

**Corporate Parenting Panel Annual
Report 2021-22**

**Report of Helen Fergusson, Head of Children's Social Care,
Durham County Council**

Electoral division(s) affected:

Countywide

Purpose of the Report

- 1 The purpose of this report is to present the Corporate Parenting Panel Annual Report April 2021 – March 2022, for agreement.
- 2 The Annual Report 2021-22 is attached as Appendix 2 of this report.

Executive summary

- 3 Over previous years, a number of changes have been implemented to strengthen political and management oversight of the Corporate Parenting Panel and increase the voice of children and young people in our work. This continues to ensure the best possible outcomes are achieved for our young people.
- 4 The Corporate Parenting Panel's Terms of Reference form part of Durham County Council's constitution and make specific reference that the Corporate Parenting Panel will prepare and provide an annual report that will be shared with Council, Cabinet and Scrutiny.
- 5 This is the fifth Annual Report of the Corporate Parenting Panel, following the changes to political oversight.

Recommendations

- 6 Corporate Parenting Panel are requested to:
 - (a) Discuss and agree the Corporate Parenting Panel Annual Report for 2021-22

Background

- 7 The terms of reference make specific reference that the Corporate Parenting Panel will prepare and provide an annual report that will be shared with Council, Cabinet and Scrutiny.
- 8 In September 2019, Durham County Council's Children's Services were inspected by OFSTED. The inspection report stated that 'The Corporate Parenting Panel is effective and is maintaining good political and strategic governance of children in care and care leavers.'
- 9 In July 2021, Durham County Council were subject to a remote focused inspection led by Children's Services and Skills on behalf of Ofsted's work into how England's social care system delivered child-centred practice and care within the context of the restrictions placed on society during the coronavirus pandemic.
- 10 The inspection identified a range of strengths and recognised that the service knows its children well, with Ofsted commenting that the self-assessment provided an accurate picture of children in care.
- 11 The processes in place to listen to the views of children and young people and to ensure their views positively impact service delivery were acknowledged. Inspectors were extremely complimentary about the Children in Care Council, having had the opportunity to meet representatives, to hear about their experiences and achievements.

Development of the Annual Report

- 12 To ensure the voice of the child is reflected in the work of the Corporate Parenting Panel, it was agreed that young people from the Children in Care Council, supported by officers from the Partnerships Team, would develop the Corporate Parenting Panel's Annual Reports.
- 13 The young people worked on the design, content and language of the Annual Report to ensure it is easy to read and understand.
- 14 To ensure we continue to raise the profile of the Corporate Parenting Panel, the Durham County Council Communications and Marketing Team have been involved in the development of the Annual Report to ensure it follows a more corporate format, whilst ensuring it uses language and design which is also appealing to young people.
- 15 The Annual Report is hosted on the Durham County Council website, Investing in Children website, and the Children in Care Council website.

- 16 The Annual Report includes information on:
- (a) What a Corporate Parent is
 - (b) The role of the Corporate Parenting Panel
 - (c) The Corporate Parenting Panel's Terms of Reference
 - (d) Key performance data
 - (e) Achievements during 2021/22
 - (f) Priorities for 2022/23
 - (g) Proud moments

Next Steps

- 17 Corporate Parenting Panel are requested to note the following key dates for the Corporate Parenting Panel Annual Report:
- (a) Children and Young People's Services Management Team: **28 July, final version for information**
 - (b) Corporate Management Team: **17 August 2022, final version for information**
 - (c) Cabinet: **14 September 2022, for endorsement**
 - (d) Council: **21 September, for information**
 - (e) Children and Young People's Overview and Scrutiny Committee: **23 September 2022, for information**
- 18 The Corporate Parenting Panel Annual Report has already been presented to Children's Social Care Management Team, Children and Young People's Services Management Team and Corporate Management Team for comment.

Conclusion

- 19 Corporate Parenting Panel are requested to provide comment and agree the Corporate Parenting Panel Annual Report which provides oversight of the work undertaken during 2020-21, and the priorities for the year ahead.

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Appendix 1: Implications

Legal Implications

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

Finance

There are cost implications for design and print services, however the Corporate Parenting Panel Annual Report will primarily be shared by email, and will be hosted on the Children in Care Council, Investing in Children and Durham County Council websites to minimise printing and distribution costs.

Consultation

Young people from the Children in Care Council have been involved in the development of the Annual Report. The consultation has been done in the main through virtual meetings coordinated by Investing in Children, due to the Coronavirus pandemic and lockdown restrictions.

Equality and Diversity / Public Sector Equality Duty

Looked After Services are available to all children and young people in line with legal duties.

Climate Change

There are no climate change implications

Human Rights

Children and young people have been central to the development of the Annual Report to ensure that their voices are heard.

Crime and Disorder

There are no crime and disorder implications.

Staffing

There are no staffing implications.

Accommodation

There are no accommodation implications.

Risk

There are no risk implications.

Procurement

There are no procurement implications.

**Appendix 2: Draft Corporate Parenting Panel Annual Report
2021-22**

Attached as a separate document