



Agenda for a meeting of the Corporate Parenting Panel to be held on Wednesday, 26 January 2022 at 6.00 pm in the Banqueting Hall, City Hall, Bradford

Members of the Committee – Councillors

LABOUR	CONSERVATIVE	LIBERAL DEMOCRATS
Thirkill Duffy Dunbar	Smith	Knox

Alternates:

LABOUR	CONSERVATIVE	LIBERAL DEMOCRATS
Tait Shafiq Alipoor	Pollard	Stubbs

NON VOTING CO-OPTED MEMBERS

Chair of Children in Care Council
Jude MacDonald
Sue Lowndes
David Ware

Bradford District Clinical Commissioning Group
Bradford Education
West Yorkshire Police

Notes:

- This agenda can be made available in Braille, large print or tape format on request by contacting the Agenda contact shown below.
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From:

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City Solicitor
Agenda Contact: Jill Bell
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To:

A. PROCEDURAL ITEMS

1. ALTERNATE MEMBERS (Standing Order 34)

The City Solicitor will report the names of alternate Members who are attending the meeting in place of appointed Members.

(Jill Bell – 01274 434580)

2. DISCLOSURES OF INTEREST

(Members Code of Conduct - Part 4A of the Constitution)

To receive disclosures of interests from members and co-opted members on matters to be considered at the meeting. The disclosure must include the nature of the interest.

An interest must also be disclosed in the meeting when it becomes apparent to the member during the meeting.

Notes:

- (1) *Members may remain in the meeting and take part fully in discussion and voting unless the interest is a disclosable pecuniary interest or an interest which the Member feels would call into question their compliance with the wider principles set out in the Code of Conduct. Disclosable pecuniary interests relate to the Member concerned or their spouse/partner.*
- (2) *Members in arrears of Council Tax by more than two months must not vote in decisions on, or which might affect, budget calculations, and must disclose at the meeting that this restriction applies to them. A failure to comply with these requirements is a criminal offence under section 106 of the Local Government Finance Act 1992.*
- (3) *Members are also welcome to disclose interests which are not disclosable pecuniary interests but which they consider should be made in the interest of clarity.*
- (4) *Officers must disclose interests in accordance with Council Standing Order 44.*

(Jill Bell – 01274 434580)

3. MINUTES

1 - 14

Recommended –

That the minutes of the meeting held on 24 November 2021 signed as a correct record (attached).

(Helen Osman – 01274 385629)

4. INSPECTION OF REPORTS AND BACKGROUND PAPERS

(Access to Information Procedure Rules – Part 3B of the Constitution)

Reports and background papers for agenda items may be inspected by contacting the person shown after each agenda item. Certain reports and background papers may be restricted.

Any request to remove the restriction on a report or background paper should be made to the relevant Strategic Director or Assistant Director whose name is shown on the front page of the report.

If that request is refused, there is a right of appeal to this meeting.

Please contact the officer shown below in advance of the meeting if you wish to appeal.

(Jill Bell - 01274 434580)

B. BUSINESS ITEMS

5. ANNUAL REPORT OF CARE LEAVERS

15 - 38

The report of the Director of Children’s Services (**Document “E”**) summarises performance and activity in respect of young people with care leaver entitlement in Bradford Metropolitan District Council.

Recommended -

Members are asked to consider the report.

(Mandy Helm - 01274 438792)

6. CORPORATE PARENTING TERMS OF REFERENCE

39 - 46

The Director of Children’s Services will present a report on the Corporate Parenting Terms of Reference (**Document “F”**) to inform members and the public the vision and purpose of the

Corporate Parenting Panel.

Recommended -

That the views of the Corporate Parenting Panel on the options set out in Section 9 of Document “F” report are requested.

(Philip Segurola - 01274 431867)

7. PROPOSALS FOR CORPORATE PARENTING PANEL 47 - 54

The report of the Director of Children’s Services (**Document “G”**) outlines proposals for the operation of Corporate Parenting Panel in 2022.

Recommended -

That members are asked to consider and agree to the proposals

(Philip Segurola – 01274 431867)

8. CONSULTATION FEEDBACK 55 - 62

A feedback event has been held this month to follow up on the issues identified by a consultation group in the summer of 2021. The report of the Director of Children’s Services (**Document “H”**) will provide an opportunity for members to discuss and comment upon consultation feedback event.

(Emily Rhodes – 07582102355)

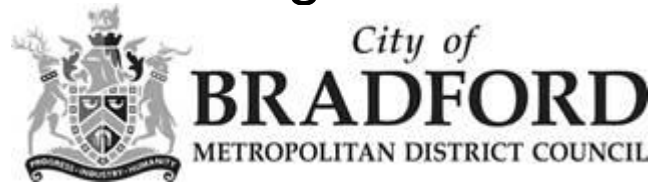
9. GOVERNING BODY FOR THE VIRTUAL SCHOOL FOR LOOKED AFTER CHILDREN 63 - 70

The Report of the Assistant Director Schools (**Document “I”**) recommends Terms of Reference and membership of a Working Group of the Corporate Parenting Panel to act as the Governing Body of the Virtual School for Looked After Children.

Recommended -

That the Corporate Parenting Panel agree to establish a working group to act as the Governing Body of the Virtual School and to the proposed Terms of Reference and membership set out at Appendix A to Document “I”.

(Jonathan Cooper - 01274 436401)



Minutes of a meeting of the Corporate Parenting Panel held on Wednesday, 24 November 2021 in Committee Room 1 - City Hall, Bradford

Commenced 5.04 pm
 Concluded 7.19 pm

Present – Councillors

LABOUR	CONSERVATIVE	LIBERAL DEMOCRAT
Thirkill Duffy Dunbar	Pollard	Knox

NON VOTING CO-OPTED MEMBERS

Sue Lowndes
 Daniel Ware

Bradford Education
 West Yorkshire Police

Observers: Councillor Alipoor

Apologies: Councillor Dale Smith

Officers

Helen Cliffe Service Manager Safeguarding & Reviewing
 David Johnston Deputy Director Social Care (DD/SC)
 Emily Rhodes Participation Co-ordinator
 Philip Segurola Assistant Director Safeguarding and Review, Commissioning & Provider Services (AD/SRCP)
 Jonathan Cooper Virtual School Head (Head/VS)

Susan Booth Governance Officer, Corporate Resources
 Helen Osman Clerk – School Governor Service

Councillor Thirkill in the Chair

5. SUMMARY OF AGREED ACTIONS

Action	Lead	Timescale
All actions from the meeting of 27 October 2021 onward to be recorded on Action Tracker and included in the agenda pack for future meetings.	Committee Services Officer	Ongoing
All minutes to be sent to attendees individually rather than through Modern.Gov.	Committee Services Officer	Ongoing
Chair to sign minutes of the 27 October 2021 meeting once the actions have been recorded on Action Tracker.	Cllr Thirkill	15-12-2021
Sufficiency Strategy to be brought to the Panel	P Segurola	Jan/Feb 2022
Fostering and Recruitment Strategy to be brought to the Panel	P Segurola	April 2022
IRO/FIRO establishment to be reviewed	P Segurola	April 2022
Next IRO report to be brought to the Panel	H Cliffe	May 2022
Deputy Chair to pursue the timing and approach to development of a Council-wide Participation Strategy as it related to Corporate Parenting.	Cllr Duffy	15-12-2021
Corporate Parent checklist, Ward Councillor section, bullet 7 – to be amended to clarify the distinction between Regulation 44 visits and visits to get to know homes/staff.	Cllr Duffy	15-12-2021
Corporate Parent checklist: advice to be taken from the Communications Team on its effective communication.	Cllr Duffy	15-12-2021
Corporate Parent checklist: Elected Members to determine which sections should be sent to which audiences.	Cllr Duffy Cllr Dunbar Cllr Pollard	15-12-2021
Corporate Parent checklist: to be reviewed regularly by the Panel in light of feedback.	Committee Services Officer	Ongoing
Consult Legal and Governance & Audit teams on the establishment of a Governing Body for the Virtual School consisting of this Panel; and on the need to increase the maximum number of Co-opted members permitted by the Constitution.	S Lowndes	15-12-2021
Amend the draft Terms of Reference as set out at paragraph 7.5 above.	Cllr Duffy	15-12-2021
Leaders of Themes to establish links with Bradford Council Lead members within whose remit their theme sat.	Theme leaders	31-01-2022
AD/SRCP to propose a schedule of dates for future meetings and key business to be taken at each.	P Segurola	15-12-2021
AD/SRCP to report to the next Panel meeting on work underway to promote recruitment of social workers.	D Johnston	Next Panel meeting

6. ALTERNATE MEMBERS (Standing Order 34)

The Committee Services Officer said that Cllr Pollard was attending this meeting as an alternate for Cllr Smith. Cllr Smith would be unable to attend meetings for some time: Cllr Pollard would attend as his alternate.

Cllr Thirkill announced that, due to pressures on her time, she intended to step down as Chair of the Corporate Parenting Panel after this meeting. Subject to the approval of Regulatory and Appeals Committee, Sue Duffy would become Chair of the panel.

7. **DISCLOSURES OF INTEREST**

There were no disclosures of interest.

8. **POINTS OF ORDER**

- a) Cllr Dunbar noted that there was no material in the agenda pack that reflected the actions agreed at the previous meeting.

Cllr Duffy said that she had agreed with Committee Services Officer that actions would be recorded from each meeting using the Action Tracker function on Google Sheets. The action tracker would then form part of the agenda pack for the next meeting.

- b) Cllr Dunbar had not received a copy of the minutes by post or e-mail. From discussion it emerged that some Panel members had done so.

The Committee Services Officer undertook to send minutes of meetings to attendees individually rather than through Modern.Gov.

9. **MINUTES**

Recommended – That the minutes of the meeting held on 27 October 2021 be signed as a correct record (previously circulated)

The Chair would sign the minutes once the actions therein had been recorded on Action Tracker.

10. **INSPECTION OF REPORTS AND BACKGROUND PAPERS**

There had been no requests to review decisions to restrict documents. The Chair noted that there had been no request to change the order of the agenda items.

11. **IRO ANNUAL REPORT 2020/2021**

The annual report of Children's Services (**Doc "B"**) provided quantitative and qualitative evidence relating to the Independent Reviewing Service in Bradford as required by statutory guidance. The Independent Reviewing Officers' (IRO) Annual Report must be presented to the Corporate Parenting Board and Bradford Partnership.

The report provided an opportunity to highlight areas of good practice and areas for improvement, identify themes and trends and report on work undertaken to date and to outline the developmental priorities for the next twelve months.

The Service Manager for Safeguarding & Reviewing (SMSR) said that the agenda paper covered the period April 2020 to March 2021. Since then, structural changes had brought oversight of the Foster Care Reviewing Officers within the

remit of the Safeguarding & Reviewing Service. She highlighted the following points in the report:

- Funding had been provided for two additional agency Independent Reviewing Officers (IROs) as part of COVID19 support: these posts would remain until further notice.
- A parent/carer feedback form had been developed to facilitate the incorporation of their views into the review process.
- The IRO process was being restructured to streamline it, allow for more effective challenge and involve line management. Oversight of IRO case files had been improved, including the closing of cases by managers. The IRO audit forms had been reviewed.
- Although the number of children entering care in Bradford continued to increase, this did not necessarily impact caseload, which also depended on the number of children leaving care.
- Caseloads were approximately 85 per full time employee (fte), compared with the recommendation in the IRO handbook of 65. Nevertheless, the service had continued to meet statutory timescales in 97% of cases: where statutory timescales had not been met, the delays had been caused by late notifications to the service.
- The service continued to embed consistency of the journey through care and to reflect the legal responsibilities of the local authority.
- The service had undertaken significant recruitment to replace IROs who had retired: while this presented challenges, it had brought considerable new energy to the service.
- Participation by young people in the review process was a key issue for the service, which was being addressed through the revitalisation of Viewpoint.
- The Service was developing its relationships with partner agencies to ensure that they were undertaking the appropriate due diligence.

The Deputy Chair reminded the Panel and officers that, in future, all papers would be taken as read and not introduced by officers. Questions were invited.

Noting that there appeared to have been no Foster Care Review Officer posts prior to 2018, **the Panel asked** how the foster care had been monitored. SMSR said that foster care had been reviewed by the supervising social worker. The Assistant Director, Safeguarding and Review, Commissioning & Provider Services (AD/SRCP), said that there was a statutory requirement that each fostering household be reviewed annually. Until recently, these reviews had been conducted by the supervising social worker. Recognising the conflict this raised between the supporting role of the social worker and the review role, and acknowledging that social workers were not trained in regulatory compliance, the service had introduced standalone Foster Care Independent Review Officers (FIROs). Early indications were that this was succeeding in making review of foster care more consistent and independent. **Replying to questions**, AD/SRCP said that he did not believe that Ofsted had specifically commented on the quality of foster care reviews: this would, however, have been a vulnerability if it had not been addressed.

Asked how foster carers had responded to the involvement of FIROs as well as their supervising social workers, SMSR said that they appeared to welcome the annual independent review. **The Panel asked**, and was informed, that the Foster

Care Independent Review process included friends and family placements

SRSM said that the service currently employed three Foster Care Independent Review Officers, with a total caseload of 167 cases. She believed it would be necessary to appoint a fourth. The Panel discussed the need for a clear understanding of the number of FIRO posts in the service structure and how this related to the predicted number of foster carers following the current recruitment. AD/SRCP said that the need for a stronger grip on this kind of data was well recognised. The development of the Sufficiency Strategy would be available in February 2022 and would inform the requirement for additional FIRPs. The Panel noted the need to set this information in the wider context of support for young people: for example, effective preventive services would reduce the need for foster care.

Asked whether officers had complete confidence in the current oversight arrangements for every child in foster care in Bradford, AD/SRCP said that he could not have said this under the previous arrangements. While it was very difficult to be 100% confident in any system, the new arrangements put the Council, as Corporate Parent, in a much stronger position: processes were now appropriate and would identify any concerns at an early stage.

Asked why the Sufficiency Strategy, which had been promised at the last meeting in draft form for December 2021, now appeared to be delayed to February 2022, AD/SRCP said that officers were fully seized of the need to commission and produce the strategy at pace: the strategy was a critical document that would provide the focus for all future work, and must be thorough. A Sufficiency Strategy did exist but was not fit for purpose: it contained insufficient analysis of need and capacity. The timeline had been delayed from December 2021 to February 2022 due to the departure of the person who had been tasked with production of the strategy. **Asked** whether his reference to “commissioning” the strategy implied that there were no officers with the skills to do the work, AD/SRCP said that the issue was one of capacity rather than skills: he would normally expect a Sufficiency Strategy to be prepared internally.

Noting the statement at section 2 of the report that “... the last twelve months has required IROs to adjust to virtual working due to the impact of Covid and ‘working from home’ requirements”, **the Panel asked** whether the Safeguarding & Reviewing Service was satisfied that the vital work of IROs could be performed adequately by means of virtual working. SMSR replied that there had been no choice due to Covid 19, but that the service was slowly moving back to face-to-face working. There had been some benefits to virtual working: for example, some young people had been comfortable with virtual meetings. **Asked** whether she considered that young people had been more engaged with virtual reviews than they had been with face to face meetings, SRSM said that it varied: some young people had engaged in consultation by telephone or WhatsApp, while others preferred face to face discussion.

A Panel member said that the question was more about whether a review could be sufficiently rigorous if it were carried out remotely. **Asked** whether all reviews were now carried out face to face, the SMSR said that they were not: the speed of returning to face to face meetings was restricted by continuing Covid constraints in operation at the venues of the meetings (eg the foster home, the school). Effective virtual meetings had been held and some face to face meetings had been facilitated as necessary.

Referring to a consultation meeting held with young people in July 2021, panel members **invited SMSR to comment** on the following points raised at that meeting:

- a) Many young people had not been clear about the role and purpose of the independent reviews and had therefore been unaware that they had been giving their views to the IRO. SMSR described the frequency and timing of reviews, which included a minimum of two per year and an average of three per year.
- b) Young people had indicated that they disliked being called out of school for IRO meetings because it drew attention to their status as Looked After Children, and for this reason did not always participate. SMSR said that efforts were made to manage review meetings according to the preferences of Young People but that, with a caseload of 85 per IRO and a limited number of hours in the working day, it was not always possible to avoid taking young people out of class for review meetings. **Replying to further questions**, SMSR said that there was some flexibility around working hours but that weekend meetings were not possible because other agencies, such as schools, would not participate at weekends.

Referring to her opening remarks, SMSR said that the two temporary posts funded as part of Covid support currently each carried a caseload of 80. As and when the Covid funding ended, those cases would have to be absorbed by permanent IROs, taking their caseloads to over 90. AD/SRCP said that, to comply with the guidance in the IRO Handbook, IROs should have a maximum caseload of 70: the additional Covid-funded posts allowed the service to remain just on the right side of this ceiling, but it would be necessary to review the position as the funding came to an end.

Asked about the current position on settled status for the District's Looked After Children, SMSR did not have the figures to hand but said that Bradford was one of the better performing local authorities in this respect.

Replying to questions, SMSR confirmed that the data in the tables in Section 3.1 of the report covered the period to 31 March in each of the years shown. Noting that the rate of children leaving care in Bradford (table 2) had increased significantly and was above the national average, **the Panel asked** whether this might reflect some degree of over-correction following the 2018 Ofsted inspection, and whether the service was confident that the thresholds were now robust and the right children in the care system. AD/SRCP said that the number of children who had been in care in 2018 was lower than would be expected, giving rise to a clear concern about whether the right children had been taken into care in the right circumstances. It was common that a disproportionate number of children were taken into care when a local authority was subject to Ofsted intervention. The turnover of children in care shown in table two suggested that the correct balance had not yet been reached. DD/SC added that, when an LA became subject to Ofsted intervention, agencies tended to become risk-averse and to conclude that children would be safer in care if there were any concern about whether they were being supported effectively at home. This was also affected by court decisions. He considered that further work was required to be certain that all children who needed to be in care were in the system, and that all who were in the system needed to be there. SMSR said that the data in table two included the impact of clearing a backlog of Discharge from Care Orders.

The Panel considered that the list of areas for further focus on social work practice issues for the next year (section 8 of the report) could usefully be more

sharply focused to indicate the actions that would be taken, the timescales and how their impact would be measured.

Asked to expand upon the statement at section 3.4 of the report that “*There has been an increase in the use of mother and baby placements. In some of these cases the IROs have observed that the placements do not necessarily address the community risks that were identified in the initial single assessment*”, SMSR said that, if a child was left in the home with her mother and, possibly, her father, perhaps as a result of a court ruling, the LA would not be putting her in a protective environment: she would be exposed to other issues. A twelve-week mother and baby placement might be followed by a move into the community. When a decision was made to embark on a mother and baby placement, plans needed to be made for the probable next stages in the care requirements of the child.

The Panel commented on section 3.6 of the report: “*We are aware that a significant number of children turned 18 during 2020/21 which accounts for the high number of children aged 17+ ceasing care. With regards to children aged 16 and 17 who were subject to Care Orders, the pathway plan was to allow the order to lapse rather than seek discharge. Often this was in response to the wishes and feelings of young people.*” **Asked** whether this meant that the pathway plan was to allow the Care Order to lapse instead of to discharge the young person from care – effectively, not a plan at all – SMSR agreed. Sometimes a young person for whom a Discharge Order could be sought because they were no longer at risk expressed a preference to maintain the Care Order so that, on reaching the age of 18, they became a care leaver.

Referring to Table 14 in section 6 of the report (reasons for initiating a Challenge and Resolution process), **the Panel asked** whether a single child might be counted in two or more rows. The SMSR confirmed that they might: a Challenge and Resolution process might relate to a single or multiple issues. **Asked** about the total number of children who had been the subject of a Challenge and Resolution process, SMSR said that this information was given at Table 13 (numbers of Stage 1, 2 and 3 challenges and the numbers escalated and resolved). In the report period, 192 challenges had been resolved, each of which might have related to one or more factors.

Resolved –

- 1. That the report be noted and the Panel look forward to seeing evidence of improvement in the next IRO report in May 2022**
- 2. That the Sufficiency Strategy be completed as a matter of urgency, and by February 2022 at the latest;**
- 3. That the Fostering and Recruitment strategy flow from the Sufficiency Strategy and be updated annually**
- 4. That the Independent Reviewing Officer and Foster Carer Reviewing Officer establishment be reviewed in the context of the Sufficiency Strategy.**

Action: Assistant Director, Safeguarding and Review, Commissioning and Provider Services

12. CORPORATE PARENTING CHECKLIST

The Report of Children's Services (**Document "C"**) provided checklist information to inform members how they could be involved as Corporate Parents and links to training and development of Members and Senior Managers.

The Deputy Chair said that the agenda paper had been based on a document provided by the DfE Commissioner and had been prepared in response to the Motion to Council on Child Protection. The document needed to be agreed by this Panel and promulgated to elected Members, officer and partners. The Panel agreed that this was an accurate statement of the background to the paper.

AD/SRCP confirmed that LAs would normally have such a document to clarify for all elected Members and Officers their role as Corporate Parents, and considered that it was a thorough statement of those responsibilities. He invited the views of the Panel on how they wished it to be promulgated and the evidence they would require of its effectiveness.

The Panel welcomed the document, which would help to engender the desired cultural shift by giving a clear indication of the range of actions that Members, officer and partners could and should take to fulfil their Corporate Parenting responsibilities.

Referring to the third bullet in the section on members of the Scrutiny Committee (*"seek qualitative as well as quantitative information to ensure that the experiences of children looked after are consistent with what the performance data shows"*), the Panel discussed the challenges presented to Scrutiny Committee members in scrutinising qualitative information in this highly confidential and sensitive area. In practice, an element of trust would be required that effective procedures were in place for officers to scrutinise cases with their first and second line managers to identify what had happened, the reasons and what should have happened. It would take time to re-establish this Trust following the misinformation that the Scrutiny Committee had received at strategic level in the past.

AD/SRCP reminded the Panel that, when they returned to conduct a full inspection, Ofsted would ask the Lead Member, and possibly other Members, how they could be sure that the LA was a good Corporate Parent. Part of the answer would be based on quantitative evidence such as academic outcomes and stability of placements. This would need to be supplemented with direct knowledge of the views of young people on their experience of being in the care system in Bradford. DD/SC added that a range of methods were in place to determine the views of children and families on placements, whether children felt safer, whether they had effective support plans etc. Regulation 44 visits to children's homes included information about the facilities to which children had access. However, the LA was not currently collecting the direct views of young people as actively as it would wish. This kind of qualitative information was challenging to collect and could change over time, because the benefits of actions were not always visible to young people immediately; but a clear understanding of the views of young people was critical. As Corporate Parent, it was essential to know whether children and young people felt they were receiving high quality care and whether they considered the LA to be a good parent.

The Panel discussed the need for measures of impact for the actions set out in

the document and an appropriate way to record that impact. Actions around being aware of facts about Looked After Children could easily be addressed by providing the information to each Ward Member. Ward Member and partners needed to be vocal in their role as Corporate Parent, including through engagement with social media: they needed to ask Young People how the care system could work better for them. DD/SC noted that the acting Director of Children's Services had established a practice of messaging young people directly: this practice needed to be extended to other officers and elected Members.

Noting that the consultation meeting held with young people in the summer of 2021 had indicated that they held carrying views on the extent to which officers acted in response to their views, **the Panel asked** whether a standardised practice would be established for responding to the views of children and young people.

AD/SRCP said that young people participated in the six-monthly child and peer reviews, but there was scope to engage with them more effectively. Participation data was reasonably positive, but the effectiveness of that participation varied. A more robust engagement process was needed for children in residential care homes and for those who used commissioned services. This was an area for improvement.

Asked whether there were plans to develop a Participation Strategy, AD/SRCP said that such a strategy could be Council-wide, with a specific section addressing the participation of children in care: this would be for Members to decide. The Panel noted the need to draw together work on a Participation Strategy with existing work on the Child-Friendly and other strategies.

Cllr Allipool withdrew from the meeting at 6.17pm

Referring to Table 12 in Section 5 of the RO report (Child Participation), the Panel noted that a relatively small proportion of children physically attended and spoke for themselves at reviews. This was consistent with the feedback from young people at the consultation meeting in July 2021 that they did not wish to be taken out of school for review meetings because they were concerned about the stigma of being identified as being in care. The panel noted that older children had wanted to chair their review meetings – this did not seem unreasonable. AD/SRCP agreed: properly supported, child-led discussions could be very powerful and represented real participation.

Cllr Allipool rejoined the meeting at 6.20pm

The Panel saw merit in establishing a Council-wide Participation Strategy, underpinned by plans at the level of each service to ensure that the overall strategy was achieved in whole and without overlap. **Asked** about the timing of the Participation Strategy, AD/SRCP said that it was not being worked on at present: this was a corporate issue. The Deputy Chair would pursue this.

The Panel discussed the need to support Members and Officers in carrying out the activities set out in the agenda paper. For example, a model would need to be developed for Ward Councillor visits to residential homes. Such a model would make clear that the purpose of the visits was to hear the views of young people and carers, rather than to make judgements. **The Panel agreed** that the second part of bullet 7 in the Ward Councillor section of the agenda paper ("arrange to visit periodically and speak to staff about their experiences and challenges") should be amended to make clear the distinction between

Regulation 44 visits and informal visits to get to know homes and staff. Members noted that Regulation 44 visits were rigorous occasions: they had to be properly prepared, ask the questions that an Ofsted Inspector would ask and address any weaknesses identified in inspections. The reports of Regulation 44 visits were sent to Ofsted

AD/SRCP said that consideration was being given to how elected Members might be involved in the monthly visits that independent officers were required to make to each home in the District. This would give Members an insight into Bradford's homes and an opportunity to learn what young people thought about them, while minimising disruption. The Panel considered that a process also needed to be established to enable Ward Councillors to get to know the foster carers in their areas, both to ensure that they understood the issues and to provide signposting to sources of support as required.

Resolved -

- 1. That the Corporate Parenting Checklist be amended as agreed**
- 2. That the checklist be submitted to the Communications Team for advice on presenting and communicating it effectively**
- 3. That the checklist be considered to be a live document, to be kept under review by the Panel in response to feedback**
- 4. That elected Members review the sections contained in the checklist to be shared with appropriate stakeholders**

Action: Strategic Director, Children's Services/ CPP Panel Members

13. CORPORATE PARENTING PANEL DRAFT TERMS OF REFERENCE

The report of Children's Services (**Document "D"**) informed both Members and the general public regarding the vision and purpose of the Corporate Parenting Panel and included a new draft Terms of Reference document.

Noting that, aside from the brief statement in the Constitution, the Panel did not have Terms of Reference, the Deputy Chair said that those set out in the agenda paper had been adapted from the Corporate Parenting Panel of another local authority.

Noting that the Virtual School had no Governing Body, the Panel considered that, like other schools, it would benefit from proper governance and accountability arrangements. The Head of the Virtual School (Head/VS) said that the Virtual School had a Management Board but that it had not met since before the Covid outbreak and did not include representation of this Panel, as the Corporate Parent of Virtual School pupils: the Governing Bodies of other schools included parent representation. He considered that the Virtual School sat naturally under the Corporate Parenting Panel. **Replying to questions**, Head/VS said that the VS Management Board was not the same as the Management Board that oversaw the Pupil Referral Units; and that the Management Board did not hold the Virtual School to account in the way that would be expected of a Governing Body.

DD/SC supported the establishment of a Governing Body for the Virtual School consisting of this Panel. Among other benefits, it would give the Panel a clearer view of the work of the Virtual School. The Education and Learning Strategic Manager (ELSM) also supported the proposal: in most LAs, the Corporate Parenting Panel was also the Governing Body of the Virtual School.

The Panel discussed how best to engage young people in its work. It noted that the Children in Care Council while a valuable partner, was not necessarily representative of the full range of Bradford's Looked After Children. AD/SRCP said that work was needed with the Children in Care Council to make it a more open forum, perhaps organised differently for the different age groups, so that it was more inclusive. He suggested that meetings of this Panel might be hosted alternately by young people, in whatever format emerged from development of the Children in Care Council and the Panel itself, perhaps in different locations throughout the District, with more formal business coming to meetings hosted by the Panel and more consultative and exploratory business to those hosted by young people. The Panel noted that this would be consistent with the views expressed by young people at the consultation meeting in July 2021 that they would like to set agendas chair meetings. AD/SRCP said that these points would be addressed in the Participation Strategy.

Resolved –

1. That the Panel agreed that Terms of Reference would be useful as a means of clarifying its role and responsibilities for a range of audiences. It noted the need to take the advice of the Legal and Governance & Audit teams on the proper way to establish the Terms of Reference and the scope to amend the provisions of the Constitution in relation to the Corporate Parenting Panel. Specific points for discussion would be:

- **The proposal that a Governing Body be established for the Virtual School and that the Corporate Parenting Panel become that Governing Body.**
- **The need to increase the maximum number of Co-opted members, to enable strong representation by partners and sufficient members to carry forward the themes identified at the meeting on 27 October 2021.**

2. That the Panel agreed the following amendments to the draft Terms of Reference set out in the report (Document "D")

Location in the draft ToR	Amendment
----------------------------------	------------------

Section headed "Purpose", fourth bullet	Add reference to the police service - 'to encourage all partners, whether they work for health or social care services, West Yorkshire Police or the voluntary
---	--

	sector, to work in an integrated manner linking back with portfolio holders in the best interests of looked after children and care leavers’
Section headed “Purpose”	Subject to the completion of the appropriate legal and other constitutional steps, add a reference to the role of the Panel as the Governing Body of the virtual School.
Section headed “Bradford Corporate Parenting Panel will”	Add reference to the preparation of an annual report on the work of the Panel to the Partnership Board and the Council
Section headed “Bradford Corporate Parenting Panel will not”	Delete section
Section headed “Details”, paragraph 6.1	Amend to read “The Panel shall meet no less often than six eight times a year”

Action: Strategic Director, Children’s Services/ CPP Members

14. ACTION TRACKING

Panel members agreed that, where they led on themes that fell within the remits of Bradford Council Lead Members, they would establish links with the Lead Members to avoid overlap, duplication or confusion.

Theme leaders reported on progress since the Panel meeting of 27 October 2021:

- a) Cllr Pollard had noted a number of points from the School Governor section of the Corporate Parenting Checklist that he would take forward in his role as Theme Leader for Education.
- b) Cllr Dunbar was due to meet officers to discuss transport related to housing: he would report more fully at the next meeting of the Panel.
- c) Cllr Duffy and CI/WYP were due to meet and would report more fully at the next meeting of the Panel.

Asked about dates for future meetings, AD/SRCP undertook to propose a schedule of dates and key elements of business to be taken at each meeting.

The Panel agreed to take at its next meeting an update on the work underway to promote recruitment of social workers.

Referring to its discussion on 27 October 2021 of the need to address its core values, the Panel asked that officers ensure that this was integrated with the other work underway on values.

Referring to its discussion on 27 October 2021 of the need to provide feedback to young people on the actions taken in light of their comments at the consultation meeting in July 2021, the Panel noted that it had assigned members of the panel to lead on the themes they had identified: reports to future meetings of the Panel would demonstrate that the themes were being actively pursued.

Replying to a question from AD/SRCP, the Deputy Chair confirmed the Panel’s

intention that training in awareness of the Corporate Parenting role of elected Member and officers should be undertaken by Members and Officers jointly where possible and should extend across the whole of the Council: it should not be restricted to Children's Services.

Chair

Note: These minutes are subject to approval as a correct record at the next meeting of the Corporate Parenting Panel.

THESE MINUTES HAVE BEEN PRODUCED, WHEREVER POSSIBLE, ON RECYCLED PAPER

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Report of the Director of Childrens Services to the meeting of Corporate Parenting Panel to be held on 26 January 2022

Subject:

E

Annual Report of Care Leavers

Summary statement:

This report summarises performance and activity in respect of young people with care leaver entitlement in Bradford Metropolitan District Council.

EQUALITY & DIVERSITY:

No issues identified.

Marium Haque
Interim Strategic Director
Children's Services

Portfolio:

Children and Families

Report Contact: Mandy Helm
Phone: (01274) 438792
E-mail: Mandy.Helm@bradford.gov.uk

Overview & Scrutiny Area:

Children's Services

1. SUMMARY

This report summarises performance and activity in respect of young people with care leaver entitlement in Bradford Metropolitan District Council.

2. BACKGROUND

Annual report of Care Leavers.

3. OTHER CONSIDERATIONS

None Identified

4. FINANCIAL & RESOURCE APPRAISAL

None Identified

5. RISK MANAGEMENT AND GOVERNANCE ISSUES

None Identified

6. LEGAL APPRAISAL

None identified

7. OTHER IMPLICATIONS

7.1 SUSTAINABILITY IMPLICATIONS

None Identified

7.2 GREENHOUSE GAS EMISSIONS IMPACTS

None Identified

7.3 COMMUNITY SAFETY IMPLICATIONS

None Identified

7.4 HUMAN RIGHTS ACT

None identified

7.5 TRADE UNION

None Identified

7.6 WARD IMPLICATIONS

None Identified

**7.7 AREA COMMITTEE ACTION PLAN IMPLICATIONS
(for reports to Area Committees only)**

None Identified

7.8 IMPLICATIONS FOR CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE

This covers Corporate Parenting Responsibilities for Care Leavers.

7.9 ISSUES ARISING FROM PRIVACY IMPACT ASSESMENT

None Identified

8. NOT FOR PUBLICATION DOCUMENTS

None

9. OPTIONS

Not applicable

10. RECOMMENDATIONS

Members are asked to consider the attached report.

11. APPENDICES

Annual report of Care Leavers.

12. BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS

None

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Bradford Children’s Social Care Annual Report on Care Leavers 2020/2021

Annual Author	Report	Mandy Helm: Head of Service, Care Leavers
Contributions to the report		Louisa Kay: Service Manager, Care Leavers Nazia Kousar: Service Manager, Care Leavers Lisa Turner: Programme Support Officer, Transformation Services
Responsible Deputy Director		David Johnston; Deputy Director

1 PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 This report provides the Bradford Partnership with progress for Care Leavers in the Calendar through to 24 November 2021.
- 1.2 This annual report sets out the work undertaken by the City of Bradford Metropolitan District Council, in respect of its duties and responsibilities, for children/young people eligible for a Leaving Care Service as set out in: -
- The Children Act 1989 (Volume 3 Transitions Guidance)
 - Children and Families Act 2014
 - Leaving Care Act 2000
 - The Children Act 2004
 - Children and Social Work Act 2017
 - Care Planning Regulations 2010
- 1.3 This report gives an overview of the activities that have taken place in relation to young people leaving care in the City of Bradford Metropolitan District Council and outlines the activities planned for the forthcoming year to ensure that our young people are: -
- Participating in the decisions affecting their care and their lives
 - Happy and healthy, both physically and emotionally
 - Promote high aspirations
 - Safe and protected from harm and exploitation
 - Able to achieve their potential, especially at school, to make the most of their learning opportunities
 - Supported with their transition to adulthood for it to be as smooth as possible with continuity of support
 - Supported and guided in accessing good jobs and higher education
 - Living in good housing
 - Financially secure
- 1.4 This report sets out the findings of our Ofsted Inspection in 2018 as well as findings from subsequent Ofsted Monitoring Visits and outlines what we have done and continue to do to ensure that our young people are getting the best service possible.
- 1.5 This report outlines the challenges the Service has faced around staff retention and high caseloads and what this has meant for our young people as well as what we have done and continue to do, to overcome these challenges.
- 1.6 Most importantly, this report outlines what our young people, who are accessing our Services, are saying in terms of what we are getting right for them and taking direction from them on how we will build on all aspects of the improvement journey to ensure that young people remain at the heart of all we do.

3 OUR OFFER

Bradford Children's Social Care and all its departments have a responsibility to act as your 'Corporate Parent'* which means it is a shared responsibility to be good parents to you and to other young people leaving the care of Bradford Children's Social Care.

The [Children and Social Work Act 2017](#) states we must do the following as your corporate parent:

- Act in your best interests, and promote your physical and mental health and wellbeing
- Encourage you to express your views, wishes and feelings, and take them into account, to secure the best outcomes for you
- Promote high aspirations to secure the best outcomes for you
- Ensure you have access to services within the Local Authority and with our Partner Agencies
- Make sure you are safe, with stable home lives, relationships and education or work
- Prepare you for adulthood and living in your own home

All care leavers are supported by a Social Worker or Personal Advisor from the Leaving Care Service. They support the young person to transition from care, and provide them with advice, support and a meaningful pathway plan as a care leaver. Staff are readily available for young people to contact, via email, phone or drop-in at our Leaving Care Officers at Sir Henry Mitchel House, Odsal Top or Shipley Library.

The Local Offer for Bradford Care Leavers sets out what they can expect as part of their journey beyond care. Young people are supported to access specialist services; housing; education, employment and training; money management; volunteering opportunities; drug and alcohol services; health services and immigration services.

Young people leaving care will have a named Personal Advisor if they are Eligible, Relevant or Former Relevant at least until your 21st birthday as outlined in Local Offer.

Before they turn 18, their Personal Advisor will focus on getting to know them and build a relationship where they will start the conversation about what they want for their future. They will help them (alongside their Social Worker) bring together their Pathway Plan goals and when they turn 18, will continue to keep their Pathway Plan under review.

Their Personal Advisor will be at their side to help them work through decision making, even if these are tough, and celebrate their achievements. Their Personal Advisor will be open and honest with them and help them figure out new responsibilities as life changes.

If the young person leaving care is age 16 or 17 and also have Eligible or Relevant Leaving Care eligibility, they will have a social worker. Their Social Worker will be responsible for making sure their Pathway Plan is focused on what is going to happen both in the present and in the future as far as possible. They will include other important people such as family and friends that are involved in their life, as well as

those who may be in their professional support network such as health professionals and colleagues from education to make sure everyone is working together and towards their goals.

It's extremely important to us within Bradford Children's Social Care that young people are involved in all decisions made about them by jointly working with their Social Worker/Personal Advisor in completing and reviewing their Pathway Plan. Young people also have access to the advocacy agency, [NYAS](#). We also value our young people's input in the development of our service. We wish to keep engaging with our young people throughout the year so we know what we are getting right and areas we need to improve. Our young people can speak with their Social Worker and Personal Advisor can also get involved with surveys, workshops and engage on social media platforms.

3 CARE LEAVER STATUS

The four different statutory care leaver status' are:

Eligible;

- you are aged 16 or 17 years
- you have been looked after for at least 13 weeks since your 14th birthday and inclusive of your 16th birthday* and still in care now
- or for 13 weeks* after your 16th birthday and still in care now

** It does not matter if the times you were in care was in a single period or over several different periods.*

Relevant;

- you are aged 16 or 17 years and have previously been Eligible but no longer in care

Former relevant;

- you are aged 18 and up to 25 years* who used to be an Eligible or Relevant young person

**when you reach your 21st birthday you may continue to need support from your Leaving Care Service and a named Personal Advisor which may be short or longer term depending on your assessed need. The support may continue up to your 25th birthday; recognising that you may still need us in some areas of your life.*

Qualifying;

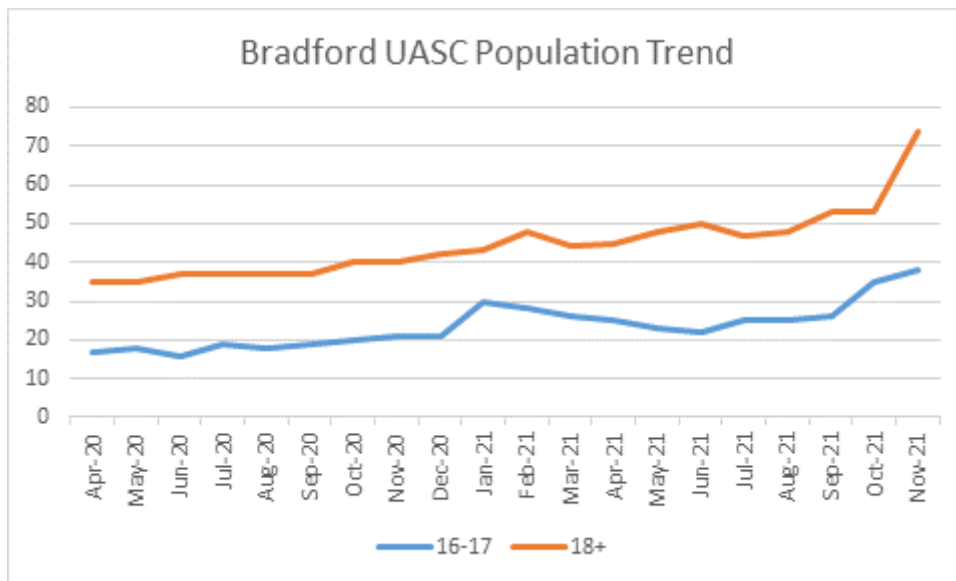
- you are aged between 16 and up to your 21st birthday (up to 25 if in education) and was in care for less than 13 weeks on or after your 16th birthday
- you were looked after immediately prior to the making of a special guardianship order and are now 16- 21 years' old

4 REVIEW AND ASSESSMENT OF CURRENT CARE LEAVERS

4.1 The number of children receiving a leaving care service in Bradford as of November 2021 was 810, this has increased by 156 young people since November 2020. As of March 2020, there were 525 young people in Bradford receiving a leaving care service.

Figures show a significant increase from March 2020 to November 2021 by 285 young people receiving a leaving care service.

These figures include separated migrant children and young people with an increasing trend within the last three months.



In order to prepare and upskill the service; during 2021 the Child First Migrant Second policy has been launched ensuring all spontaneous arrivals and National Transfer of young people and managed by the Leaving Care Service. Service Managers, Team Managers and Social Workers have engaged in Age Assessment Training. There has been a whole service requirement to undertake Triple Planning Training and Human Rights Assessment training (including Personal Advisors); this will continue into 2022 and will become a fixed feature for mandatory training within the service to ensure consistency and develop expertise.

In addition, this year; further focused work has been undertaken to understand the Leaving Care population leading to the development of the 16/17 Joint Homeless Protocol between Bradford Housing and Bradford Childrens Services. The impact on the service will mean that only those young people who are eligible for a Leaving Care service will be supported within the service ensuring proper use of frameworks and legislation.

4.2 Out of the 810 young people receiving a Leaving Care Service, 241 are Eligible, 471 are Former Relevant, 17 are Relevant and 81 are Qualifying.

4.3 Age and Gender

Age	% (No)		Gender	% (No.)	
16	18.5%	(155)	Male	52.7%	(426)
17	18%	(152)	Female	47%	(380)
18	20%	(164)	TGM	0.3%	(4)
19	19%	(158)			
20	14%	(124)			
21	7%	(63)			
22	3%	(30)			
23	0.5%	(4)			

4.4 Ethnicity and Religion

Ethnicity	% (No.)		Religion	% (No.)	
White - British	51.5%	(419)	No religion	21.5%	(176)
Asian/British - Pakistani	14%	(113)	Not recorded	18.5%	(153)
Mixed - White/Asian	7.5%	(62)	Not known	21%	(171)
Other Ethnic Group	7%	(59)	Muslim	15%	(117)
Black/Black British - African	5%	(33)	Christian	11.5%	(90)
Gypsy / Roma	2.5%	(21)	Roman Catholic	3.5%	(31)
Mixed - Caribbean	2.5%	(21)	Atheist	2.5%	(22)
Asian/British Asian - Other	2.5%	(20)	Church of England	2.5%	(21)
White - Central European	2%	(17)	Orthodox Christian	2.4%	(18)
White - Central European	1.5%	(13)	Other	0.8%	(6)
Mixed - Other	1.2%	(10)	Buddhist	0.6%	(4)
Asian/British - Bangladeshi	1%	(8)	Hindu	0.2%	(1)
Mixed - White/Black African	0.6%	(5)			
Black/Black British - Other	0.4%	(3)			
Traveller of Irish Heritage	0.25%	(2)			
Asian/British Asian - Indian	0.25%	(2)			
Black British - Caribbean	0.15%	(1)			
Not Yet Obtained	0.15%	(1)			

4.5 Accommodation and Placements

- 80% (649) of our young people are placed or choosing to live within district with 24% (161) placed or choosing to live outside of district.
- This includes 12 (1%) young people who have Qualifying Care Leaver status and are now over the age of 18 years.
- 112 (17%) young people who have Former Relevant status aged 18-25 years
- 33 (5%) young people who have Eligible care leaver status who reside in foster homes, residential homes and semi-independent homes.
- Our remaining young people have Relevant status and have returned to live with their parents.
- Whilst some out of district placements include our neighbouring local authorities; we continue to have attention on those placed further afield and

transition plans in returning home to Bradford. Young people are discussed at High Cost Placement Panel which is now embedded ensuring senior management oversight and approval.

- Where our young people choose to remain living out of district; our practitioners work closely with local housing providers and authorities to seek honouring of Leaving Care entitlements (for example priority status for council housing). We have employed a dedicated Personal Advisor to focusing on homeless prevention amongst our care leavers; strengthening links with partner agencies, providing advice and guidance to practitioners and where appropriate joint working arrangements to enable our young people to reside in their area of choice.
- Practitioners continue to maintain keeping in touch arrangements irrespective of their location. The service continues to encourage links with other Leaving Care services as a local point of contact and where we have consent will share Pathway Plans.
- Bradford Care Leavers aged 17 to 18 in suitable accommodation is in line with the Yorkshire and Humber Region and slightly lower than the England Average
- Bradford Care Leavers aged 19 to 21 in suitable accommodation is slightly lower than the Yorkshire and Humber Region and England Average

Data from 24 November 2021		17 to 18 years				19 to 21 years			
		2018	2019	2020	2021	2018	2019	2020	2021
Bradford	Accommodation considered not suitable	c	c	7%	c	3%	3%	c	4%
	Accommodation considered suitable	94%	93%	91%	90%	93%	88%	95%	87%
	No information	c	c	2%	c	4%	9%	c	9%
England	Accommodation considered not suitable	5%	5%	5%	4%	7%	6%	6%	5%
	Accommodation considered suitable	89%	88%	90%	91%	84%	85%	85%	88%
	No information	6%	6%	5%	5%	9%	9%	9%	7%
Yorkshire and The Humber	Accommodation considered not suitable	4%	4%	6%	5%	6%	6%	6%	5%
	Accommodation considered suitable	90%	92%	92%	90%	88%	88%	89%	89%
	No information	6%	4%	3%	5%	7%	7%	5%	6%

It is noteworthy that in October 2021 system changes have been made to improve the integrity of the data; whilst there have been marginal changes there are minor data cleansing requirements and training as a result in a changing workforce, in respect of the shared definition of suitability, whilst subjective the DfE guidance is clear in that *‘accommodation is to be regarded suitable if it provides safe, secure and affordable provision for young people. Accommodation that clearly exposes the person to risk of harm or social exclusion by reason of its location or other factors should be coded as ‘unsuitable’.*

Bradford Care Leavers aged 18 remaining with their foster carer is higher than the England Average but lower than the Yorkshire and Humber Region

Bradford Care Leavers aged 19 to 20 remaining with their foster carer is higher than the England and the Yorkshire and Humber Region

	18 years				19 to 20 years			
	2018	2019	2020	2021	2018	2019	2020	2021
Bradford	69%	69%	67%	61%	43%	41%	49%	52%
England	55%	57%	58%	60%	26%	26%	28%	30%
Yorkshire and The Humber	62%	61%	67%	64%	34%	34%	32%	37%

In October 2021 the Leaving Care service has driven the review of the Staying Put procedures; working in partnership with both Placement Co-ordination and the Fostering Service. We understand that early planning is essential in promoting the Staying Put arrangement and may begin before a young person reaches the age of eligibility for Leaving Care services. We anticipate increasing Staying Put arrangements as we progress into 2022.

4.6 Employment, Education and Training

Bradford Care Leavers aged 17 to 18 in EET is lower than the Yorkshire and Humber Region and England Average

Bradford Care Leavers aged 19 to 21 in EET is slightly higher than the Yorkshire and Humber Region and in line with the England Average

	17 to 18 years				19 to 21 years			
	2018	2019	2020	2021	2018	2019	2020	2021
Bradford	71%	63%	59%	63%	63%	51%	51%	52%
England	64%	64%	64%	65%	51%	52%	53%	52%
Yorkshire and The Humber	69%	67%	66%	69%	53%	51%	53%	51%

Young people leaving care are accessing education, employment or training via various routes.

Activity Type	No. of YP
Blanks	59
Degree level education - full time	39
Higher education (i.e. studies beyond A level but below degree) - full time	5
Education at A-level or below - full time	263
Young person engaged full time in training or employment	6
Apprenticeship - full time	19
Employment without formal training or apprenticeship - full time	61

Other training - full time	25
Education at A-level or below - part time	10
Young person engaged part time in training or employment	1
Employment without formal training or apprenticeship - part time	17
Other training - part time	7

There are a number of Care Leavers not in Education, Training and Employment (NEET).

Not in education, employment or training because of illness or disability	44
Not in education, employment or training: other circumstances	212
Not in education, employment or training due to pregnancy or parenting	46

As highlighted above; it is noteworthy that in October 2021 system changes have been made to improve the integrity of the data; there are minor data cleansing requirements and training as a result in a changing workforce with 7% 'blank' entries. Our data has allowed us to identify a small co-hort of young people with Former Relevant eligibility who have been closed to service; the service will be making proactive attempts to contact the young people to ensure that rights and entitlements are known and understood and service re-instated where the young person consents.

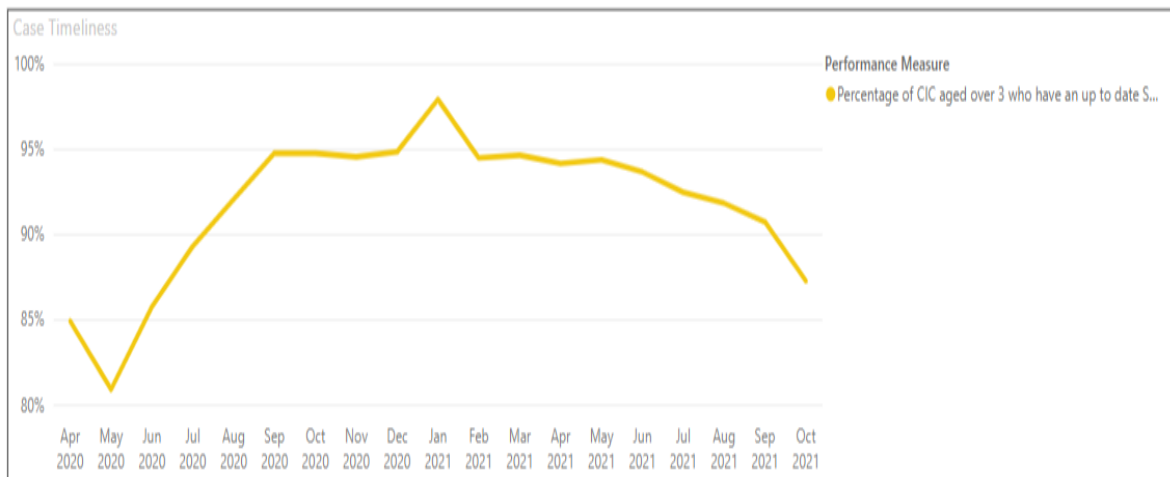
During 2021 we have introduced the EET Group; a forum co-led by both Leaving Care, the Virtual School and SEND; inviting Social Workers and Personal Advisors to access advice and guidance in respect of supporting education, employment and/or training planning for young people who are identified as NEET. The Group members are equipped with up to date opportunities for young people to support the practitioner in navigating barriers to learning. As the group embeds; focus will extend to our young people who are parents or who are identified to have an illness or disability understanding the diversity of needs amongst our young people. In the coming period the group will seek to dovetail with Bradford Youth Justice Services to ensure a co-ordinated strategy in supporting young people involved in both service areas.

4.7 Health and Wellbeing – Strengths and Difficulties Questionnaire (SDQ), Health Assessments

SDQ's for young people receiving a Leaving Care Service

- 82% of young people aged 16 receiving a Leaving Care Service have completed an SDQ in the last year
- 13% of you people aged 16 receiving a Leaving Care Service have completed an SDQ over 1 year ago
- 5% of young people aged 16 receiving a Leaving Care Service do not have an SDQ
- 32% of young people aged 17 receiving a Care Leaving Service have an SDQ in the last year

The below includes young people receiving a Leaving Care service;



The use of the SDQ tool has averaged 80+% during the Autumn of 2021 and progress is tracked weekly within the service. There is identified need in terms of impact and analysis as the service improvement plan progresses into 2022; reflecting within Pathway Planning and subsequent service interventions to support emotional and behavioural health. The service already works closely with our Looked After Children Nurses and has the added value of our Leaving Care Nurses who continue to have a key role in supporting the holistic aspects of health into adulthood.

Health Assessments

The below includes young people receiving a care leaving service



The Children Looked After and Care Leavers Annual Report 2020-2021 NHS Bradford District and Craven shares that

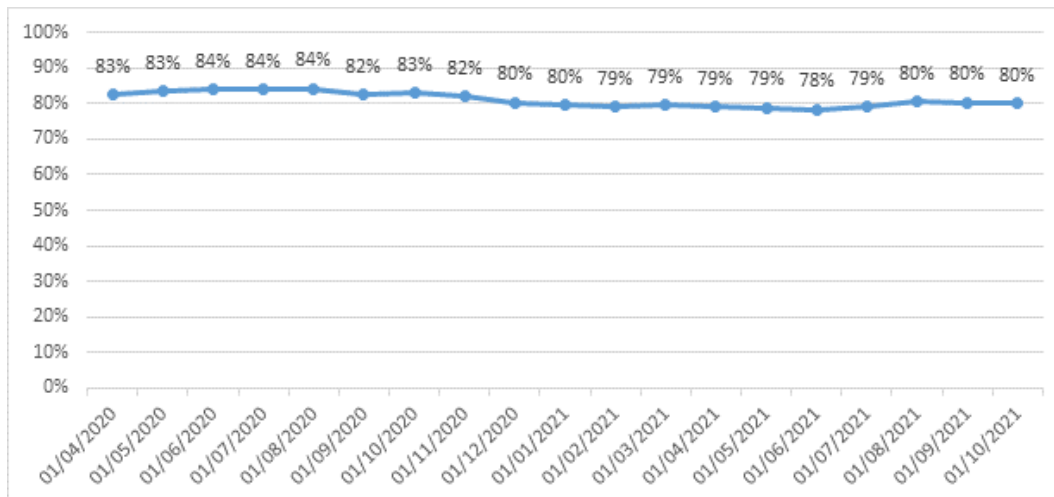
- There is local evidence of CLA and care leavers having higher rates of teenage pregnancy than the general population.
- The Designated Doctor and Designated Nurse have accessed safeguarding children and CLA supervision and have also provided formal and ad hoc supervision to members of the wider CLA, care leavers and YOT multi-agency system in respect of health needs, health outcomes signposting to health services and escalating individual cases.

- Training has been provided to Specialist GPs in Care leavers/unaccompanied asylum seekers

4.8 Pathway Plans

% of Care Leavers including those still in care with an active Pathway Plan has fallen

% of Care Leavers, including those still in care with an active Pathway Plan, remained steady since April 2020 with the last 3 months remaining at 80% despite the significant increase in demand across the service.



In January 2021 the Leaving Care service implemented the Leaving Well App. A platform that is easily accessible for young people and practitioners alike and encourages joint contribution in undertaking the Pathway Plan (part 1 needs assessment and part 2 plan within one document).

The service has reviewed the effectiveness of the platform concluding that the app will be discontinued by the end of the calendar year.

In the meantime; the service has reviewed the LCS Pathway Plan template incorporating a safety plan domain with a target go live date of the end of the calendar year.

During the summer of 2021 the service has facilitated both in-house and research in practice training in respect of Pathway Planning in order to upskill practitioners. This will continue to be part of the annual learning programme within Leaving Care recognising the changing workforce in the last year.

4.9 Meaningful contact

Bradford Care Leavers aged 17-18 In touch with the LA is slightly lower than the England Average and the Yorkshire and Humber Region

Bradford Care Leavers aged 19 to 21 In Touch with the LA is in line with the England Average but slightly lower than the Yorkshire and Humber Region

	17 to 18 years				19 to 21 years			
	2018	2019	2020	2021	2018	2019	2020	2021
Bradford	99%	95%	97%	93%	92%	91%	89%	91%
England	93%	93%	94%	94%	88%	89%	90%	91%
Yorkshire and The Humber	94%	95%	97%	95%	92%	92%	93%	93%

There has been instability within the Leaving Care workforce within the last year; resulting in rising caseloads. That said; 'In Touch' has improved amongst our young people aged 18+.

There has been significant investment in time to address workforce deficits and understand the trends within the Leaving Care service including our increasing separated migrant population. The primary focus is to afford practitioners the time to build meaningful relationships though regular 'In Touch' (in Bradford the frequency in the last year has been every 6 weeks opposed to every 8 weeks for the region and nationally).

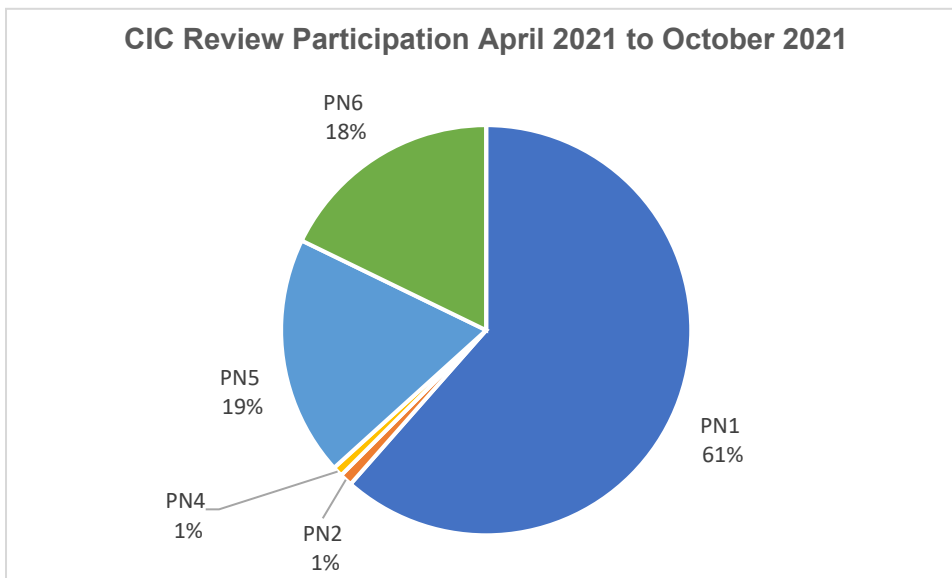
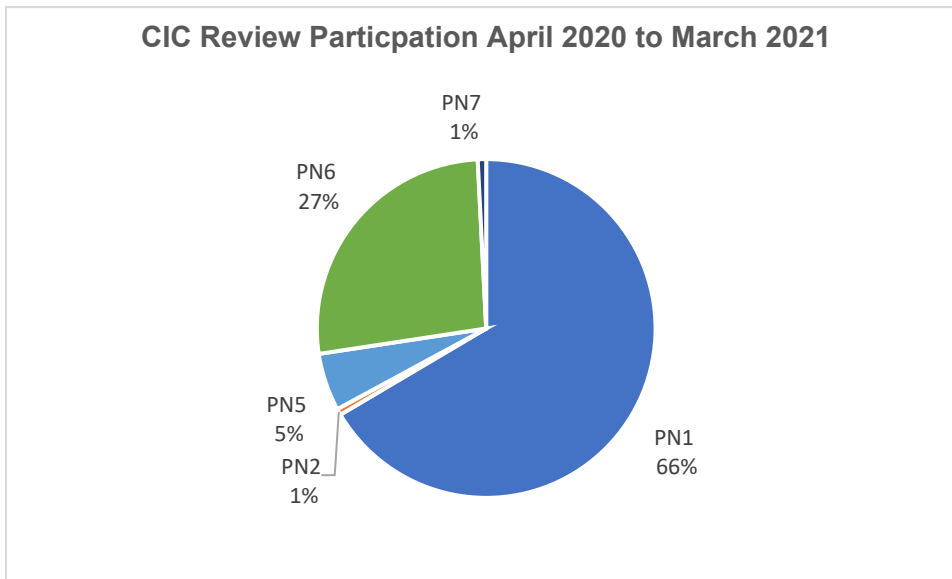
Moving forward the service is recruiting to 6 FTE and 3 part time Personal Advisor positions expected to be in post by February 2022.

4.10 Care Leavers participation in Child Looked After Reviews

	April 20 - March 20	03/04/21 - 19/10/21
Number of Child Looked After Reviews that took place for Care Leavers aged 16 and 17	607	285

Participation Codes for Child Looked After Reviews

PN 1	Young Persons attended their Child Looked After Review and spoke for themselves
PN 2	Young Persons attended their Child Looked After Review and their advocate spoke to them
PN 3	Young Persons attended their Child Looked After Review and gave their views non verbally (prior comms with their IRO e.g. Viewpoint)
PN 4	Young Persons attended their Child Looked After Review, however, did not contribute
PN 5	Young Persons did not attend their Child Looked After Review, however, an advocate shared their views
PN 6	Young Persons did not attend their Child Looked After Review, however, they shared their views via prior comms with their IRO e.g. Viewpoint
PN 7	Young Persons did not attend their Child Looked After Review and did not send their views



5 KEY HEADLINES AND CHALLENGES

- 5.1 The Service has undergone 2 restructures within the last 4 years which saw the Leaving Care Service and Children in Care Teams becoming 1 Service area and then splitting again so that the Children in Care Teams became part of the Locality Assessment and Long Term Teams and the Leaving Care Service, once again, being a standalone service.
- 5.2 Added to these two restructures, the Service has seen a significant rise in cases with the added struggle of high sickness absence resulting in extremely high caseloads at times.
- 5.3 Ofsted Judged 'The experiences and progress of care leavers' as 'Requires Improvements' during their Children's Services Inspection 17th September to 28th September 2018 and outlined the following: -

Strengths

- There are a range of housing options available, including staying put, and the vast majority of young people are in suitable accommodation.
- Care leavers, have seen fewer changes of staff and managers, and this has enabled children to build better relationships with their social workers and ensure that work has been completed in a timely manner. Inspectors did see examples of good work throughout children's services, but more consistently with care leavers

Requires Improvement

- Children in care and care leavers are not yet receiving consistently good help to promote their well-being and to improve their outcomes. There had been a decline in the overall quality of services since the last Ofsted inspection. However, actions by managers are addressing the issues and there are evident recent improvements in the support being offered.
- Children leaving care receive inconsistent support as they move towards independence. All care leavers have allocated social workers until they are 18, with Personal Advisor providing regular support between 18 to 25 years old. However, there was mixed feedback from care leavers who met inspectors. Some reported good relationships with their workers, while others were critical of a lack of support.
- Not all care leavers have access to key documents such as their health passports, national insurance numbers and passports, which they will need as they start their life as young adults.
- Pathway plans are not user friendly and the recording of the young person's voice and engagement in the computer-based planning record is minimal.

5.4 During the Ofsted Monitoring Visit in February 2021, the visit looked at the quality and impact of key decisions for care leavers. Ofsted did find appropriate focus on improving support for care leavers, however, they did also find some similarities seen during their Inspection in September 2018: -

- Young people who have left care receive an inconsistent service. The quality of the support they receive is too dependent on individual Personal Advisers. Some care leavers are benefiting from a high level of contact and effective support at this most difficult of times. However, the additional needs of individual young people during the pandemic have not been systematically assessed. This has left some without a clear plan of how they are to be supported. There is a lack of ambition for some care leavers and a failure of management oversight to consistently drive planning for these young people. Personal Advisers caseloads are too high for them to be able to consistently provide the level of support that many of these vulnerable young people require.

Ofsted also found in relation to Care Leavers: -

Strengths

- Some Care Leavers reported that they have received support during the pandemic which has helped them secure college and university places and apprenticeships.

Requires Improvement

- During the pandemic, there has been a significant drop in the number of care leavers who have been able to maintain employment, education or training. While this has been an impact of the pandemic, some care leavers told inspectors that they had not received the right support and guidance for their education.

5.5 During January and February 2021, the internal QA Service undertook full audits on 47 young people within the Leaving Care Service and found: -

Strengths

- Evidence that 19 (40%) young people had been supported well to develop their independence skills. They were engaged in activities with key workers or carers to cook, budget, take care of themselves.
 - 17 young people were achieving in education or employment.
 - 1 young parent had been helped to make informed choices about keeping safe for her and her baby.
 - 1 young person who was subject to risks of criminal exploitation and other particularly complex needs was supported and risks managed through clear plans that were regularly reviewed. This enabled him to remain in his placement and rebuild his relationships with family.
 - 5 young people who had been referred as unaccompanied asylum seekers had secured appropriate accommodation, financial assistance and access to education and employment opportunities.
 - 1 young person's risks of self-harm had been reduced and she was able to focus on her education.
- Young people's friendships and support networks were known and maximised to the young person's benefit. The response by the allocated worker to any difficulties the young person was experiencing once they were living independently was responded to in a timely and effective way. Help was given for financial and debt management and other practical problems as they arose.
- Help and advice was given regarding emotional well-being young people.
- Good link up with other professionals and housing and placement providers to ensure that young people's needs were met.
- Young people's wishes and aspirations for the future were known and they were assisted to fulfil those aspirations.
- Good examples of young people being supported with accessing and staying in further education

Identified Learning

- Concerns in respect of risk management
- Young people in custody had not had a timely assessment and responded to by the service to see them and ensure that their welfare needs were met
- Assessments for young people who were placed with parents had not been updated to analyse the historical risks presented by their parents and identify whether further work was required to ensure health and safety issues were addressed for those young people. Because they were living at home, planning for their independence had not been considered full.
- The support and potential risks from wider family support/networks were not routinely addressed in pathway plans for all young people.
- Not all young people's needs, such as budgeting skills had been assessed earlier enough and they could have been supported better had risks such as mental health needs been better understood. Young people were felt to have moved into independent living before they had the necessary skills to manage.
- Some young people needed further support to ensure their health and well-being needs were met.
- Voice of the young person is not always evidenced

5.6 As a result of the 2020 pandemic young people have experienced a change in services and whilst usual visiting arrangements have resumed; we have been unable to re-establish the structured and informal groups which previously provided an additional platform and opportunity to hear from our young people. The service celebrated a 'virtual' care leavers week inviting online cooking demonstrations and providing opportunities to 'meet the managers' and young people rising 16 years to learn about the Leaving Care service and breakdown any barriers or misconceptions.

As the service returns to office bases safely we will be expanding both 'Meet the Managers' and induction to Leaving Care on a routine basis.

The service launched the first online survey seeking views and experiences of young people to inform how the service's continued improvement journey. The survey will close in December 2021; the impact will be analysed and will determine future use of the platform as means for young people to have their say.

6 PROGRESS

- 6.1 Following the Ofsted inspection, there has been the appointment of a Head of Service whom has the responsibility and oversight of the Care Leaving Service and, together with the Service Managers, produced an action and development plan for the Leaving Care Service.
- 6.2 Recruited to a fixed term team for a 12-month period, pending a review of the Service structure, consisting of a Team Manager, 2 Social Workers and 8 Personal Advisors to reduce caseloads for the substantive workforce.
- 6.3 The Leaving Care Service has developed and launch a number of guides and protocols as outlined below to aid and ensure consistency in practice for all our young people to promote their well-being and improve their outcomes: -
 - Leaving Care, Youth Homeless and Separated Migrant Children Practice Standards
 - Leaving Care Practice Guidance
 - Separated Migrant Children Protocol
 - Youth Homeless Protocol
- 6.4 The workforce has undergone training on 'what a good Pathway Plan looks like' to support them in developing Plans with young people in a consistent way
- 6.5 The workforce has undergone training on 'Age Assessments' for when working with Separated Migrant Children.
- 6.6 Twenty 'My Story' books have been developed to aid as a guide and template of 'what a good My Story book looks like' for the workforce, from Children's Social Work Teams to refer to when beginning to develop My Story Book's for the young people they are working with and for the Leaving Care Service Personal Advisor's and Social Workers to further develop as young people join the Leaving Care Service.
- 6.7 Team Managers and Practice Supervisors have undergone training on Bradford's internal Performance dashboard (Power BI) to enable them to identify areas of poor practice to focus on through Team Meetings and 1-1 coaching. Weekly performance meetings take place to monitor targets against KPI's
- 6.8 Embedded 1-1 coaching between Practice Supervisors with Social Workers and between the Practice Supervisors and Personal Advisors as well as monthly group reflective supervisions to undertake critical and analytic discussions and focus on areas of individual learning.
- 6.9 Head of Service, Service Managers, Team Managers and Practice Supervisors are undertaking regular DiP Sampling activities to evidence that the Practice Standards and Practice Guidance are fully embedded within the Service and that our young people are receiving a consistent service. Any themes of inconsistent practice are being picked up and used to develop direct training in these areas with the workforce. Inadequate outcome cases are escalated to HoS with a meeting being held to review actions and aid learning and improvement.

6.10 Improved management grip by

- The Team Manager placing a management analysis on the young person's file when they have reviewed and approved an Assessment and or plan, ensuring the child/young person has been seen and contributed.
- Completing one Practice Observation of either a Home Visit, Meeting or Attendance Panel, once every 6 months
- Service Managers observing 1 Supervision session per Team Manager every 6 months (excluding personal aspect, unless agreed)
- Team Managers meeting weekly with Practice Supervisors to explore pressures or issues for the Team
- Team Managers adding a 'Management Oversight' to a case if they have had a case discussion. The Management Footprint will stretch beyond Supervision.
- Team Managers having a case discussion and adding a Management Oversight to all cases when they have been open for 6 months, 9 months, one year and each 3 months thereafter. The Management Oversight will record the intervention and support needed for families to progress the case within agreed timescales
- Team Managers setting clear timescales, monitoring progress and supporting workers to complete identified tasks.
- Team Managers actively challenging workers when deadlines are frequently missed

6.11 Identified the learning needs of the workforce to aid the development of a bespoke mandatory training plan that will cover all areas as outlined below to build on Social Workers / Personal Advisors knowledge, experience and skills and give them confidence to assess risk and develop plans for children: -

- Pathway Plan Training (regular on evolve)
- Life Story Work with focus on 16+ and separated migrant children
- Bespoke training understanding risk
- Public and Private Law Outline
- Child Care Law
- DoLs
- Age Assessment Training (routine on-going cycle)
- Triple Planning Training
- Section 20 – duties and responsibilities
- Homelessness
- Restorative Practice
- TACT about language and Social Care
- Domestic Abuse / information around on injunctions, non-mol etc
- Young people's mental health and relationships
- Trauma
- Human Rights Assessment
- Safeguarding Adults level 1 – an introduction and Safeguarding Adults 2 – part 1 and part 2
- Mental Capacity Act

6.12 Developed a Terms of Reference for the Education, Employment and Training Group.

6.13 Strengthened partnership working with Virtual Schools.

- 6.14 Undertook a review of current PEP's (aged 16 to 18) and ensured they capture aspirations and educational support needs for young people and made recommendations of improvements linked into Ofsted's findings
- 6.15 Set up sessions for young people, weekly on Monday's, to provide Care Leavers with Careers and Options Advice through employing / accessing a Specialist Worker
- 6.16 Reviewed the 'Smooth it Out Group' who work with young people from aged 15 and 16 year olds in delivering 'My Home' with an outcome of it being an excellent service for our young people leaving care.
- 6.17 Gain the views of our young people on the service we offer them through survey which identified areas that we are doing well and are committed to build on and identified areas of further need for improvement.
- 6.18 Secured an additional 4 more placements options for Separated Migrant Children.
- 6.19 Identified what IT equipment Care Leavers have and provided those who are without any devices with the devices they need.
- 6.20 Appointed to the (interim) position of Homeless Prevention Personal Adviser to develop partnership working and sustainable pathways to prevent the need for homeless assessments, improve release planning from custody and ensure young people are supported to move into suitable independent accommodation from the offset.

7 NEXT STEPS

- 7.1 Review the current workforce structure and Job Profiles within the Care Leaving Service to determine whether fit for purpose and produce an options paper on structure(s) moving forward with recommendations and financial ask (if required) to take to DMT for decision.
- 7.2 Develop and deliver the identified bespoke mandatory training package to the workforce and form as part of induction for new members that join the Service.
- 7.3 Engage in the Participation Framework and Strategy working group to form future engagement avenues with children and young people.
- 7.4 Produce EET Priority Action Plan for Care Leavers.
- 7.5 Research and apply for available funds open for application that can be co-ordinated and completed through the EET Group for Care Leavers.
- 7.6 Review the financial officer available for Care Leavers attending University and develop financial policy.
- 7.7 Produce Guidance for staff on how they should provide support to Care Leavers accessing and attending Universities.
- 7.8 Review 'Staying Put provision through Task and Finish Group, will cover all the above – include PC and Fostering Service.
- 7.9 Develop training for Foster Carer's with the 'Smooth it Out Group'.
- 7.10 Induction, support and information package for Care Leavers.

- 7.11 Identify links into Sixth Forms and Colleges to be part of the launch and awareness campaign for Youth Homeless.
- 7.12 Develop an end of Service Survey for Care Leavers.
- 7.13 Develop web content for all parts of the service.
- 7.14 The Deputy Director, Children's Social Care and Head of Service for Leaving Care will be responsible for ensuring that the authority meets the requirements set out in all the Acts within 1.1. The Head of Service will be responsible for producing the Care Leavers Annual Report and overseeing the implementation of identified improvements and actions.



Report of the Director of Children's Services to the meeting of Corporate Parenting Panel to be held on 26 January 2022.

Subject:

F

Corporate Parenting Terms of Reference

Summary statement:

Corporate Parenting Terms of Reference to inform members and the public the vision and purpose of the Corporate Parenting Panel.

EQUALITY & DIVERSITY:

There are no equality or diversity issues arising this is a terms of reference for the panel.

Marium Haque
Interim Strategic Director
Children's Services

Portfolio:

Children and Families

Report Contact: Philip Segurola
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Overview & Scrutiny Area:

Children's Services

1. SUMMARY

The Corporate Parenting Panel has a duty as corporate parents to our children and young people who are in the care of the local authority and those leaving care. The Corporate Parenting Panel needs to set out clearly their vision and purpose which are outlined within the Terms of Reference.

2. BACKGROUND

Children's Social Care were judged as inadequate by Ofsted in September 2018. During a monitoring visit in February 2020, Ofsted stated: -

- The Corporate Parenting Board meets regularly and has a well-established link to the Children in Care Council, which regularly challenges them to do better for children.
- Corporate Parenting is being refreshed with new priorities for supporting Children in Care more effectively and a focus on improving wider Children's participation.

The purpose of this Draft Corporate Parenting Terms of Reference is on the promise of the second statement in terms of refreshing priorities to set out clearly the purpose and function of the Corporate Parenting Panel.

3. OTHER CONSIDERATIONS

Not applicable

4. FINANCIAL & RESOURCE APPRAISAL

Not applicable

5. RISK MANAGEMENT AND GOVERNANCE ISSUES

Not applicable

6. LEGAL APPRAISAL

Not applicable

7. OTHER IMPLICATIONS

7.1 SUSTAINABILITY IMPLICATIONS

Not applicable

7.2 GREENHOUSE GAS EMISSIONS IMPACTS

Not applicable

7.3 COMMUNITY SAFETY IMPLICATIONS

Not applicable

7.4 HUMAN RIGHTS ACT

Not applicable

7.5 TRADE UNION

Not applicable

7.6 WARD IMPLICATIONS

Not applicable

7.7 AREA COMMITTEE ACTION PLAN IMPLICATIONS (for reports to Area Committees only)

Not applicable

7.8 IMPLICATIONS FOR CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE

The Corporate Parenting Terms of Reference will set out clearly the vision and purpose of the Corporate Parenting Panel.

7.9 ISSUES ARISING FROM PRIVACY IMPACT ASSESMENT

There are no identifiable factors within this report or presenting paper.

8. NOT FOR PUBLICATION DOCUMENTS

The document can be made public.

9. OPTIONS

- Agree to the proposed Terms of Defence Presented.
- Suggest edits and additions.

10. RECOMMENDATIONS

The views of the Corporate Parenting Panel on the options set out in Section 9 of this report are requested.

11. APPENDICES

Draft Corporate Parenting Terms of Reference.

12. BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS

Not applicable.

CORPORATE PARENTING PANEL

Terms of Reference

Vision

The Corporate Parenting Panel is designed to provide the necessary leadership that drives an ambitious and multiagency approach to improving outcomes for our children in care and care leavers. Our desire to provide our children and young people with everything they need that a good parent would naturally want for their own children is set out in The Bradford Corporate Parenting Strategy for children looked after and young people leaving care. We want our children and young people to work with us, along with their parents and carers, in shaping how we manage and organise the 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 their learning opportunities and for them to participate in the decisions affecting their care and their lives. We want their transition to adulthood to be as smooth as possible with continuity of support, access to good jobs and higher education, while living in good housing and being financially secure. Our strategy invites us to work together with common purpose, putting our looked after children at the heart of everything we do.

Purpose of Corporate Parenting Panel

- To raise awareness of the Council's corporate parenting responsibilities and develop expertise and knowledge among elected Members and officers.
- To provide a forum for elected members to oversee the implementation of the Corporate Parenting Strategy and the progress of all looked after children.
- To ensure that all looked after children and young people have a positive experience and that the strategy enhances their outcomes
- To encourage all partners, whether they work for the police, health, education, social care services or the voluntary sector, to work in an integrated manner in the best interests of looked after children and care leavers;
- To lead cultural and behavioural change to promote better outcomes for looked after children and care leavers;
- To hold all partners to account for their role in the delivery of services to looked after children and care leavers.

Bradford Corporate Parenting Panel will:

- Provide leadership across the city to create a more effective and efficient health and wellbeing for looked after children and care leavers;
- Work with members of the councils Executive to develop policy and services relevant to children in care and care leavers.
- Take responsibility for the quality of services for looked after children and care leavers.
- Establish a Working Group, accountable to the Corporate Parenting Panel, to act as the Governing body for the Virtual school.
- Will establish subgroups to support the work of the panel as deemed necessary.
- Work effectively with and through partnership bodies, with clear lines of accountability and communication;

- Share expertise and intelligence and use this synergy to provide creative solutions to complex issues;
- Agree the strategic priorities for services for looked after children and care leavers
- Make a positive difference, improving the outcomes for all looked after children and care leavers.

Support to the Panel

- Governance support to the Corporate Parenting Panel will be provided by Committee Secretariat. Childrens Services will attend meetings and publishing minutes of each meeting.
- A Committee Services Officer will be responsible for organising meetings, publishing agenda papers and minutes of each meeting.
- An Officer from Children's Services will be responsible for capturing actions from the minutes and tracking progress to report into future Corporate Parenting Panels.
- This Committee Officer will advise the Panel on constitutional procedures where necessary.
- Technical support in preparing reports for the Panel and giving advice to the Panel in relation to looked after children and care leavers will be provided by the Directorate of Childrens Services.

Details

1. Name

- 1.1 The Panel will be known as the Bradford Corporate Parenting Panel

2. Membership

- 2.1 The Membership of the Panel will consist of up to 12 Members.

Members must be drawn from:

- The Executive Member and portfolio holder for Childrens and Families.
- 4 Elected Members proportionate to controlling party and other ratios
- Senior Health representative
- Senior Police Officer
- Foster Care representative
- Virtual School Head Teacher

The Panel will also have the power to co-opt 3 Members in a non-voting capacity.

3. Constitutional Status

- 3.1 The Corporate Parenting Panel is established in the Council's Constitution and as such will adhere to its constitutional rules around the convening of meetings and publication of business.

4. Quorum

- 4.1 The Quorum shall be 3members.

5. Chair

5.1 The Chair shall be the Executive Member and portfolio holder for children and families. Both the Chair and the Vice-Chair of the Panel shall be determined by the Regulatory and Appeals Committee.

5.2 In the absence of the Chair the Vice-Chair shall chair the meeting.

6. Frequency of Meetings

6.1 The Panel shall meet no less often than six times a year.

7. Conduct

7.1 The Panel and its members will operate in accordance with the standards of behaviour and principles required by the Council's Code of Conduct and Bradford Behaviours, which applies to both councillors and any person appointed as a co-opted member to a Panel or committee of the Council.

DRAFT 13th Jan

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Report of the Director of Children's Services to the meeting of Corporate Parenting Panel to be held on 26 January 2021

Subject:

G

Proposals for Corporate Parenting Panel

Summary statement:

This paper outlines proposals for the operation of Corporate Parenting Panel in 2022.

EQUALITY & DIVERSITY:

No issues identified

Marium Haque
Interim Strategic Director
Children's Services

Portfolio:

Children and Families

Report Contact: Philip Segurola
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Overview & Scrutiny Area:

Children's Services

1. SUMMARY

The attached paper outlines proposals for the operation of the corporate Parenting panel over the course of 2022.

2. BACKGROUND

This paper follows on from the discussion held at Corporate Parenting Panel on 24 November 2021.

3. OTHER CONSIDERATIONS

None Identified.

4. FINANCIAL & RESOURCE APPRAISAL

None Identified.

5. RISK MANAGEMENT AND GOVERNANCE ISSUES

None Identified.

6. LEGAL APPRAISAL

None Identified.

7. OTHER IMPLICATIONS

7.1 SUSTAINABILITY IMPLICATIONS

None Identified.

7.2 GREENHOUSE GAS EMISSIONS IMPACTS

None Identified.

7.3 COMMUNITY SAFETY IMPLICATIONS

None Identified.

7.4 HUMAN RIGHTS ACT

None Identified.

7.5 TRADE UNION

None Identified.

7.6 WARD IMPLICATIONS

None Identified.

**7.7 AREA COMMITTEE ACTION PLAN IMPLICATIONS
(for reports to Area Committees only)**

None Identified.

7.8 IMPLICATIONS FOR CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE

None Identified

7.9 ISSUES ARISING FROM PRIVACY IMPACT ASSESMENT

None identified

8. NOT FOR PUBLICATION DOCUMENTS

None

9. OPTIONS

None

10. RECOMMENDATIONS

Members are asked to consider and agree to the proposals

11. APPENDICES

Corporate Parenting Panel proposal.

12. BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS

None

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Corporate Parenting Panel Proposal

Overview

The aim of this document is to outline a proposal for the forward operation of the Corporate Parenting Panel with particular regard to the participation of care experienced children and young people. It is envisaged that there will be eight meetings of the panel over the course of 2022 with an alternation between more formal committee based meetings and meetings which are young person led. These young person led meetings will be staged at different venues across the district to ensure inclusivity across the area as a whole.

In structuring the business of Corporate Parenting Panel in this way it is hoped that a level of flexibility can be achieved that allows for panel members to have oversight of key statutory reports whilst allowing for a thematic focus on specific issues with the use of co-opted champions where appropriate. The role of the governing body for the virtual school will also need to be integrated into the matrix of accountabilities.

A forward plan will be put in place that tracks the year ahead and identifies the points in the year where Corporate Parenting Panel will receive statutory reports such as the annual report of the virtual school, and the annual reports of the fostering and adoption services. This more formal element of agenda planning will be intertwined with the young person led agenda setting that will arise from the meetings that are led by them. The intention is to develop a dynamic dialogue between the operations of the panel and panel members and our children in care and care leavers with a co-production approach to the programme of work undertaken.

The young person led meetings will not be restricted to members of the children in care council but will be open forums to encourage a broad breadth of engagement across age bands.

The involvement of care experienced children and young people

Rationale

As noted in the Ofsted 'Monitoring visit to Bradford children's services' report dated 22/10/2021 "Corporate parenting is underdeveloped and has lacked a proactive approach to advocacy and challenge on behalf of children and young people. Young people told inspectors that their involvement with, and influence on, their corporate parents has been limited, as they have not felt able to fully engage on an equal basis with adults in formal meetings."

This has resulted in the disenfranchisement of children and young people in care. They are left feeling their input is ineffectual and "at the bottom of the chain".

Aim

To increase the safe and effective participation of children and young people in the Corporate Parenting Panels and to create a sustainable means of dialogue between young people and their corporate parents.

Briefly this will be achieved by a remodelling of the corporate parenting panels as outlined below.

- Corporate parenting panels will be held regularly throughout the year with at least four being designed and led by children and young people.
- The aim will be to host each of these four meetings in a different locality within the Bradford district.
- Each meeting will address 2-3 topics / themes. Consideration will be given to age and developmental stage suitability.
- A process for deciding upon the agendas for these meetings will be developed, so that all participants are aware of the topics to be discussed in advance. For example, Entitlements, criminalisation of young people, family time and access to further and higher education.
- Corporate parenting panels will be run informally and a range of refreshments will be provided which are more suitable to the palettes of young people – they will decide this.
- Feedback on the sessions will be provided in a timely manner. Issues raised may be addressed in a 'you said, we did' format, with attached timescales for completion.
- It is envisioned that any revision to the children in care council and care leavers council will be made with an eye to more effectively feeding into the corporate parenting panels.
- Formats of the individual panel meetings will be dependent on age range of children and young people, themes and the location. For example; some may be discussion based others may be more physical and arts and crafts.
- To have an effective and sustainable means of dialogue, the CPP members will join these Children in Care and Care Leaver led sessions. Members will be actively encouraged to get to know the children and young people.
- Annual celebration events for children and young people will be supported practically by the council and elected members.
- Annual report of a 'you said, we did' to be presented to the children and young people who access the Children in Care and Care Leavers sessions, so they can evaluate progress and commitment to corporate parenting

Areas for consideration

- Many of the children and young people who will be involved in facilitating these corporate parenting panels will have experienced trauma which may affect their interactions and ability to form trusting relationships. Key themes of trauma informed practice will be shared with elected members as part of the corporate parenting training that is being developed.
- We need to put mechanisms in place to ensure that outcomes and decisions from Corporate Parenting Panel are made available in an accessible format for children and young people. As an example, the minutes from the four Corporate Parenting Panel

Minutes where the children and young people take the lead, could be published in a newsletter and sent out quarterly. The newsletter could form part of the 'you said, we did' offer. Giving an opportunity for the children and young people to have their say through a designated email address to reply.

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Report of the Director of Children's Services to the meeting of Corporate Parenting Panel to be held on 26 January 2021

Subject:

H

Consultation Feedback

Summary statement:

Discussion on feedback event to consultation group.

EQUALITY & DIVERSITY:

No issues identified

Marium Haque
Interim Strategic Director
Children's Services

Portfolio:

Children and Families

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Overview & Scrutiny Area:

Children's Services

1. SUMMARY

Opportunity for members to discuss and comment upon consultation feedback event.

2. BACKGROUND

A feedback event has been held this month to follow up on the issues identified by a consultation group in the summer of 2021.

3. OTHER CONSIDERATIONS

None Identified

4. FINANCIAL & RESOURCE APPRAISAL

None Identified

5. RISK MANAGEMENT AND GOVERNANCE ISSUES

None Identified

6. LEGAL APPRAISAL

None Identified

7. OTHER IMPLICATIONS

7.1 SUSTAINABILITY IMPLICATIONS

None Identified

7.2 GREENHOUSE GAS EMISSIONS IMPACTS

None Identified

7.3 COMMUNITY SAFETY IMPLICATIONS

None Identified

7.4 HUMAN RIGHTS ACT

None Identified

7.5 TRADE UNION

None Identified

7.6 WARD IMPLICATIONS

None Identified

**7.7 AREA COMMITTEE ACTION PLAN IMPLICATIONS
(for reports to Area Committees only)**

None Identified

7.8 IMPLICATIONS FOR CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE

Discussion to form and develop ongoing consultation with young people for 2022.

7.9 ISSUES ARISING FROM PRIVACY IMPACT ASSESMENT

None Identified

8. NOT FOR PUBLICATION DOCUMENTS

None

9. OPTIONS

None

10. RECOMMENDATIONS

None

11. APPENDICES

Summary of consultation themes.

12. BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS

None

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Corporate Parenting Development Areas - consultation

Please see below some of the initial areas for the comprehensive development of a new approach to Corporate Parenting, some of these areas have been included as they have been identified directly with children in care, care leavers, children in care council, foster carers and social work staff. Others are identified via Corporate Parenting examples from good and outstanding LA's, they are linked to portfolio areas though there will be some cross over. It is envisaged that members of Corporate Parenting Panel will also become more active in driving change by linking with Exec members to develop the areas below, they (panel members) would be expected to report their progress back to Corporate Parenting Panel to be recorded in the minutes, this is in addition to Corporate Parenting being driven through each of the directorates by the CEO.

It is essential that we are able to report back to children, young people and carers at the regular feedback and consultation sessions as they have raised the need for these improvements and have complained that they repeatedly raise issues but they are not acted upon.

We need to get to a position where any changes to policy relating to Children Looked After goes through consultation with those with lived, living and caring experience prior to changes being made.

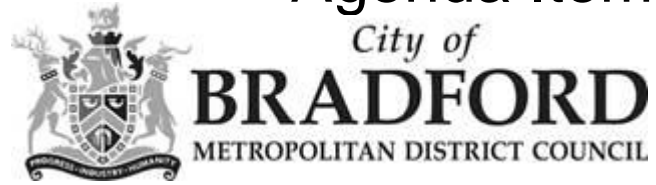
This proposal includes Exec members acting as a champions and drivers for the areas below, as mentors for a CLA and also attending Corporate Parenting periodically relevant to the portfolio areas

Education, Employment and Skills	Regeneration, Planning and Transport	Neighbourhoods and Community Safety	Healthy People and Places	Corporate	Children and Families
<p>Children Looked After Education Policy areas:</p> <p>Children looked after school policy e.g.? Have we developed a Looked after policy /offer in conjunction with our schools? Sometimes referred to as Care Aware school policy, that involves coordinated low profile support that doesn't make the child or young person feel different or stand</p>	<p>Children Looked After Housing Policy areas e.g. Leaving care accommodation – local and regional partners brought together to develop a regional offer.</p> <p>Childrens Homes estate review.</p> <p>Local Housing based on the right environment considering the</p>	<p>Children Looked After: CSE and CCE development work. Neighbourhood Policy: e.g. Coordinator / Ward Officer communication with children's homes, foster carers and care leavers with regular area information about activities and support that can be accessed in and across wards.</p>	<p>Children Looked After Sports and Culture Offer E.g. Free access to sports and cultural opportunities for a looked after young person and a friend sometimes called a Plus one card.</p> <p>Free access to sports and activities coaching to encourage / build on aspirations and skills</p>	<p>Children Looked After Policies to include: Council Tax Local and regional exemption e.g. does is their local exemption transferable if they move to a neighbouring authority?</p> <p>Local Authority Employment Policy to identify vacancy opportunities ring-</p>	<p>Children Looked After Policies; Comprehensive Corporate Parenting, Sufficiency Strategy and Foster Care strategy</p>

<p>out, and includes attendance support and celebration, outside and after school activities and classes e.g. drama, dance, music etc.</p> <p>Virtual School Head teacher progress in relation to their enhanced strategic role and connection Social Care and the development of the above where it doesn't exist already</p> <p>Are Personal Education Plans up to date and reflecting the voice of the child.</p>	<p>importance of relationships, and not based on first accommodation available.</p> <p>Involvement in the suitability of the environment and quality of hostels / houses of multiple occupation.</p> <p>Accommodation for young people returning from University in holiday periods</p>	<p>Links with housing providers and area offices when care leavers move into the area, where they can go for support / Keeping in touch once in independent living.</p>	<p>e.g. higher ability swimming clubs etc.</p> <p>Holiday activity offer?</p>	<p>fenced to Young Care leavers. Ensure that Care Leavers are guaranteed an interview if they meet the essential specification criteria,</p> <p>Include Care Leavers as a protected characteristic.</p>	
<p>Aspiration Bradford, could a specific Children Looked After Offer be developed. E.g. Work taster experience /opportunities</p> <p>Develop employment Offers with LA commercial partners</p>	<p>Transport - bus passes, bike hire for Children Looked After</p>	<p>Youth Work links with CLA, Homes, Foster Carers and Adoption carers.</p>	<p>Over 25s CLA continued support e.g. mental / emotional support.</p>	<p>Development of the role of young mayor and reinstatement of take over days,</p>	<p>Voice and Influence throughout CSC.</p> <p>Advocacy and engagement strategy</p> <p>Young Assessor development?</p> <p>Communication App</p>

for Children Looked After					
A specific Children Looked After Apprenticeship for developed.		Neighbourhood planning / area committee activity and planning for Looked After Children	On line emotional health support system / tool/ development or tap into existing model/ app.	Development of a comprehensive Entitlement APP,	Section 44 visits, Unregulated, Private accommodation and contracting. Member pledges Member engagement in local Childrens home activity. Members as Children Looked After Champions in all areas. Members and Foster Care Ward Forums.
Classes in Cooking, independent living, managing a budget		Information and advice and Care leavers has this been considered the information available e.g. rights based information.		Consider the appointment of a young Care Leaver to work alongside Childrens DCS.	CLA holidays, Foster and residential care.

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Report of the Assistant Director Schools to the meeting of Corporate Parenting Panel to be held on 26 January 2022

Subject:

I

Governing Body for the Virtual School for Looked After Children.

Summary statement:

Recommended Terms of Reference and membership of a Working Group of the Corporate Parenting Panel to act as the Governing Body of the Virtual School for Looked After Children

EQUALITY & DIVERSITY:

There are no equality or diversity issues arising from the proposed Terms of Reference.

The aim of the proposed membership is to secure wide representation on the Governing Body of the Virtual School for Looked After Children.

Sue Lowndes
Assistant Director Schools

Portfolio:

Children and Families

Report Contact: Jonathan Cooper
Head of Bradford Virtual School for
Looked After Children
Phone: (01274) 436 401
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Overview & Scrutiny Area:

Children's Services

1. SUMMARY

The Corporate Parenting Panel agreed on 24 November 2021 that a Governing Body should be established for the Virtual School.

The Corporate Parenting Panel is invited to:

- establish a working group to act as the Governing Body of the Virtual School; and
- agree the Terms of Reference and membership (*below*)

2. BACKGROUND

The Virtual School plays a strategic role in making sure the Corporate Parenting responsibilities of the Council, with regard to the education of looked after children, are met. The aims of the school are to promote achievement, raise attainment and ensure equality of opportunity to enhance the life chances of all looked after children wherever they live.

Oversight of the Virtual School was previously governed by a Management Committee.

On 22 December 2021 the Clerk to the Corporate Parenting Panel was commissioned by the Deputy Chair to:

- Research and liaise with the School Governor Service on how Virtual School Governing Bodies are constituted in other LAs, specifically including how they function in their relationship with their Corporate Parenting Panels e.g. sub group, themed meeting etc.
- Liaise with the Head of the Virtual School as required.
- Make recommendations to the Chair and Deputy Chair of the Corporate Parenting Panel on the setting up of a Governing Body for the Virtual School and operating options.

There is no common model for the governance of Virtual Schools. An internet review of ten Virtual School “Governing Bodies” across England indicates that, in some cases, the CPP itself is the Governing Body; more often the Governing Body is a sub-committee of the CPP, with or without a majority of governors being CPP members; and some are more autonomous, with only one governor being a CPP member.

The recommendations in this Report were informed by:

- The National Association of Virtual School Headteachers (NAVSH) Virtual School Handbook 2018
- Telephone conversations with:
 - The Head of the Virtual School
 - A National Governance Association (NGA) adviser with experience of establishing the Governing Body of the Birmingham City Council Virtual School
- Advice from the Bradford Council’s School Governor Service, including two sets of potential Terms of Reference.
- An internet trawl of Virtual School Governing Bodies.

- Ofsted report: *The impact of Virtual Schools on the educational progress of Looked After Children*, October 2012

3. OTHER CONSIDERATIONS

None.

4. FINANCIAL AND RESOURCE APPRAISAL

There are no direct financial implications arising from this report.

5. RISK MANAGEMENT AND GOVERNANCE ISSUES

The Corporate Parenting Panel undertake the role of the Regulatory and Appeals Committee to oversee the corporate parent responsibilities of the Council for looked after children.

There are no significant risks arising out of the implementation of the proposed recommendations.

6. LEGAL APPRAISAL

Local authorities have a duty under the Children Act 1989 to safeguard and promote the welfare of a child looked after by them. This includes a specific duty to promote the child's educational achievement, wherever they live or are educated.

Local authorities also have a duty under section 23ZZA of the Children Act 1989 (inserted by section 4 of the Children and Social Work Act 2017) to promote the educational achievement of previously looked-after children in their area by providing information and advice to any person that has parental responsibility for the child; providers of funded early years education; designated teachers for previously looked-after children in maintained schools and academies; and any other person the authority considers appropriate for promoting the educational achievement of relevant children.

The role of virtual schools within local authorities has been further extended from September 2021. Local authorities will receive funding to resource Virtual School Heads to work with schools, colleges and social care leaders to create a culture of high aspirations that helps all children with social workers to make educational progress.

A local authority has a general power in respect of discretionary committees to delegate any of its functions (except with respect to levying, or issuing a precept for, a rate) to a sub-committee; and a discretionary committee may, unless the authority otherwise directs, itself delegate any of its functions to its sub-committees; and, in turn, a sub-committee may unless otherwise directed delegate any of its functions to an officer. It can also set up working or task groups provided it makes clear its intention and there is no conferment of delegated powers.

7. OTHER IMPLICATIONS

7.1 SUSTAINABILITY IMPLICATIONS

None.

7.2 GREENHOUSE GAS EMISSIONS IMPACT

None.

7.3 COMMUNITY SAFETY IMPLICATIONS

None.

7.4 HUMAN RIGHTS ACT

None.

7.5 TRADE UNION

None.

7.6 WARD IMPLICATIONS

None.

7.7 AREA COMMITTEE ACTION PLAN IMPLICATIONS

None.

7.8 IMPLICATIONS FOR CHILDREN AND FAMILIES

Strengthening of oversight by the Corporate Parenting Panel of the Virtual School for Looked After Children.

7.9 ISSUES ARISING FROM PRIVACY IMPACT ASSESSMENT

There are no identifiable factors within this report or presenting paper.

8. NOT FOR PUBLICATION DOCUMENTS

None.

9. OPTIONS

The four options:

- A. Establish the Corporate Parenting Panel (CPP) as the Governing Body of the Virtual School.
- B. Establish a sub-committee of the CPP as the Governing Body of the Virtual School
- C. Establish a working group to act as the Governing Body of the Virtual School
- D. Establish a stand-alone Governing Body for the Virtual School

Option C is recommended to the Corporate Parenting Panel to enable wide stakeholder participation including, but not restricted to, CPP members and without the constraints of formal sub-committees

10. RECOMMENDATIONS

That the Corporate Parenting Panel agree to establish a working group to act as the Governing Body of the Virtual School and to the proposed Terms of Reference and membership set out at Appendix A.

11. APPENDICES

A Draft Terms of Reference for the Governing Body of the Virtual School

12. BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS

N/A

Bradford Virtual School for Looked After Children Governing Body Terms of Reference

The aim of Bradford Virtual School (VS) is to promote and champion the educational Attainment and Achievement of all Looked After Children across the Local Authority including those children and young people placed out of authority.

The Bradford Council Corporate Parenting Panel is responsible for the governance of the Bradford Virtual School. The Governing Body of the Virtual School is a working group of the Corporate Parenting Panel.

These terms of reference provide a framework which will enable the Corporate Parenting Panel to provide clear leadership to meet the needs of Looked After Children (LAC).

The document is divided into 3 sections:

1 Governance

The name of the school is the Bradford Virtual School for Looked After Children

The Virtual School Governing Body shall consist of:

- Representative(s) of the Corporate Parenting Panel (including elected members and, where possible, the Chair or Vice Chair of CPP and in compliance with S15. of the Local Government & Housing Act 1989 from a list of the members appointed by the Regulatory and Appeals Committee)
- Senior Leadership level representatives of:
 - Children's Social Services
 - Education Safeguarding service
 - Education Psychology service
 - Health Service
 - Looked After Children / Recent care leavers [*For consideration: The Head of the Virtual School strongly recommends that LAC/Care Leavers determine whether and how they wish to be represented: this should not be seen as compulsory.*]
 - Foster or adoptive carer(s)
 - A special school
 - A primary school
 - A secondary school

These senior leadership level representatives shall be appointed by the Governing Body with the assent of the Corporate Parenting Panel.

- the Virtual School Head [*For consideration: The National Governance Association recommends that the school executive should not be represented on GBs, the function of which is to hold the executive to account.*]

2 Terms of Reference

The Governing Body of the Bradford Virtual School for Looked After Children will:

- (i) champion the educational needs of Looked After Children wherever they are placed and educated;
- (ii) approve the process used by the Virtual School Head to set internal targets for pupil attainment and progress;
- (iii) support and challenge the outcomes, priorities and key actions of the Virtual School including its development plan;
- (iv) ensure that strategic policies and practice enhance educational outcomes for Looked After Children, which includes the allocation of resources;
- (v) promote interagency working with representation from key areas to break down barriers between professionals and the barriers to learning for Looked After Children;
- (vi) monitor, support and challenge outcomes for Looked After Children and at key reporting points;
- (vii) ensure robust data systems are in place to monitor attendance, progress, achievement and exclusion of Looked After Children;
- (viii) ensure that Pupil Premium Plus spending for Looked After Children, both the proportion distributed to schools and the proportion retained centrally by the Virtual School, is effective and linked to outcomes;
- (ix) receive and comment on the annual report to the Corporate Director, Children's Services, on the progress of children in care and the work of the LAC Virtual School;
- (x) review the governance of the Virtual School; and
- (xi) advocate on behalf of Looked After Children and care leavers

3 Procedures

- (i) The Governing Body will meet at least once each School term.
- (ii) The quorum for a meeting will be 50% of the number of governors in post.
- (iii) The Corporate Parenting Panel shall appoint the Chair and Vice Chair of the Governing Body. The Chair shall be a member of the Corporate Parenting Panel.
- (iv) Every question to be decided at a meeting of the Governing Body shall be determined by a majority of the votes of the governors present and voting on the question.
- (v) Where there is an equal division of votes the Chair or, as the case may be, the person who is acting as Chair for the purposes of the meeting (provided that such a person is a member of the Governing Body), shall have a second or casting vote.
- (vi) The Chair, in agreement with the Chair of the Corporate Parenting Panel, shall have power to exercise any function of the Governing Body where a delay¹ in exercising that function would be likely to be seriously detrimental to the interest of:
 - (a) the School;
 - (b) any pupil of the School, or their parent/carer; or
 - (c) a person who works at the School

¹ "delay" means delay for a period extending beyond the earliest date on which it would be reasonably practicable for a meeting of the Governing Body to be held.

and it is not possible to arrange a meeting of the Governing Body to deal with that matter in a timely manner, and the action and the reasons for the action are reported to the Governing Body at its next meeting.

- (vii) The Governing Body shall appoint a Clerk to the Governing Body.
- (viii) The Clerk shall give written notice of the meeting, a copy of the agenda for the meeting and any reports or other papers to be considered at the meeting at least seven clear days in advance to each member.
- (ix) The Clerk shall ensure that the minutes of the proceedings of a meeting of the Governing Body are drawn up and signed (subject to the approval of the Governing Body) by the Chair of the next meeting.
- (x) The signed minutes of meetings shall be circulated to all members of the Corporate Parenting Panel. The Chair of the Governing Body shall answer any questions concerning the minutes at the next meeting of the Corporate Parenting Panel.
- (xi) Items that are deemed to be confidential by the Governing Body shall be recorded as a separate confidential minute and reported orally at the next Corporate Parenting Panel meeting by the Chair of the Governing Body, as required.
- (xii) The Governing Body shall, as soon as reasonably practicable, make available for inspection by any interested person a copy of:
 - (a) the agenda for every meeting;
 - (b) the signed minutes of every such meeting; and
 - (c) any report or other paper considered at any such meeting.
- (xiii) The Governing Body may exclude from items required to be made available any material relating to:
 - (a) a named person who works, or who it is proposed should work, for the Virtual School Service; or
 - (b) a named pupil or looked after child; or
 - (c) any other matter that by reason of its nature the Governing Body is satisfied should remain confidential.
- (xiv) Where:
 - (a) in relation to any matter there may be a conflict between the interests of a Governor and the interest of the Governing Body;
 - (b) a fair hearing is required and there is any reasonable doubt about a Governor's ability to act impartially in relation to any matter; or
 - (c) a relevant person has a pecuniary interest in any matter;that person, if present at the meeting of the Virtual School at which the matter is the subject of consideration, shall disclose their interest, withdraw from the meeting and not vote on the matter in question.

Agreed by the Corporate Parenting Panel on