
**CORPORATE PARENTING PANEL – FULFILLING CORPORATE PARENTING
RESPONSIBILITIES**

**Responsible Cabinet Member - Councillor Chris McEwan,
Children and Young People Portfolio**

Responsible Director - Murray Rose, Director of Children's Services

Purpose of Report

1. To seek Council approval for changes to the membership for Corporate Parenting Panel, and to the introduction of mandatory training for members on Corporate Parenting responsibilities.

Background

2. A review of the Corporate Parenting and Child Protection Panel has taken place. Members of the Panel have agreed to focus on the Corporate Parenting agenda, and Child Protection monitoring will remain within the statutory body of Darlington Safeguarding Children's Board.
3. Corporate Parenting is the term used to describe the role assumed by the Council in relation to children and young people who are 'looked after' by the local authority (i.e. 'in public care').
4. The Children Act 1989 gave local authorities legal responsibility for children in care and expectations about how that responsibility will be fulfilled.
5. The over-arching approach being clarified in October 2003 'If this were my child' which details the importance of Councillors as being a 'good parent to the children they look after'

Outcome of Consultation following review of Corporate Parenting Panel

6. The review recommended: -
 - (a) A clear Corporate Parenting Policy Statement by adopted
 - (b) Corporate Parenting information to be available to Members' on the Intranet
 - (c) Training on the role of Corporate Parents be mandatory for all Councillors
 - (d) CPP meetings to focus on a theme and receive reports from a range of services and organisations
 - (e) Membership
Increase in members of the Panel: -

Current Membership of the Panel: -

Director of Children's Services
Chief Executive (Chair)
Cabinet Member with Portfolio for Children and Young People, Councillor Chris McEwan
Opposition Member, Councillor Heather Scott

It is proposed that the membership of the Panel be increased to reflect wider Councillor representation and also include those directly caring for children and young people.

Proposed Membership: -

Chief Executive
Lead Member for Children's Services
Shadow Lead Member for Children's Services
Three additional Members'
Assistant Director, Children's Services
Accommodation Manager, Children's Services
Foster Carer
Residential Home Manager/Support Worker
CLA Development Officer/Young Person representative or link

The meeting would also include additional officers and representatives, dependant on the theme of the meeting

Legal Implications

7. This report has been considered by the Borough Solicitor for legal implications in accordance with the Council's approved procedures. There are no issues which the Borough Solicitor considers need to be brought to the specific attention of Members, other than those highlighted in the report.

Section 17 of the Crime and Disorder Act 1998

8. The contents of this report have been considered in the context of the requirements placed on the Council by Section 17 of the Crime and Disorder Act 1998, namely, the duty on the Council to exercise its functions with due regard to the likely effect of the exercise of those functions on, and the need to do all that it reasonably can to prevent, crime and disorder in its area. It is not considered that the contents of this report have any such effect.

Council Policy Framework

9. The issues contained within this report are required to be considered by Council.

Conclusion

10. In order to ensure that Darlington Borough Council fulfils the Corporate Parenting responsibilities, a review of existing arrangements has taken place, and recommendation

made to improve focus and ensure a wider membership.

Recommendation

11. Council are requested to: -

- (a) Approve the increase in Councillor representation on the Corporate Parenting Panel
- (b) Approve mandatory training on the Corporate Parenting responsibilities for all Councillors.

Reasons

12. The recommendations are supported by the following reasons: -

- (a) Review of current procedures
- (b) Recommendation of Corporate Parenting panel

Murray Rose, Director of Children's Services

Background Papers

Report to Corporate Parenting Panel 23.11.07 – Fulfilling Corporate Parenting Responsibilities

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