

Corporate Parenting Panel

Terms of Reference as approved by the parent Select Committee

The purpose of the Panel is to support the Children, Families & Education Select Committee in championing corporate parenting across the Council, directly engaging children in the Council's care and care experienced young people 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

3 Elected Members, who be appointed by the Children, Families & Education Select Committee based upon political balance, one of whom to be appointed as Chair. A Vice-Chair may also be appointed. Elected Members do not need to be Members of the parent Committee but cannot be

Cabinet Members. 3 named substitutes, appointed by the Select Committee may attend in the absence of the appointed Members of the Panel and that they need not be Members of the parent Committee but cannot be Cabinet Members.

Non-voting Members

- a) Up to 5 Children in Care Council Members (one of whom the Chair or Vice-Chair may ask to assist them informally in chairing a specific meeting).*
- b) Senior Officer from Children's Services
- c) Participation Manager
- d) Assistant Director for Education and Vulnerable Children
- e) The Local Authority's designated Looked After Children Nurse or Doctor
- f) 1 x Foster Carer representative
- g) Assistant Director for Corporate Parenting and Fostering
- h) Advisors
- i) 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 Chair or Vice-Chair in the running of the meeting.*

Meetings and Operation

- a) The Panel will meet four times a year and in private*
- b) The Panel will have in place a work programme for its activity.
- c) The Chair of the Panel, in conjunction with other members, shall agree the dates of the Panel for the ensuing year, where possible.
- d) The Chair of the Children, Families and Education Select Committee should authorise any additional meetings that may be required or requested by the Chair of the Panel.
- e) 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.
- f) The Chair of the Panel will agree agenda items in advance of the meeting.
- g) The Panel cannot establish any other sub-groups or bodies to carry out its responsibilities.

**Unlike the parent Select 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.*

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 Children, Families and Education Select 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 experienced young people 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 experienced young people, 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, Looked After Children Health Team, Corporate Parenting Service, Virtual School and Fostering and Adoption Service.
- e) To consider the impact on outcomes for children on other relevant activities linked to Looked After Children and care experienced young people's lived experiences, e.g. emotional wellbeing.
- f) To undertake any associated activity, review or task as requested by the Children, Families and Education Select Committee, reporting back to the Committee if directed.
- g) That through the Chair of the Panel, to advise the Children, Families and Education Select Committee and Cabinet Member for Children, Families and Education on matters relating to corporate parenting.
- h) To present the minutes of the Panel to a subsequent meeting of the Children, Families and Education Select Committee, where the Chair of the Panel, along with any Children in Care Council Members, may attend to update the Committee on the Panel's work.