

Corporate Parenting Board

Vision of the Isle of Wight Council for Children in Care and Care Leavers

The vision of the Isle of Wight strategy for children in care and care leavers is simple:

- We want our children and young people to have everything good parents want for their children.
- We want our children in care and care leavers to work with us, along with their parents and carers, in shaping how we manage and organise planning, resources and services that support and care for them.
- We want our children and young people to be happy and healthy, both physically and emotionally, to be safe and protected from harm and exploitation, and to be supported each step of the way to adult life.
- We want them to achieve their potential, especially at school, to make the most of the learning opportunities they are offered and to participate in the decision affecting their care and lives.
- We want them to make the transition to adulthood with continuity of support, access to good jobs and higher education, whilst living in good housing and being financially secure.

Our strategy compels us to work together with common purpose, putting the support and care of our children in care and care leavers at the heart of everything we do.

Purpose of the Corporate Parenting Board

The Corporate Parenting Board is a multi-agency advisory board to the Full Council and to the Cabinet Member for Children's Services, Education and Skills and not a formal committee of the council. It comprises of a minimum of three elected members of the Isle of Wight Council (appointed from among those best qualified to serve but including at least one minority group member and one from either the Fostering or Adoption Panel), as well as the multiagency partners on the island who are responsible for delivering good and effective corporate parenting for children and young people. The Board confirms its joint commitment to improving services and outcomes for children in care and care leavers for whom the council is corporate parent.

The Board's role is to lead on ensuring the corporate parenting responsibilities of the multi-agency partnership are being met, in line with the Children Act 1989. Section 22 of the Children Act 1989 sets out the general duty of the council in relation to children looked after by it; to safeguard and promote the welfare of these children, ensuring effective, individualised support and access to services. This duty is inclusive of both children and young people with care orders and those provided with accommodation. The Children and Social Work Act 2017 defined for the first time in

law the responsibility of corporate parents to ensure, as far as possible, secure, nurturing and positive experiences for looked-after children and young people.

This responsibility is not just up to the lead member or the staff within Children's Services. We need everyone looking out for our most vulnerable children and young people, and every councillor has their role to play to ensure children in care and care experienced young people have a sense of belonging and are given the same opportunities as their peers. The responsibility and accountability for corporate parenting must be shared across the local authority and its partners.

Accountability of the Corporate Parenting Board:

The Corporate Parenting Board is accountable:

- To the council and the Cabinet Member for Children's Services, Education and Skills and to the Full Council.
- To children in care, care leavers and their carers or guardians.
- To each respective member on the Board and the relevant senior management team of each agency that is represented.

Roles and Responsibilities of the Corporate Parenting Board:

- To develop expertise about services for and issues affecting children and young people, both in care and leaving care.
- To enable elected councillors to fulfil their role as corporate parenting champions and advocates for Isle of Wight children in care, and those leaving local authority care.
- To provide multi-agency strategic direction for services and projects working to achieve good outcomes for both children in local authority care and young people leaving care.
- To actively raise the awareness of other elected councillors, the Cabinet and the Full Council to the whole council's corporate parenting responsibilities towards the Isle of Wight's children in care and care leavers.
- To oversee and challenge progress and performance against the objectives within the Isle of Wight's Corporate Parenting Strategy

Terms of Reference of the Corporate Parenting Board:

1. Secure real and sustained improvements in the life chances of children in care and care leavers, and to work within an annual programme to that end;
2. Develop, monitor and review a corporate parenting strategy, work plan and training programme for all members to receive regular training in their corporate parenting responsibilities. Board members should have specific

training, particularly before the consideration of important child care issues at Board meetings;

3. Ensure the life chances of children in care and care leavers are maximised in terms of health, educational attainment, and access to training and employment, to aid the transition to a secure and productive adulthood;
4. Recommend ways in which more integrated services can be developed across all council directorates, schools and other stakeholders, to lead towards better outcomes for children in care and care leavers;
5. Ensure performance monitoring systems are in place and regularly review performance data to ensure sustained performance improvements in outcomes for children in care and care leavers;
6. To receive inspection and annual reports, including from the Independent Reviewing Lead Officer and the Virtual School Head, including:
 - areas of good practice
 - areas for development
 - commentary on the participation of children and their parents
 - the educational achievement of children in care
 - whether any resource issues are putting the delivery of a good service to all children in care at risk
7. To report to the Cabinet and subsequently to Full Council annually;
8. To make recommendations to the Cabinet Member for Children's Services, Education and Skills as the Lead Member for Children's Services;
9. To report to the Policy and Scrutiny Committee for Children's Services, Education and Skills after each meeting;
10. To develop and undertake a programme of consultation, listening and engagement events with, as well as visits to services providing support and advice to, children in care and care leavers;
11. Ensure children in care and care leavers play an integral role in service planning and design, and that their views are regularly sought and acted upon through the Hearing Young People's Experience (HYPE) group, including:
 - a. those with special educational needs (SEN) and learning difficulties or disabilities (LDD)
 - b. unaccompanied asylum-seeking children in the care of the Isle of Wight Council and Isle of Wight looked after children placed in other local authority areas
12. Drive forward improvements for children in care and care leavers.
13. Ensure that the needs identified by the HYPE group are appropriately considered and incorporated into key plans, policies and strategies throughout the council.
14. Ensure sufficient resources are made available for the HYPE group to directly engage with all children in care and care leavers and deliver agreed projects on behalf of the council and function as a working group.
15. Raise awareness of the council's corporate parenting responsibilities among elected members and officers by promoting the role of elected members as

corporate parents and the council as a large corporate family with key responsibilities.

16. Ensure members are regularly updated on the issues affecting children in care and care leavers and how the council is held to account to respond.
17. Provide a forum for elected members to oversee progress of all children in care and care leavers through the implementation of the Children in Care Strategy.
18. Scrutinise and monitor outcomes for children in care and care leavers and encourage all partners to work in an integrated manner, in the best interests of children in care and care leavers and hold partners to account for their role in delivery of services.
19. Raise the profile of the needs of children in care and care leavers through a range of actions and events, to recognise their achievement and contribution.
20. Ensure that children and young people are clear about what they can expect from the Isle of Wight Council as corporate parents, including access to somewhere to call home, education, employment and training.
21. Ensure that the Local Offer for care leavers continues to meet need (<https://www.iow.gov.uk/Residents/Care-and-Support/Childrens-Services/Isle-of-Wight-Care-Leavers/Isle-of-Wight-Local-Offer-for-care-leavers>).
22. Ensure all staff working with children in care and care leavers have appropriate support and training.
23. To have oversight of the Virtual School for the Isle of Wight.

Membership

- Cabinet Member for Children's Services, Education and Skills (Lead Member for Children) (Chair)
- At least one representative from the HYPE group, selected to represent the group at the regular HYPE meetings
- Elected members, including a member of the Policy and Scrutiny Committee for Children's Services, Education and Skills, at least one minority group member and one from either the Fostering or Adoption Panel
- At least one Isle of Wight Council Foster carers, identified through foster carers support network.
- Head of Strategy and Operations Children and Family Branch
- Service Manager-Children in care
- Health - LAC Designated Dr and Nurse.
- CCG-Lead Officer with responsibility for children's health commissioning.
- Education -Virtual Head
- Adult Social Care – Lead Officer from Transitions Team
- Housing Services Lead Officer
- Children and Families Branch- Children's Rights Officer

Quorum

At least three persons, including the Chair or Vice Chair, Head of Strategy and Operations or a Children and Families Service Manager, the Children's Rights Officer or a representative from HYPE

Support to the Corporate Parenting Board

The strategic lead and administrative support for the Board sits within the council's Children and Families directorate. Specifically, the Head of Strategy and Operations and senior admin officer within the departments business hub. Together they will be responsible for organising meetings, publishing agenda papers, attending meetings and producing the minutes of each meeting.

Frequency of Meetings

The Board will meet at least four times a year. Agendas and papers will be distributed at least one week prior to the meeting.

Conduct

The Board and its members will operate in accordance with the standards of behaviour and principles required by the council's code of conduct, which applies to both councillors and any person appointed as co-opted member to a board or committee of the council.

December 2019