somerset Corporate Parenting Strategy 2019 - 2022

[Somerset Corporate Parenting Strategy 2019 -2022](#)

7. Appendices

7.1 Somerset Corporate Parenting Board Annual Report 2018 - 2019

Glossary of Terms

CAMHS	Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services
CCG	Clinical Commissioning Group
CIN	Children in Need
CL	Care leavers
CLA	Children Looked After
CPB	Corporate Parenting Board
CSC	Children's Social Care
CV	Curriculum Vitae
CYPP	Children and Young People's Plan
DCS	Director of Children Services
DfE	Department for Education
DT	Designated Teachers
IRO	Independent Reporting officer
NEET	Not in Education, Employment or Training
NHS	National Health Service
OFSTED	Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills
P2i	Pathway to Independence
PEP	Personal Education Plan
RAG rated	Red, Amber, Green, Blue (Business As Usual - BAU) rated
SCC	Somerset County Council
SCPB / CPB	Somerset Corporate Parenting Board
SCT	Somerset Children's Trust
SDQs	Strength and Difficulties Questionnaire
SEND	Special Educational Needs /Disability
SiCC	Somerset in Care Council
SLCC	Somerset Leaving Care Council
Sompar	Somerset Partnership
SW	Social Worker
TOR	Terms of Reference
UASC	Unaccompanied Asylum Seeking Children
VS	Virtual School