

Council

10 July 2012

Establishment of Corporate Parenting Panel

Recommendations

- (1) That Council agree to the establishment of a Corporate Parenting Panel with the terms of reference as set out at paragraph 2 of the report.
- (2) That the following members be appointed to the Panel.....

1.0 Introduction

- 1.1 Ofsted published a report in December 2011 regarding its inspection of safeguarding and looked after children in Warwickshire. The following was identified as an area for improvement:

“elected members should ensure that they are familiar with the key priorities established by the Corporate Parenting Board in order to ensure good outcomes for looked after children and young people, and the development of apprenticeship schemes”

- 1.2 Warwickshire County Council currently has a Corporate Parenting Steering Group (whose main link is with the Corporate Parenting Group and Children in Care Council). It is proposed that this is replaced with a formal Panel with a link to the Children’s Trust and with strengthened relationships with elected members across the Council.
- 1.3 The current Corporate Parenting Steering Group has discussed what form a new member body should take and, whilst agreeing that the profile of the body should be raised, were not in agreement with what form this could take to ensure strong links with all members, but avoiding the creation of another committee.

2.0 Proposal

- 2.1 It is suggested that a Panel be established as set out below. Although the Panel will be responsible for developing the Corporate Parenting priorities (and as such will naturally need to be assured that it is resulting in positive outcomes) it should not duplicate the scrutiny role of the Children and Young People Overview and Scrutiny Committee who will remain responsible for monitoring performance. As an advisory panel, if there are issues that require

member decision, these should come forward as recommendations to the Leader or Cabinet as appropriate.

2.2 Overall Purpose

To secure elected member and cross organisation support and commitment for delivering improved services and better outcomes for looked after children, young people and care leavers.

Aims and Objectives

1. To raise the profile of looked after children, young people and their carers and act as 'champions' for their needs and rights.
2. To raise the profile of Corporate Parenting across the County Council, district councils and partners, including schools.
3. To advise on the strategic direction of services for looked after children and young people and to agree the Corporate Parenting priorities on an annual basis.
4. To monitor the delivery of the Pledge commitments to looked after children, young people and care leavers.
5. To listen to the views of children and young people in care, care leavers and their carers and commit to involving them in the review and development of services.
6. To recognise and celebrate the achievements of looked after children, young people, care leavers and their carers.
7. To report annually to Cabinet on its activity.

2.3 Membership

The current membership of the Steering Group isin number. It is proposed that the Panel be established with representation taken from each political group on a politically proportionate basis.

It is suggested that the panel have six members. Proportionately this would be 4 Conservatives 1 Labour and 1 Liberal Democrat.

3.0 Member Briefings/Seminars

The Council is reminded that, in addition to the establishment of this Panel, Corporate Parenting has become a regular subject for member seminars in the Member Development Programme and is now provided annually.

Background Papers

Ofsted Report

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