


<p>Council</p> <p>30 September 2020</p>	 <p>TOWER HAMLETS</p>
<p>Report of: James Thomas, Director of Children and Culture</p>	<p>Classification: Unrestricted</p>
<p>Corporate Parenting Board Annual Report 2019 – 2020</p>	

Lead Member	Councillor Danny Hassell, Cabinet Member for Children and Schools
Originating Officer(s)	Richard Baldwin, Divisional Director Children's Social Care
Wards affected	All wards

Executive Summary

The Corporate Parenting Board Annual Report 2019 to 2020 sets out the purpose of the board, how it functions in Tower Hamlets, what has been achieved over the last year and future priorities and challenges. The report includes sections focused on engagement with young people, including their views on key issues and challenges ahead, and the work we do with Foster Carers.

Recommendations:

The Council is recommended to

1. Note the contents of the Corporate Parenting Board Annual Report 2019-20

1 REASONS FOR THE DECISIONS

- 1.1 Not applicable as this is a noting report.

2 ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS

- 2.1 N/A

3 DETAILS OF THE REPORT

- 3.1 The Tower Hamlets Corporate Parenting Board (CPB) demonstrates our continuing commitment to the corporate parenting principles and shows how

we deliver on them across many partnerships and services. The board meets on a quarterly basis and has representation from Councillors, young people, foster-carers, partner organisations and senior managers from across the Council.

- 3.2 Alongside the Children in Care Council (CiCC), the board provides a forum where children and young people in the care of the council have direct access to senior leaders and decision makers to share their views and raise and address issues.
- 3.3 The board is able to take a strategic approach to the experiences of children looked after and care leavers and work with partners to continually develop and strengthen practice in relation to our corporate parenting responsibilities.
- 3.4 The CPB Annual Report 2019 – 2020 provides information on a wide range of achievement including:
 - Training for all members of the board
 - Workshop for the CPB led by the CiCC – followed by development of an action plan
 - Changes to the Housing “bidding” process to respond to concerns raised by care leavers (new revised protocol will be launched in September 2020)
 - Improvements to facilities at Kitkat Terrace for Care Leavers
 - Annual awards ceremony for Foster Carers
 - Participation in the ‘Fostering Potential (Educational Champions) Programme
 - The Virtual School Awards
 - Virtual School enrichment offer ‘Give it a Go’
 - Education and training opportunities for Care Leavers, including apprenticeships and a supported employment programme
 - Recruitment to a permanent CAMHS post in the Edge of Care Team
 - Establishment of the Health of Children Looked After and Care Leavers Steering Group
- 3.5 The report includes reflections on recent months and the Covid 19 emergency as well as providing an overview of recent work and plans for the future. This includes:
 - Development of a longer term, sustained response to the Pandemic
 - Further use of ‘Practice Weeks’ as an opportunity to build the importance of corporate parenting within Tower Hamlets
 - Review of the CiCC with a focus on broadening the membership
 - Service development work between the CAMHS in Social Care Team and the CiCC
 - Training via the Virtual School on trauma awareness and returning to school as Covid 19 restrictions are lifted.
 - Recruitment of the next Through Care Service cohort for the Supported Employment Programme in Autumn 2020.
 - Participation of the Fostering Service in a research-based project led by the Fostering Network with the Thomas Coram Research Unit.

- Contributing to the 'Mockingbird in Lockdown' film by the Tower Hamlets Mockingbird family (part of the Fostering Network programme)

3.6 The report also includes a section focused on engagement with young people, including how the Children in Care Council (CiCC) works with the CPB, plans for the future of the CiCC and key issues for the 2020 and onwards from the perspective of the young people.

3.7 As we face the challenges of the next year the Corporate Parenting Board is committed to developing understanding across the entire council of the role that everyone plays in supporting children looked after and care leavers and ensuring they have access to the opportunities that all children should get.

4 EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS

5 The Tower Hamlets Corporate Parenting Board (CPB) is committed to delivering on the corporate parenting principles for all children in care and care leavers. This report provides information about how the board does this through its activities, engagement and plans for the future.

6 OTHER STATUTORY IMPLICATIONS

6.1 This section of the report is used to highlight further specific statutory implications that are either not covered in the main body of the report or are required to be highlighted to ensure decision makers give them proper consideration. Examples of other implications may be:

- Best Value Implications,
- Consultations,
- Environmental (including air quality),
- Risk Management,
- Crime Reduction,
- Safeguarding.
- Data Protection / Privacy Impact Assessment.

6.2 There are no further specific statutory implications.

7 COMMENTS OF THE CHIEF FINANCE OFFICER

7.1 There are no direct financial implications.

8 COMMENTS OF LEGAL SERVICES

8.1 Section 1 of the Children and Social Work Act 2017 sets out the corporate parenting principles which all local authorities must have regard to, when carrying out their functions in relation to children looked after by them, or children who were recently looked after by them. The statutory corporate parenting principles are set out in the Annual Report.

8.2 Although there is no statutory requirement for a local authority to establish a Corporate Parenting Board, statutory guidance ('Applying Corporate

Parenting Principles to Looked-After Children and Care-Leavers', February 2018) indicates that the establishment of a Corporate Parenting Board or Panel is best practice to co-ordinate the implementation of the corporate parenting principles.

- 8.3 There is no statutory requirement to prepare a Corporate Parenting Annual Report, but Section 111 of the Local Government Act 1972 gives a power to a local authority to do anything incidental to the discharge of any of its functions.
- 8.4 The proposals set out in this report comply with the above legislation and guidance.

Linked Reports, Appendices and Background Documents

Linked Report

- NONE

Appendices

- Final Draft Corporate Parenting Board Annual Report 2019-20

Background Documents – Local Authorities (Executive Arrangements)(Access to Information)(England) Regulations 2012

- NONE

Officer contact details for documents:

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