

Governance Committee

2 December 2019

Corporate Parenting Panel Terms of Reference

Report by Director of Law and Assurance

Electoral Divisions: All

Summary

Changes to the terms of reference for the Corporate Parenting Panel are proposed in order to further improve the outward-focus of the Panel and to ensure that the voice of the child is central to all its work. The changes include making the Cabinet Member for Children and Young People the Chairman of the Panel, increasing the number of elected members to seven, simplifying the areas of responsibility and providing for the establishment of sub-groups for specific pieces of work.

Recommendation

That the revised terms of reference and constitution of the Corporate Parenting Panel, as set out at Appendix A, be endorsed for recommendation to the County Council.

Proposal

1. Background and Context

1.1 The County Council has a Corporate Parenting Panel (CPP) that meets four times per year, consisting of six members representatives of organisations who work with children in care. It meets regularly with the Children in Care Council and care leavers in order to ensure their views are represented, but here is no formal role for young people, families and carers in the process.

2. Proposal

2.1 It is recommended that the changes summarised below, and set out in at Appendix A, are made to the CPP terms of reference to deliver a more outcomes and outward focussed Panel, and to ensure the voice of the child is central to its work.

- (a) **Chairmanship:** That the Chairman of the CPP should be the Cabinet Member for Children and Young People. This will ensure a closer connection with the responsibilities of the lead member for children on behalf of the wider membership.
- (b) **Membership:** That the membership of the Panel is increased to seven members of the County Council so extend capacity and reach.

- (c) **Areas of Responsibility:** A simpler list of responsibilities has been added to help ensure a focussed work programme.
 - (d) **Sub-Groups:** a mechanism to establish sub-groups, led by the service, is suggested to better deliver the range of work of the Panel.
- 2.2 It is recommended that the revised terms of reference be reviewed in six months, when further changes may be proposed following engagement with the Children in Care Council.

3. Resources

- 3.1 This proposal should have a minimal impact on resources.
- 3.2 Staff support for the CPP is provided both by Service lead officers from the Children, Young People and Learning Directorate, as well as from Democratic Services. If any additional activities and meetings are to be held, it is likely that some more officer time will be required but this can be met from within existing capacity.

Factors taken into account

4. Consultation

- 4.1 Consultation has been undertaken with the Cabinet Member for Children and Young People, the Chairman of the Council and the lead for Corporate Parenting within the service. The Children in Care Council, Care Leavers and current Panel members will be consulted as part of the implementation programme and any further changes required as a result will be presented to the Governance Committee for future consideration.

5. Risk Management Implications

- 5.1 There are no risks associated with these proposals. Training and support will be provided to any external members appointed to the Panel, to ensure they are able to fulfil their roles and contribute effectively.

6. Other Options Considered

- 6.1 The other option is to make no changes to the Panel. The changes proposed are designed to improve the work of the CPP and its ability to influence and improve outcomes for children looked after and care leavers. If no changes are made, the opportunity to improve and develop the CPP would be missed and the voice of the child would not be well embedded.

7. Equality Duty

- 7.1 The proposals set out in this report will not have any impact on those with protected characteristics, as set out in the Equality Act.

8. Social Value

- 8.1 None.

9. Crime and Disorder Act Implications

9.1 None.

10. Human Rights Implications

10.1 None.

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Appendix A

Revised terms of reference for the Corporate Parenting Panel

Background Papers:

None