

ESTABLISHMENT OF A CORPORATE PARENTING PANEL

Committee name	Social Care, Housing and Public Health
Officer reporting	Anisha Teji - Democratic Services
Papers with report	Appendix A - Draft Terms of Reference
Ward	N/A

HEADLINES

The purpose of this report is to establish a Corporate Parenting Panel to support the Committee in discharging its important corporate parenting responsibilities.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

That the Committee:

- 1. Agree the establishment of a Corporate Parenting Panel and its Terms of Reference and Operation as set out in Appendix A;**
- 2. Appoint Councillors Susan O'Brien, Nick Denys & Tony Eginton to be the voting Elected Members on the Panel on the basis of political balance (2 Con: 1 Lab) and;**
- 3. Upon the recommendation of the Chairman of this Committee, to agree that Councillor Susan O'Brien be the Chairman of the Corporate Parenting Panel with Councillor Nick Denys as the Vice-Chairman.**

SUPPORTING INFORMATION

As part of a review of overview and scrutiny arrangements, on 10 May 2018 the full Council assigned oversight of the Council's corporate parenting responsibilities to the new Social Care, Housing and Public Health Policy Overview Committee. This provided for greater integration of corporate parenting within the Council's core governance arrangements.

To discharge this responsibility further, full Council also agreed that this Committee could decide whether to establish a Corporate Parenting Panel of 3 Members (any non-Cabinet Member) to support its overview role in relation to children in the Council's care and care leavers.

This Committee, under the Council's Constitution, is required to agree the establishment, membership and operation of any such Panel. The Constitution also makes it clear that any Panel established cannot create any other sub-group or body to carry out its responsibilities.

Technically, panels are not required to operate in the same regulatory way as a formal committee or sub-committee. This can provide greater flexibility in operation, particularly useful as it is proposed that the Panel's membership includes young people in care (and care leavers), along with a number of relevant internal and external representatives.

The Panel will also have a direct-line into the Council's decision-making process. Being part of the Council's established overview and scrutiny arrangements, it may report to and put its findings

to this Committee, which can be then be forwarded to Cabinet for consideration.

Importantly, the Panel gives young people a valued role within Hillingdon's democratic process and enables Councillors to work directly with them and hear their views.

Operation

It is proposed that the Panel meets quarterly and has an active work programme in place with topical items generated by young people themselves, the Council or as referred from this Committee. This Committee will receive the minutes of the Panel as part of its own agenda, which will provide for regular updates on the Panel's work, where the Panel's Chairman and young people may also attend to present any findings.

The Corporate Parenting Manager will be the lead officer and link with the Children in Care Council representatives on the Panel. A Democratic Services Officer will be assigned to provide dedicated support to Panel meetings.

Implications on related Council policies

The Panel will work to the Council's and Cabinet's agreed policies for children and young people, along with strengthening our consultation and engagement with residents. Furthermore, a key role for overview and scrutiny is also to make recommendations on service changes and improvements to the Cabinet who are responsible for the Council's policy and direction.

How this report benefits Hillingdon residents

The Panel gives young people in Hillingdon a valued role within our democratic process and enables Councillors to work directly with them and hear their views.

Financial Implications

There are no financial implications with the establishment of the Panel, which will be operated and resourced under existing Social Care and Democratic Services budgets.

Legal Implications

There are no legal implications arising from this report.

BACKGROUND PAPERS

NIL

Appendix A - Draft Terms of Reference and Operation of the Corporate Parenting Panel - London Borough of Hillingdon

1. Title, Purpose and Membership

This Panel shall be called the “Corporate Parenting Panel”.

It’s purpose shall be to support the Committee in championing corporate parenting across the Council, directly engaging children in the Council’s care and care leavers in the democratic and decision-making process, working with them and partners to monitor relevant service and improve outcomes and life chances.

Membership will comprise of:

Voting Members

- a) 3 Elected Members, who be appointed by the Social Care, Housing and Public Health Policy Overview Committee based upon political balance, one of whom to be appointed as Chairman. A Vice-Chairman may also be appointed. Elected Members do not need to Members of the parent Committee but cannot be Cabinet Members.

Non-voting Members

- b) Up to 5 Children in Care Council Members (one of whom the Chairman or Vice-Chairman may ask to assist them informally in chairing a specific meeting).*
- c) Corporate Parenting Manager
- d) The Virtual School Head Teacher
- e) The Local Authority’s designated LAC Nurse or Doctor
- f) 1 x Foster Carer representative

Advisors

Relevant Council officers, e.g. from Social Care, Early Intervention and Prevention, Housing Service, along with external representatives, e.g. Department for Work and Pensions, may attend relevant Panel meetings as advisors. Council officers should attend the Panel to present any reports to the Panel regarding their service area.

**This gives Children in Care Council representatives, in an informal capacity, a unique opportunity to get experience of assisting the Chairman or Vice-Chairman in the running of the meeting.*

2. Meetings and Operation

- a) The Panel will meet quarterly and in private*
- b) The Panel will have in place a work programme for its activity.
- c) The Chairman of the Panel, in conjunction with other members, shall agree the dates of the Panel for the ensuing year, where possible.
- c) The Chairman of the Social Care, Housing and Public Health Policy Overview Committee should authorise any additional meetings that may be required or requested by the Chairman of the Panel.

- d) The Panel will allow themes and agenda topics to be brought to them from the Children in Care Council (CiCC), with themes identified at each meeting.
- e) The Chairman of the Panel will agree agenda items in advance of the meeting.
- f) The Panel cannot establish any other sub-groups or bodies to carry out its responsibilities.

**Unlike the parent Policy Overview Committee, the Panel is not required to operate under statutory procedures outlined in the Local Government Act 1972 and access to information rules do not apply. This allows the Panel to be conducted in a flexible way to suit the requirements of the Members and young people participating in it.*

3. Terms of Reference

- a) To champion the seven corporate parenting principles introduced by the Children and Social Work Act 2017.
- b) To support the work of the Social Care, Housing and Public Health Policy Overview Committee overseeing the Council's corporate parenting responsibilities by providing a strategic overview and monitoring of the statutory services for Looked After Children (LAC) and care leavers across the Borough, reporting back to the Committee on any findings, as appropriate.
- c) To actively engage young people who are looked after by the Council, along with care leavers, in order to ensure they have an opportunity to influence the development of services, participate in the decision-making and democratic process.
- d) To receive annual reports of the work of the Independent Reviewing Officers, LAC Health Team, Virtual School and Fostering and Adoption Service.
- e) To consider the impact on outcomes for children on other relevant activities linked to LAC and care leavers lived experiences, e.g. emotional wellbeing.
- f) To undertake any associated activity, review or task as requested by the Social Care, Housing and Public Health Policy Overview Committee, reporting back to the Committee if directed.
- g) That through the Chairman of the Panel, to advise the Social Care, Housing and Health Policy Overview Committee and Cabinet Member for Education & Children's Services on matters relating to corporate parenting.
- h) To present the minutes of the Panel to a subsequent meeting of the Social Care, Housing and Health Policy Overview Committee, where the Chairman of the Panel, along with any Children in Care Council Members, may attend to update the Committee on the Panel's work.

Extract from the Council's Constitution on the establishment of a Panel [approved 10 May 2018]: 'The Social Care, Housing & Public Health Policy Overview Committee may establish a Panel to support strong oversight of the Council's corporate parenting responsibilities. The Committee may appoint 3 Members to this Panel based on political balance. Membership may include non-Cabinet Members not on the Committee. The Committee may also appoint relevant

Council officers and other external stakeholders to the Panel and agree its chairmanship and operation. In agreeing its operation, the Committee will provide for the Panel not to be able to establish any other sub-group or body to carry out its responsibilities.'