



Haringey Council

Report for:	Cabinet 4 October 2011	Item number	
Title:	Response to Scrutiny Review of Corporate Parenting		
Report authorised by :	Peter Lewis Director, Children's Service		
Lead Officer:	Debbie Haith Deputy Director, Children and Families		
Ward(s) affected: All	Report for Key/Non Key Decision: N/A		

1. Describe the issue under consideration

1.1 To set out the response of Children's Services to the Scrutiny Review on Corporate Parenting.

2. Cabinet Member Introduction

2.1 As Cabinet Member for Children's Services I welcome the content of this Scrutiny Report and recommendations;

2.2 The review process has been comprehensive and has taken into account the views of children and young people, foster carers, residential staff, specialist health staff, Elected Members and officers from all departments of the council:

2.3 As the Cabinet Member for Children with a statutory responsibility for Looked After Children, this report has provided a detailed overview of corporate parenting which will strengthen the role of corporate parenting within the council and across partner agencies.

2.4 The report has 18 recommendations. Our response to the individual recommendations in the Overview and Scrutiny report is outlined in Appendix 1.

3. Recommendations

3.1 That Cabinet agrees the response.



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4. Other options considered

4.1 N/A

5. Background information

5.1 The Overview and Scrutiny Committee commissioned a review into corporate parenting. The review considered how the Council and its local partners work together to address the full range of needs of looked after children and young people. The focus was on the role and contribution of a range of services, as well as that played by elected Members. It aimed to receive input from a wide range of sources including children and young people in care and those who had recently left care.

5.2 The review's terms of Reference were:

"To consider how well the full range of parental needs of looked after children and young people are addressed corporately by the Council and to make recommendations on how this role could be strengthened"

6. Financial Implications

The Chief Financial Officer has been consulted in the preparation of this report. Value for money issues and any potential financial implications arising from the review will be considered in liaison with the service finance lead and contained within existing resources.

7. Legal Implications

There are no additional legal implications within this report.

8. Equalities and Community Cohesion Comments

8.1 A disproportionate number of looked after children come from ethnic minority backgrounds and research shows that looked after children grow into adults suffering disproportionately from social exclusion.

9. Head of Procurement Comments

NA

10. Policy Implications

10.1 Council Plan: A thriving Haringey and a caring Haringey

10.2 Sustainable Community Strategy Outcome: Economic vitality and prosperity shared by all

10.3 The Corporate Parenting Strategy

11. Use of Appendices

Please see Appendix One (Action Plan) at the end of this document

12. Local Government (Access to Information) Act 1985

12.1 Background papers are as follows:



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- The Role of Councillors as Corporate Parents – Rotherham MBC Lifelong Learning Opportunities Scrutiny Panel
- Aspects Of The Council’s Corporate Parenting Responsibilities – Middlesbrough Children and Learning Scrutiny Committee
- Children Looked After by Camden – Camden Corporate Parenting Scrutiny Committee
- Children and Young People’s Strategic Plan – Haringey Council
- The Role of Councillors as Corporate Parents – Wakefield MDC Children’s Services Scrutiny Working Group
- If This Were My Child – A Councillor’s Guide to Being a Good Corporate Parent – Department for Education and Skills/LGiU
- Show Me How I Matter; A Guide to the Education of Looked After Children – LGA/IdEA
- London Borough of Greenwich Corporate Parenting Review Jan 2010 - PricewaterhouseCoopers LLP Children’s Services Consulting Team



Action Plan for implementing the recommendations of the Scrutiny Review of Corporate Parenting

No	Recommendation	Response	Commentary
1	That the corporate parenting function be embedded in the performance management framework of the Council through each Council service being required to identify a specific action within their business plan that contributes to their corporate parenting responsibility. (para 2.17)	Agreed	The business plan for council departments has been put in place for 2011/12 but the recommendation can be incorporated in 2012/13. Lead: Eve Pelekanos - Head of Policy, Intelligence and Partnerships
2	That, subject to minimum criteria being met for the person spec., all Council care leavers be guaranteed an interview for advertised posts within the Council for the first 5 years after leaving care. Care leavers should also be included in the Haringey Guarantee Scheme. (2.18)	Agreed in principle	Schemes of this type have been established in other Local Authorities with levels of success. A proposal will be scoped for consideration at the Corporate Parenting Advisory Committee. Lead: Steve Davis – Head of Human Resources
3	That each Council service and key partner agencies be requested to identify a staff member of appropriate seniority to champion the interests of looked after children and care leavers and, in particular, provide a role in service development and as a key contact for staff working directly with children. (2.21)	Agreed	The Looked After Children’s Multi-agency group has senior representation from across the council and partner agencies. The group has a work plan which has been developed with reference to the Corporate Parenting Advisory Committee.



4	That the Council use its key strategic role to influence partners and other third party organisations to provide opportunities and support for looked after children and care leavers. (2.22)	Agreed	Through the range of commissioning activity that the council and its partners are engaged in, where services impact on LAC, consideration should be given to how services could contribute to the corporate parenting responsibility. Lead: Debbie Haith – Deputy Director, Children and Families
5	That, in order to enhance accountability and transparency, the Council should review and clarify the respective roles of the Corporate Parenting Advisory Committee (CPAC) and the Children’s Safeguarding Policy and Practice Advisory Committee, including whether it remains appropriate for the Cabinet Member for C&YPS to chair the CPAC, and, in addition, allocate the specific role of providing scrutiny and challenge in both corporate parenting and the delivery of safeguarding policy and practice to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee. (2.24)	The role of both committees was considered as part of the governance review.	A review of ToR has been completed. There is a joint meeting of both committees held Bi-annually to discuss issues which impact on the role of both committees.
6	That Member engagement be enhanced through: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Measures being taken to ensure that that all Members attend both initial and refresher training on their corporate parenting role; ▪ All Members of the Council receiving more regular updates on looked after children and, in particular, their achievements; ▪ An Annual Report to all members highlighting the Council’s Corporate Parenting performance towards delivering the 47 promises that the 	Agreed in principle	Training is already provided to all members on both Corporate Parenting and Safeguarding. Attendance is a matter for members to address. In practice attendance has been very high. Refresher training can be provided on request and members have been invited to Regulation 33 training as well as “Total Respect” training which is delivered by young people and staff .



	<p>Council signed up to in “The London Pledge for Children and Young People in Care” and performance monitoring statistics that Councillors are considered to have a “need to know”; and</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ All Members being given the opportunity to participate in celebrating the achievements of looked after children. (2.27) 		<p>The corporate Parenting committee receives an annual report from the Virtual School for Looked After Children. This report is made available to all members. <i>In future a notification will be forwarded to members when it is published</i></p> <p>An update report on the progress of action to implement the 47 recommendations from the London Pledge has been presented to the Corporate Parenting Advisory Committee. Update reports will continue to be presented and are available to all members.</p> <p>Members of the Corporate Parenting advisory committee are invited to celebration events. Practical limitations make it difficult to extend invitations to all members.</p> <p>Lead: Ayshe Simsek – Principal Committee Co-ordinator</p>
7	<p>That an appropriate scheme be developed for Members to champion the educational attainment of particular looked after children. (2.29)</p>	Not agreed	<p>In their capacity as school governors members should ensure that the role of designated governor and teacher for LAC is implemented and that the school and governing body are aware of how they should fulfil their responsibilities to LAC.</p>



8	That, in the light of concerns raised in evidence received by the panel concerning children missing from our care and especially those missing from our care homes, a scrutiny review be undertaken on the Council's policy, procedures, practices and performance in this area, including the "Missing From Care and Home" Action Plan <i>Scrutiny Review – Corporate Parenting Page 6 of 35</i> as well as the financial impact. (2.31)	This is a decision for the Overview and Scrutiny Committee	
9	That enhanced local education targets be developed that provide additional challenge to further improve educational achievement for looked after children. (3.18)	Agreed in principle	The virtual school tracks attainment against projected individual student potential attainment and provides targeted support with the support of designated teachers in schools. This is set out in the Personal Education Plan which is a statutory requirement. The school's tracking system ensures that students are tracked individually and those who need additional support are identified.
10	That a proactive approach be adopted to delivering and increasing the uptake of tutoring opportunities and to improve and expand the Study Centre. (3.23)	Agreed	Schools are given an additional pupil allowance to provide additional support for LAC. The virtual school is working with designated teachers to ensure that this funding is directed at meeting the needs of individual Looked After Children. The work of the study club is reviewed each academic year and potential new students who will benefit from the support are identified and actively supported to attend.



11	That funding be retained to provide specific sexual health provision for looked after children and care leavers, including advice on preventing conceptions. (4.22)	Agreed	<p>Health partners and the local authority are committed to working to the statutory guidance on promoting the health and wellbeing of looked after children. The multi-agency working group for looked after children and the associated action plan prioritises the health of looked after children including ensuring that they receive appropriate advice on sexual health matters. The work of the group is reported to the Corporate Parenting Advisory Committee.</p> <p>As part of the review health assessment we continue to provide sexual health advice and education, age and developmentally appropriately as required</p> <p>Lead: Judy Mace - Whittington Health, Haringey Designated Nurse for Children in Care</p>
12	That all of Haringey’s looked after children be provided with a free Haringey Active Pass offering 70% discount for use in Haringey leisure centres, irrespective of where they live. (4.29)	Not agreed	<p>Within allowances provided to Haringey carers and commissioned placements there is already an element for recreational activities. This funding enables children and young people to pursue activities of their choice and in the local area in which they are placed.</p>
13	That the element of the carers allowance intended to provide for savings for young people be “top sliced” and used to establish individual savings plans or trust funds for children in care. (4.34)	Agreed in principle	<p>A savings policy is being drafted and will be presented to the Corporate Parenting Advisory Committee.</p> <p>Lead: Wendy Tomlinson – Head of Service, Commissioning and Placements</p>



14	That all schools be encouraged to repatriate funds provided from central government for careers guidance for LACYP to either Connexions or C&YPS and that, if successful, this be used to provide a dedicated worker providing careers advice for all Haringey's LACYP. (5.12)		Schools will become responsible for impartial careers advice and guidance from 2012. Discussions will be held with secondary schools to see how they intend to fulfil this responsibility, particularly for Looked-After young people. Lead: Belinda Evans – Head of Youth, Community and Participation
15	That enhanced support be developed to assist care leavers with finding and maintaining accommodation and that this include support being provided from an earlier stage and a specific resource to assist them in bidding for properties. (5.17)	Agreed	The Leaving Care Team has a staff member with lead responsibility for accommodation. There are strong links with housing and Homes for Haringey. Colleagues from Housing work with the team to provide a rolling programme of workshops for young people to help prepare them for managing tenancies. A quota system operates to provide care leavers with permanent accommodation. A senior manager from Housing is on the Multi agency LAC group.
16	That a policy be developed on semi-independent living for looked after children between 16 and 19. (5.19)	Agreed	Haringey are currently involved in a cross borough initiative to commission semi-supported accommodation.
17	That initiatives to improve emotional support for care leavers and the development of a specific mentoring scheme for care leavers be strongly supported that a report on progress be submitted to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee in due course. (5.22)	Agreed	Following a request from CPAC, a report was considered on the risk of social isolation of young people leaving care and how young people could be supported. CPAC has requested a further report on how a mentoring scheme could be delivered to support young people. Lead: Chris Chalmers – Head of Service, Children in Care



18	That enhanced systems for monitoring of long term outcomes be developed and in particular the progress of NEETs, and that a practical way for remaining in contact with vulnerable care-leavers into their 20s be developed. (5.24)	Agreed in principle.	<p>There is a statutory responsibility to remain in contact and provide a Personal Advisor to care leavers up to the age of 21 (and 25 if they remain in education). Recent legislation has extended the right for young people to request assistance any time up to the age of 25 if they return to education.</p> <p>The national requirement is to report on young people aged 19. The information relates to education, employment and training status, suitability of accommodation and contact with the service. The Leaving Care Service is looking into enhancing the monitoring of outcomes including for older young people.</p> <p>Lead: Chris Chalmers – Head of Service, Children in Care</p>
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