

# North Somerset Council

## Report to the Council

**Date of Meeting:** 22 September 2020

**Subject of Report:** CORPORATE PARENTING RESPONSIBILITIES

**Town or Parish:** N/A

**Officer/Member Presenting:** THE EXECUTIVE MEMBER FOR CHILDREN'S SERVICES AND LIFELONG LEARNING

**Key Decision:** No

**Reason:** The report draws members' attention to the educational achievements of some of our children and young people and reminds them of their corporate parenting responsibilities.

### Recommendations

Members are asked to:

1. Recognise their corporate parenting responsibilities
2. Congratulate 'their children' on their educational achievements
3. Commit to gaining a better understanding of their role as corporate parents
4. Support the suggestion that two members become Younger People's Champions to mirror the longstanding position of an Older People's Champion so that young people's views more generally can be heard and acted upon

### 1. Summary of Report

- 1.1 The report provides background information on the role of corporate parents and makes particular mention of the educational achievements of some of our young people. It is intended that there will be a report at all future Council meetings so that members are kept informed of the progress of our children and young people. This will provide members with the opportunity to consider how they are meeting their role as an effective corporate parent alongside colleagues.

### 2. Policy

- 2.1 Whilst the concept of members viewing themselves as the parents of all children who are looked after came from the Quality Protects initiative launched in 1998 by Frank Dobson, the then Secretary of State for Health, the Children and Social Work Act 2017 defined for the first time in law the responsibility of corporate parents to ensure, as faster as possible, secure, nurturing and positive experiences for 'our' children. This means that they should:
  - act in their best interests, and promote their physical and mental health and wellbeing;

- encourage them to express their views, wishes and feelings, and take them into account, while promoting high aspirations and trying to secure the best outcomes for them;
- make sure they have access to services;
- make sure that they are safe, with stable home lives, relationships and education or work;
- prepare them for adulthood and independent living.

### **3. Details**

3.1 The National Children's Bureau, which produced the training material available to all members across the country, confirms that members are responsible for:

- being aware of the corporate parenting role and the shared responsibility for ensuring that the needs of children looked after and care leavers are met;
- having some knowledge of the profile and needs of the children and how they might be changing;
- understanding the impact on children looked after of all council decisions;
- receiving information about the quality of care and the quality of services that children are experiencing;
- considering whether this would be good enough for their own child;
- ensuring that action is being taken to address any shortcomings opinion the service and to constantly improve the outcomes for children and young people who are looked after.

3.2 Given the national focus on the impact of Covid-19 on young people's education this short report gives examples of the achievements of our young people during this incredibly difficult time. We should recognise the support that these young people have received from their foster carers, teachers and social workers to enable them to make this progress and meet their aspirations.

3.3

- Young person 1 - obtained a foundation degree in Social Science, with a Distinction
- Young person 2 - obtained a degree in Applied Computing (first class)
- Young person 3 - obtained a degree in Performing Arts (third class)
- Young person A - GCSEs: Grade 7 x 1, Grade 6 x 4 and Grade 4 x 1
- Young person B - GCE: Grade 7 x 1, Grade 6 x 1, Grade 5 x 3 and Grade 4 x 3

Three other young people were entered for a number of GCSEs but didn't pass them. We had no young people sitting A levels this year.

3.4 On a separate but related development, the appointment of two Young People's Champions would provide additional visibility to members of the hopes and aspirations of our future generations. Many council plans and strategies make long term commitments and it is critical that these demonstrate that young people's views are valued.

### **4. Consultation**

4.1 No consultation was required although for future reports it is hoped that some of our children and young people will contribute their views, experiences and aspirations in order for members to gain information as to the impact of our policies and services.

## **5. Financial Implications**

5.1 None

### **Costs**

None

### **Funding**

None

## **6. Legal Powers and Implications**

None

## **7. Climate Change and Environmental Implications**

7.1 This report outlines the opportunity for members to elicit the views of North Somerset's children and young people in regard to future strategies and plans: climate change and environmental issues are issues about which young people feel strongly and many of them have shown that they are keen to influence local as well as national decisions.

## **8. Risk Management**

None

## **9. Equality Implications**

[Have you undertaken an Equality Impact Assessment? Yes/No      No

## **10. Corporate Implications**

None

## **11. Options Considered**

None

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### **Appendices:**

None

### **Background Papers:**

[www.local.gov.uk/sites/default/files/documents/15.11%20Corporate%20parenting\\_v05.pdf](http://www.local.gov.uk/sites/default/files/documents/15.11%20Corporate%20parenting_v05.pdf)