

## **CORPORATE PARENTING PANEL TASK AND FINISH REVIEW GROUP**

**2<sup>ND</sup> APRIL, 2012**

**PRESENT** – Councillor C. Taylor (in the Chair); Councillors Curry, E.A. Richmond; and B. Egan.

**OFFICERS** – Jenni Cooke, Assistant Director Children, Families and Learning; Mary Sweeney, Service Manager, Children in our Care; Andy Whittam, Youth Service Participation Officer and Allison Hill, Democratic Officer.

### **DISCUSSION –**

- Members received an overview of the role of the Corporate Parenting Panel and its responsibilities under the 1989 Children Act and the Children Act 2004 for partnership arrangements.
- Emphasis that all Councillors share the corporate parenting responsibility.
- Under the Children Act 2004 (Section 10 and 11) examined the responsibility of other public services i.e. Health, Police, Youth Offending Service and Education ('virtual Head') to 'promote co-operation between the Authority and its relevant partners'.
- Considered the levels of responsibility i.e. Universal (minimum expectation of every Member); Targeted (specific interest of Ward Councillors); and Specialist (Lead Member, Scrutiny and Panel/Board arrangements).
- Members discussed the current Membership of the Corporate Parenting Panel which consists of 4 elected Members and Chaired by the Chief Executive. There is also a Foster Care and a Residential Worker on the Panel. It was noted that the Corporate Parenting Panel does not have any member representation from the Liberal Democrats.
- It was discussed whether there was a need for further representation on the Corporate Parenting Panel from the partners i.e. Health and the Police.
- There is currently no reporting mechanism in place for the Corporate Parenting Panel and the Minutes of each meeting do not appear on the Council's Web Site, therefore not open to the public. Discussion ensued around the need to report work of the Panel and how this can be communicated to all Members.
- Members discussed the role of Scrutiny and future links to the Corporate Parenting Panel.
- Consideration was given to the Safeguarding and Looked After Inspection in November, 2011 which made no specific recommendations however suggested that consideration be

given to an Annual Corporate Parenting Plan or Report. Members of the Group felt that reporting was important, however felt that 12 months was too long to find any potential problems.

- Members also considered the comments from the Peer Challenge in July 2011 which suggested more multi agency representation on the Panel.
- A Member suggested that it would be useful for Members of the Children and Young People Scrutiny Committee to meet the authority's Children in Care Council (Darlo Care Crew) and it was agreed to invite the young people to attend a meeting of the Scrutiny.

**NEXT MEETING** – It was agreed that a further meeting of this Task and Finish Review Group be arranged to discuss the matters above further, and as there were limited Members and no Members of the Corporate Parenting Panel present, it is imperative that a Member of the Corporate Parenting Panel is present at the next meeting. Date and time to be confirmed.