

# North Somerset Council

## Report to Full Council

**Date of Meeting: 19<sup>th</sup> September 2023**

**Subject of Report: Corporate Parenting responsibilities**

**Town or Parish: All**

**Officer/Member Presenting: Cllr Catherine Gibbons**

**Key Decision: N/A**

**Reason: The report draws members' attention to their corporate parenting responsibilities**

### Recommendations

Members are asked to:

Recognise their corporate parenting responsibilities  
Commit to gaining a better understanding of their role as corporate parents  
Consider ways in which they can support our young people.

### 1. Summary of Report

The report provides background information on the role of corporate parents. It is intended that there will continue to 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

While 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**

, The Children and Social Work Act 2017 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.

It is suggested that members would find it helpful to increase their knowledge of this important role through:

- Attendance at the Corporate Parenting Panel (which is attended by care experienced young people, Children's Services staff and colleagues from other agencies)
- Reading of the regular Full Council report
- Reading the reports that CYPS Policy and Scrutiny Panel receive
- Considering the information within the Local Government Association's (LGA) resource pack (link at the bottom of this report)

This report will be accompanied by a verbal update from Cllr Gibbons which will include reference to our pledge – now called 'Our Promise' (please see link in background papers)

As well as an update regarding the following:

- **Overview of positive action from Councillors as Corporate Parents:** Including: donations, courses and activities, mentoring and Christmas gift fund.
- **Feedback from Corporate Parenting Panel** – including themed sessions focussed on the views of care experienced young people.
- **Next Steps Fund** – update regarding number of young people supported in the past year and outcomes.

**Additional background papers are below, including our Corporate Parenting Strategy and Care Leaver offer.**

### **4. Consultation**

None

### **5. Financial Implications**

None

**Costs**

N/A

**Funding**

N/A

**6. Legal Powers and Implications**

Children and Social Work Act 2017

**7. Climate Change and Environmental Implications**

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**

No

**10. Corporate Implications**

None

**11. Options Considered**

None

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**Appendices:**

None

**Background Papers:**

08.1 Corporate Parenting Strategy  
08.2 North Somerset Council's Promise  
08.3 North Somerset's Offer for our Care Leavers

[Corporate parenting resource pack | Local Government Association](#)