

Subject:	Corporate Parenting Strategy		
Date of Meeting:	1st November 2010		
Report of:	Strategic Director- People		
Contact Officer:	Name:	James Dougan	Tel: 295511
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Key Decision:	No		
Wards Affected:	All		

FOR GENERAL RELEASE

1. SUMMARY AND POLICY CONTEXT:

- 1.1 On 17th May 2010, the Board agreed to the proposal for the development of a Corporate Parenting Strategy for Brighton & Hove.
- 1.2 Corporate Parenting describes the collective responsibilities that members and officers of Brighton & Hove City Council and its partner organisations have towards children and young people in care of the local authority. These include children accommodated by voluntary agreement with their parent/s, those on statutory orders, those in shared care arrangements, those remanded into care and unaccompanied asylum seeking children. The duties extend to those young people who have left care up to the age of 21 (or 24 if remaining in higher education).

2. RECOMMENDATIONS:

- 2.1 To agree the attached Corporate Parenting Strategy for Brighton & Hove (See Appendix '1').
- 2.2 The Partnership Board accepts their responsibilities to further the goals as outlined in the corporate parenting strategy within their own organisation and collectively as a partnership.
- 2.3 This is a Council-wide and partner agency responsibility and individuals at every level across all service areas in Brighton & Hove must as the Corporate Parent, achieve these tasks.

3. RELEVANT BACKGROUND INFORMATION

3.1 In spite of considerable attention over recent years, the gap between the outcomes for Children in Care and their peers has continued to widen. The Government nationally has responded over the years by having a number of initiatives to improve the outcomes of Children in Care. The last major initiative was Care Matters which was designed to ensure the effectiveness of the state's responsibility and the role of local authorities in discharging their duties as corporate parent.

Some of the corporate parenting initiatives that have been achieved in Brighton & Hove are:

- Priority access to health services including Morley Street dental service
- 16+ Nurse providing a personalised and flexible service including sexual health and contraception
- Listen Up card ensures free access to swimming and other leisure activities
- Dedicated pathway for access to Children and Adolescent Mental Health Services
- Joint Protocol with Housing Department ensures that the corporate responsibility for meeting the diverse accommodation needs of young people who have been Looked After by B&HCC are met.
- Pan Sussex 'Missing from Care' Protocol with Sussex Police
- Entry2Learning partnership with Sussex Central YMCA
- Partnership with Aim Higher Sussex
- Appointment of Headteacher of Virtual School for Children in Care
- Tickets for shows at B&H venues
- Development of Listen Up Care Council (LUCC) and 16 Plus Advisory Group participation groups for Children in Care and care leavers
- Offers of B&HCC-wide opportunities from taster days to apprenticeships
- Extension of support post-18 (Supported Lodgings and Supporting People) so that care leavers move to their own accommodation when ready and able

3.2 Brighton & Hove has been engaged for sometime in corporate parenting developments. It was a pilot area for the Who Cares Trust Equal Chances Project in 2000 and since then there has been a continuous strengthening of work to bridge the gap between the outcomes for Children in Care and those of the general population of children when compared to both our comparator authorities and to the national average. Some examples below:

Outcome %	Result	Comparator Av	National Av
CiC reaching Level 4 in English at Key Stage 2	60	44.9	46
CiC reaching Level 4 in Maths at Key Stage 2	53	43	46
CiC missing 25+ days of schooling for any reason	8.2	13.6	11.5
Care leavers at 19 years in education, training, employment	69.8	63.6	62.9
Care leavers at 19 years in suitable accommodation	93	82.9	88.8
Young Offenders who are CiC	1.8	2.34	2.1
Stability of placements for CiC (number of moves)	10.4	9.4	10.4

- 3.3 The strategy will provide members and officers with the opportunity to make significant improvements by looking in more detail at some of the factors which impact on the outcomes for Children in Care. It will help take forward positive and definitive action and will build on the improvements undertaken and continuing in Brighton & Hove. The strategy is about ensuring that these children and young people are safe, secure and healthy, are encouraged and supported to achieve their potential and aspirations, are encouraged to lead fulfilled lives and are successfully prepared for a future where they will be valued and involved citizens who are economically independent and able to contribute positively to the communities in which they live.

4. CONSULTATION

- 4.1 Children and young people who are in care and care leavers have been involved in the development of the strategy. As a council and as a partnership we have been committed to listening to children and young people in our care and providing them with a range of opportunities to enable them to make the decisions about how they want to get involved. These opportunities afford the children and young people the ability to effect change in services. But they also provide the young people with opportunities to develop their skills and levels of understanding in areas most relevant to their own interests and personal development. We have two formal processes within the care system which are the 16 Plus Advisory Board for young people and the Listen Up Care Council Group for children up to 16 years. The new strategy will advance a whole range of consultative and involvement initiatives.
- 4.2 The Brighton & Hove Pledge (Appendix '3') which is a set of promises that set out the support and care we will provide to children and young people in care and care leavers was produced and led by consultation with a significant number of service users. It is one mechanism by which the Council and its partners can be held accountable by children, young people and their carers on the levels of service provided.

5. FINANCIAL & OTHER IMPLICATIONS:

Financial Implications:

- 5.1 There are currently no direct financial implications arising from the recommendations in this report. If additional costs arise as a result of the future development of the corporate parenting strategy then it would be necessary to identify appropriate funding.

Finance Officer Consulted: Andy Moore Date: 21st October 2010

Legal Implications:

- 5.2 The Corporate Parenting Strategy will assist the partners to the Children & Young People's Trust in meeting their duties to Children in Care and care

leavers. It mirrors the Every Child Matters agenda and reflects the duty to promote the well being of children contained in Sect 10 of the Children Act 2004. The Board will be aware that no child can be Looked After without either the consent of their parents or by way of an Interim Care Order (ICO) sanctioned by the Court. An ICO can only be made where the threshold criteria that the child is suffering or is at risk of suffering significant harm is proved to the satisfaction of the court AND the court are satisfied that such an order is necessary to secure the welfare of the child.

Lawyer Consulted: Natasha Watson Date: 21st October 2010

Equalities Implications:

- 5.3 The Corporate Parenting Strategy is critical to the implementation of Brighton & Hove Council's Equalities Policy and to the achievement of the priorities set out in the Children & Young People's Plan 2009-12

Sustainability Implications:

- 5.4 There are no immediate sustainability implications

Crime & Disorder Implications:

- 5.5 The Corporate Parenting Strategy aims to support young people to engage in law abiding and socially acceptable activity and behaviour

Risk and Opportunity Management Implications:

- 5.6 The Corporate Parenting Strategy will assist the partners of the Children & Young People's Trust in meeting their duties to Children in Care and care leavers and this includes the management of significant risks, including risk to self, to others and to reputation and financial risk.

Corporate / Citywide Implications:

- 5.7 The Corporate Parenting Strategy describes the collective responsibilities that members and officers of Brighton & Hove City Council and its partner organisations have towards children and young people in local authority care.

6. EVALUATION OF ANY ALTERNATIVE OPTION(S):

- 6.1 The Corporate Parenting Strategy meets a statutory duty upon Brighton & Hove City Council in respect of Children in Care and care leavers

7. REASONS FOR REPORT RECOMMENDATIONS

- 7.1 To meet Brighton & Hove City Council's statutory duty in respect of Children in Care and care leavers

SUPPORTING DOCUMENTATION

Appendices:

1. Brighton & Hove City Council Corporate Parenting Policy and Strategy
2. Corporate Parenting Directorate Offers
3. The Brighton & Hove Pledge

Documents In Members' Rooms

None

Background Documents

None

