

Corporate Parenting Panel

14 December 2018

Corporate Parenting Panel Terms of Reference



Report of Helen Fergusson, Head of Children's Social Care, Children and Young People's Services, Durham County Council

Electoral division(s) affected:

Countywide

Purpose of the Report

- 1 The purpose of the report is to present the revised Corporate Parenting Panel Terms of Reference to the Corporate Parenting Panel for agreement (Appendix 2).

Executive summary

- 2 The Terms of Reference form part of Durham County Council's constitution, which is subject to an annual refresh. This annual refresh provides the Corporate Parenting Panel with an opportunity to review its Terms of Reference to see if they remain fit for purpose, now that the Panel is established and operational in its new format.

Recommendation(s)

- 3 Members of the Corporate Parenting Panel are asked to:
 - a. Agree the proposed Corporate Parenting Panel Terms of Reference attached as Appendix 2.
 - b. Agree to recommend that full council amends the terms of reference as part of the annual review of Durham County Council's constitution.

Background

- 4 The Children Act 1989 gave all local authorities the statutory responsibility to act as corporate parents to children whose parents cannot look after them.
- 5 The National Children's Bureau's "Putting Corporate Parenting into Practice" 2013 identified the following factors for a Corporate Parenting Panel where Local Authority services for looked after children were judged to be 'good' by Ofsted:

- a. Demonstrated a strong cross party commitment to looked after children by championing their rights, having high aspirations for their achievement, monitoring children's progress and challenging outcomes
 - b. Clearly understood its role and the responsibilities of the Local Authority to looked after children and planned for and prioritised their needs resulting in a greater focus on improving outcomes
 - c. Actively engage with their young people for example with the Children in Care Council that is well established and has regular and effective links with senior management and elected members.
- 6 Following an inspection of Durham County Council's Children's Services by Ofsted in February/March 2016 the service was judged as requiring improvement. Since this judgement the service has carried out work to address Ofsted's recommendations and with the Council's Transformation Agenda has made significant improvements in relation to political oversight of Children's Services including the revised terms of reference of the Corporate Parenting Panel.
- 7 At its meeting on 22 March 2017, Durham County Council formally agreed the terms of reference for the Corporate Parenting Panel.
- 8 Provision within the terms of reference states that the Corporate Parenting Panel is to act as a governing body for the Virtual School and as a governing body for Aycliffe Secure Centre. At the meeting on 24th April 2017, the Corporate Parenting Panel agreed the Terms of Reference for these sub groups.

Conclusion

- 9 The Terms of Reference form part of Durham County Council's constitution, which is subject to an annual refresh. This annual refresh provides the Corporate Parenting Panel with an opportunity to review its Terms of Reference to see if they remain fit for purpose.

Background papers

- None

Other useful documents

- Appendix 2: Corporate Parenting Panel Terms of Reference

Contact: Jayne Watson

Tel: 03000 268371

Appendix 1: Implications

Legal Implications

The Corporate Parenting Panel Terms of Reference form part of Durham County Council's Constitution.

Finance

Expenses may be incurred by co-opted members for travel costs, this will be paid from Democratic Services general member's expenses budget.

Consultation

Text.

Equality and Diversity / Public Sector Equality Duty

Text.

Human Rights

Text.

Crime and Disorder

Text.

Staffing

Text.

Accommodation

Text.

Risk

Text.

Procurement

Text.