

## **Council**

**18 July 2024**

### **Corporate Parenting Board Annual Report**

Report from: Dr. Lee-Anne Farach, Director of People and Deputy Chief Executive

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#### **Summary**

The Corporate Parenting Board Annual report summarises the work on the Board over the last year, outlines progress against the strategy and sets out the priorities for the coming year 2024-25.

#### **1. Recommendation**

1.1. The Council is asked to note the progress made against the Corporate Parenting Strategy as set out in the attached Annual Report.

#### **2. Budget and policy framework**

2.1. The Annual Report is a way of demonstrating engagement and commitment to the Council's corporate parenting responsibilities, as set out in the Children and Social Work Act 2017 which defined for the first time in law the responsibility of corporate parents to ensure, as far as possible, secure, nurturing and positive experiences for children in our care and care leavers. This requires the Council to have regard to a set of corporate parenting principles when exercising its functions in relation to children in our care and care leavers.

2.2. The Plan is aligned with the Council Strategy priority "Supporting Medway's people to realise their potential".

2.3. It is consistent with the Medway's People's Strategy and Children and Young People's plan, and provides a golden thread of shared priorities for all people in Medway.

### 3. Background

- 3.1. Since the Inspection of Local Authority Children's Services carried out by Ofsted in 2019 which found services in Medway to be 'Inadequate', the Corporate Parenting Board has been refreshed and membership updated. Its improved functions were recognised in the July 2023 Inspection of Local Authority Children's Services (ILACS), which found children's services to be Good overall.
- 3.2. The new administration, elected in May 2023, has continued to prioritise corporate parenting. The Lead Member for Childre, chairs the Corporate Parenting Board and elected members take responsibility to champion particular aspects of the agenda, working closely with young people who are represented on the Board through Medway Children and Young People's Council (MCYPC).

### 4. Vision and Strategic Outcomes

- 4.1. The Corporate Parenting Board strategy is consistent with the People's Strategy which is underpinned by a strengths-based approach, which champions resilience and independence; focus on strengths within individuals, families, and wider community.
- 4.2. The Corporate Parenting Board Annual report provides detailed information on progress against following strategic outcomes:
  1. Provide timely and high-quality intervention to help children remain with or return to their families, if it is safe to do so
  2. Provide and commission the right mix of placements
  3. Promote timely permanence planning for all children to ensure they have the opportunity of a stable, permanent home and long-term relationships in a placement appropriate to their needs
  4. Ensure that children and young people in our care, achieve their full potential and can access suitable education, employment or training
  5. Improve the health and emotional well-being of children and young people in care and care leavers
  6. Aim to keep young people in care and care leavers safe through the provision of trained, supported and motivated staff who understand and are alert to the potential for exploitation and abuse of young people and who take the right action at the right time
  7. Prepare young people for a successful transition to adulthood
  8. Ensure that children in care and care leavers' views and experiences inform current and future service delivery.
- 4.3. The strategy has recently been updated and the refreshed objectives, developed in consultation with children and young people, will be the priorities for the coming year.

## 5. Governance

- 5.1. Progress in delivering the Corporate Parenting Strategy will be overseen by the Corporate Parenting Board, supported by Children's Services Management Team.
- 5.2. Key elements will also be monitored on a quarterly basis through the Council Plan and an annual report to Cabinet to demonstrate progress in achieving actions and targets.

## 6. Risk management

- 6.1. The risks associated with the Corporate Parenting Board Annual report are outlined in the table below:

Risk	Description	Action to avoid or mitigate risk	Risk rating
Corporate Parenting Strategy is not aligned with other council or partner priorities	Plan is not aligned which results in opportunities lost to sustain joined-up, efficient and effective prioritisation of corporate parenting responsibilities in collaboration with all our partners,	Consultation with all key stakeholders including corporate and external partners.	CII

## 7. Consultation

- 7.1. There has been consultation on progress against the strategy and in developing refreshed objectives for the revised strategy with children and young people in care and care experienced young people, supported by MCYPC.

## 8. Climate change implications

- 8.1. There are no implications as a direct result of the recommendations of this report.

## 9. Financial implications

- 9.1. There are no implications as a direct result of the recommendations of this report.

## 10. Legal implications

- 10.1. There are no implications as a direct result of the recommendations of this report.

## Lead officer contact

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## Appendices

Appendix 1 – Corporate Parenting Board Annual Report 2023-24

## Background papers

None