


REPORT TO CABINET

18 March 2020

Subject:	Corporate Parenting Strategy 2020-2023
Presenting Cabinet Member:	Cabinet Member for Best Start in Life Cllr Joyce Underhill
Director:	Executive Director of Children's Services Lesley Hagger
Contribution towards Vision 2030:	
Key Decision:	Yes
Cabinet Member Approval and Date:	Cllr Joyce Underhill: 12 February 2020
Director Approval:	Lesley Hagger: 10 February 2020
Reason for Urgency:	Urgency provisions do not apply
Exempt Information Ref:	Exemption provisions do not apply
Ward Councillor (s) Consulted (if applicable):	This is a Council-wide initiative
Scrutiny Consultation Considered?	Scrutiny consultation has not been undertaken
Contact Officer(s):	Charlotte Moriarty Corporate Parenting Co-ordinator charlotte_moriarty@sandwell.gov.uk

DECISION RECOMMENDATIONS

That Cabinet recommend the Council to:

Approve the Corporate Parenting Strategy 2020-2023 and action plan as set out in the appendix.

1 PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

- 1.1 The report summarises the refreshed Corporate Parenting Strategy 2020-2023 that has been developed to underpin the Council's commitment and role as Corporate Parent to the children and young people in our care and to our Care Experienced young people.
- 1.2 The three-year strategy outlines what we aim to do to support our children and young people. It highlights the focus on the 7 Corporate Parenting Principles introduced by the Children and Social Work Act (2017); our pledge to our Children in Care and Care Experienced young people, and how our Corporate Parenting Board aims to develop the role of our Corporate Parents as well as our young people in ensuring that positive outcomes are achieved.

2 IMPLICATION FOR VISION 2030

- 2.1 The work of the Corporate Parenting Board, and the Corporate Parenting Board Annual Report, provides a transparent assessment of the performance and effectiveness of local services for the children in Sandwell's care and care experienced young people (previously called Care Leavers). This is relevant to the Council's Vision 2030 and in particular:

Ambition 1: Sandwell is a community where our families have high aspirations and where we pride ourselves on equality of opportunity and on our adaptability and resilience.

Ambition 2: Sandwell is a place where we live healthy lives and live them for longer, and where those of us who are vulnerable feel respected and cared for.

Ambition 3: Our workforce and young people are skilled and talented, geared up to respond to changing business needs and to win rewarding jobs in a growing economy.

Ambition 4: Our children benefit from the best start in life and a high-quality education throughout their school careers with outstanding support from their teachers and families.

Ambition 5: Our communities are built on mutual respect and taking care of each other, supported by all the agencies that ensure we feel safe and protected in our homes and local neighbourhoods.

Ambition 8: Our distinctive towns and neighbourhoods are successful centres of community life, leisure and entertainment where people increasingly choose to bring up their families.

3 BACKGROUND AND MAIN CONSIDERATIONS

- 3.1 The Corporate Parenting Strategy 2020-2023 is required to inform the ongoing work in promoting positive outcomes for our Children in Care and Care Experienced young people.
- 3.2 Section 1: Provides an introduction to the strategy and to the commitment of Sandwell MBC, along with key partners. It introduces our Corporate Parenting Pledge with the 10 key messages that as Corporate Parents we have committed to strive to apply in our service delivery and to drive improvement in our local arrangements, whilst inviting our Care Experienced people to feedback wherever possible.
- 3.3 Section 2: Provides a profile of who our Children in Care and Care Experienced young people are. It includes evidence of various consultations that have taken place, including: Youth Takeover Day 2019, “what do our young people want from the people that work with them?”, Floetry examples and pictures from events, meetings and various young people led activities.
- 3.4 Section 3: Provides some headline data with regards to our Children in Care and Care Experienced young people. This is a snapshot of some of the key information as it currently stands and aims to provide an image of where we currently are within Sandwell.
- 3.5 Section 4: Provides information on our Corporate Parenting Board and some of the changes that have occurred in terms of layout of meetings, priorities of the Board to introduce the 7 Corporate Parenting Principles and the workstreams that accompany these principles to ensure that these principles are successfully the driving force behind every outcome of the Board.
- 3.6 Section 5: Provides an overview of what we will do as Corporate Parents to ensure that positive outcomes are promoted and evidenced throughout the three-year period of the strategy and beyond. This provides an overview of what success will look like within each of the workstreams based on consultation with your children and young people and the commitments of our Corporate Parents.
- 3.7 Appendix 1 to the Corporate Parenting Strategy: Provides the accompanying action plan setting out the tangible outcomes the Corporate Parenting Board hopes to deliver. This will be revisited yearly for progress to be monitored and tracked.

4 THE CURRENT POSITION

- 4.1 Two Corporate Parenting Newsletters have been developed; one for Councillors and one for council officers to provide updates on Corporate Parenting within Sandwell MBC and encourage a more active role wider than the Corporate Parenting Board itself.
- 4.2 A landing page on Sandwell MBC's Intranet has been developed providing an overview of the role of the Corporate Parent with officer contact details for more information, all issues of the Corporate Parenting Newsletter, an area to read the latest updates and news, and information on ways for officers to get involved in their role as Corporate Parent.
- 4.3 Prior to each full Council meeting there is a display or activity relevant to Corporate Parenting, and the Mayor makes reference to the role of all councillors as Corporate Parents in her opening address.
- 4.4 The Corporate Parenting Board Annual Report was considered at Full Council on 14 January 2020.

5 CONSULTATION (CUSTOMERS AND OTHER STAKEHOLDERS)

- 5.1 The Corporate Parenting Strategy 2020-2023 has been consulted with our Children in Care and Care Experienced young people, along with key partners and various partners through our Corporate Parenting Board.
- 5.2 Sandwell Children's Trust has contributed to the content of the Corporate Parenting Strategy 2020-2023.

6 ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS

- 6.1 The Corporate Parenting Strategy 2020-2023 is considered to be the most effective way of ensuring Sandwell MBC is carrying out its responsibilities to the children and young people in its care.

7 STRATEGIC RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

- 7.1 There are no specific financial implications arising from this report.
- 7.2 The formulation of the Corporate Parenting Strategy 2020-2023 was met from existing resources.

8 LEGAL AND GOVERNANCE CONSIDERATIONS

8.1 This report has been produced in accordance with the Council's Constitution. The law and government guidance set out the leading role of Councillors to make sure their Council is an effective Corporate Parent for every child in care. This means supporting standards of care and wanting the same as any good parent would want for their child.

8.2 The Children and Social Work Act (2017), identifies Corporate Parenting Principles that each Local Authority in England must, in carrying out functions in relation to the children and young people in its care, have regard to the need:

- (i) to act in the best interests, and promote the physical and mental health and well-being, of those children and young people;
- (ii) to encourage those children and young people to express their views, wishes and feelings;
- (iii) to take into account the views, wishes and feelings of those children and young people;
- (iv) to help those children and young people gain access to, and make the best use of, services provided by the local authority and its relevant partners;
- (v) to promote high aspirations, and seek to secure the best outcomes, for those children and young people;
- (vi) for those children and young people to be safe, for stability in their home lives, relationships and education or work;
- (vii) to prepare those children and young people for adulthood and independent living.

The children and young people mentioned in this subsection are:

- (i) children who are looked after by the local authority
- (ii) relevant children
- (iii) persons aged under 25 who are former relevant children.

9 EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT

- 9.1 An Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) screening has been carried out and a full EIA is not required for this proposal. If approved, the refreshed strategy will have a positive impact on our children and young people aged 0-25, along with their parents/carers and families.

10 DATA PROTECTION IMPACT ASSESSMENT

- 10.1 There are no data protection implications arising from this report.

11 CRIME AND DISORDER AND RISK ASSESSMENT

- 11.1 There are no specific crime and disorder implications arising from the content of this report.
- 11.2 The Corporate Risk Management Strategy (CRMS) has been complied with - to identify and assess any significant risks associated with this decision/project. This includes (but is not limited to) political, legislation, financial, environmental and reputation risks. Based on the information provided, it is the officers' opinion that no significant risk has been identified.
- 11.3 Any potential risks associated with the successful delivery of the action plan are identified and monitored through the Corporate Parenting Board.
- 11.4 Assurances for actions, potential operational risks and risks associated to the successful delivery of the action plan will be monitored and escalated through the Corporate Parenting Board.

12 SUSTAINABILITY OF PROPOSALS

- 12.1 The work of the Corporate Parenting Board is monitored yearly, and this is presented through the Corporate Parenting Board Annual Report.
- 12.2 The action plan attached to the Corporate Parenting Strategy 2020-2023 will allow for regular monitoring through bi-monthly Corporate Parenting Board meetings.

13 HEALTH AND WELLBEING IMPLICATIONS (INCLUDING SOCIAL VALUE)

- 13.1 The work of the Corporate Parenting Board supports the health and wellbeing of our Children in Care and Care Experienced young people.

14 **IMPACT ON ANY COUNCIL MANAGED PROPERTY OR LAND**

14.1 There is no impact on Council managed property or assets.

15 **CONCLUSIONS AND SUMMARY OF REASONS FOR THE RECOMMENDATIONS**

15.1 It is recommended that Members consider the following:

15.2 The approval of the Corporate Parenting Strategy 2020-2023 in noting its commitment to delivering the 7 Corporate Parenting Principles in line with legislation and through the work of the Corporate Parenting Board and key partners

15.3 The Corporate Parenting Board's commitment to continue to develop its delivery of the Council's statutory responsibilities to Children in Care and Care Experienced young people and their parents/carers.

15.4 The Corporate Parenting Board's commitment to using the content of the Strategy, including the action plan, to inform the ongoing work of the Corporate Parenting Board in raising outcomes for Children in Care and Care Experienced young people in Sandwell.

16 **BACKGROUND PAPERS**

16.1 Corporate Parenting Matters Landing Page:
https://intranet.sandwell.gov.uk/info/20171/childrens_services/3239/corporate_parenting_matters

17 **APPENDIX:**

Corporate Parenting Strategy 2020-2023

Lesley Hagger
Executive Director of Children's Services