

Council

21 September 2022



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

Report of Corporate Management Team
Councillor Ted Henderson, Cabinet Portfolio Holder for Children
and Young People’s Services
Councillor Mamie Simmons, Chair of the Corporate Parenting Panel

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 (attached as Appendix 2), for endorsement.
- 2 The Annual Report 2021-22 was agreed by the Corporate Parenting Panel at its meeting on 19 July 2022, and will be considered by Cabinet at its meeting on 14 September

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 Council is requested to:
 - (a) Note the content of the Corporate Parenting Panel Annual Report

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.
- 12 This has also been echoed in the recent ILACS (Inspection of Local Authority Children's Services) inspection, which took place in May 2022.

Development of the Annual Report

- 13 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.
- 14 The young people worked on the design, content and language of the Annual Report to ensure it is easy to read and understand.
- 15 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.

- 16 The Annual Report is hosted on the Durham County Council website, Investing in Children website, and the Children in Care Council website.
- 17 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

Conclusion

- 18 Council is recommended to note the Corporate Parenting Panel Annual Report, subject to it being endorsed by Cabinet, which provides oversight of the work undertaken during 2021-22, 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: Corporate Parenting Panel Annual Report 2021-22

Attached as a separate document