

# Corporate Parenting Strategy

“As if this were my child”

Leicester City Council  
2014-2016

## **INTRODUCTION**

As corporate parents in Leicester City Council it is our responsibility to ensure that looked after children get the best experiences in life, from excellent parenting which promotes good health and educational attainment to a wide range of opportunities to develop their talents and skills in order to have an enjoyable childhood and successful adult life. Stable placements, good health and support during transition are all essential elements, but children will only achieve their potential through the ambition and high expectation of all those involved in their lives.

### **The Objectives of the Corporate Parenting Strategy**

The overall aim of the strategy is to ensure the corporate responsibility of the whole council and partner agencies to looked after children through the corporate parenting arrangements and governance. Leicester City Council has a strong track record as a corporate parent and this strategy builds on this so that the council can become an outstanding corporate parent.

This strategy applies to those with a vested interest or professional responsibility in supporting and improving the lives of looked after children and care leavers.

The principles of 'as if they were my own child' underpins this strategy and therefore the objectives of this strategy is to ensure that the whole Council and partner agencies work together towards a ensuring better outcomes for looked after children and care leavers. This can only be realised if all stakeholders work together in collaboration with a common purpose and ambition.

There is a responsibility on the Council and its partners to assess the contribution made to looked after children and care leavers and to enable the development of initiatives or services in meeting their needs within that service.

This strategy is governed by the Corporate Parenting Forum and applies to all employees, service and departments and has the oversight of all elected members.

### **Overarching Principles**

- At the heart the Leicester Corporate Parenting Strategy is the full participation, involvement and contribution of looked after children and young people and leaving care up to the age of 25 ;
- Excellent Corporate Parenting requires ownership and leadership at a senior level, including elected members; therefore councillors and officers must have a clear understanding and awareness of the issues for looked after children and care leavers so that they can ensure that their responsibilities as corporate parents are reflected in all aspects of the work of the Council;
- All services have mechanisms in place to continually monitor and review the contribution they make to looked after children and care leavers;
- The Corporate Parenting Strategy is promoted across the Council at a Member, Council, Department, Service and Individual level;
- The corporate parenting commitment is measurable through the improvement in life chances of looked after children and care leavers and these outcomes are reported to and quality assured by the Corporate Parenting Forum and Children in Care Council.

## **Looked After Children and Care Leavers**

The term 'looked after' refers to any child or young person for whom the authority has, or shares, parental responsibility, or for whom the authority provides care and accommodation to the child or young person on behalf of their parent. Leicester has between 520 and 550 LAC in their care at any one time. The majority of the children and young people need alternative care and accommodation because they are not able to live at home with parents. The term "child" can refer to any child or young person between 0-18 years.

The authority also has a duty and responsibility to those young people who leave their long term care after the age of 16 years until they reach the age of 21 years or up to the age of 25 if they are in higher education.

## **The Corporate Parenting Forum and the Children's Pledge**

The Corporate Parenting Forum has the responsibility of ensuring that we as a whole council are delivering the oversight of the corporate parenting agenda and is made up of senior officers from the council and partners, elected members and looked after young people and care leavers.

The Children's Pledge is a commitment from the Corporate Parenting Forum, partners and elected members to all our children and young people in and leaving our care. The Pledge has been developed in partnership with young people, the Children in Care Council, elected members and partners. The underlying principles are aimed at ensuring looked after children are safe, healthy, able to contribute to their local community, able to grow up in a stable environment, achieve and attain, have a voice and be best placed to reach their full potential as adults. The pledge underpins the quality assurance reporting to the Corporate Parenting Forum and subsequent priorities.

## **The role of every Council Department**

Every council department has a responsibility to ensure that all staff has an awareness of, and commitment to, the Corporate Parenting Strategy. Every council department will identify ways in which they can ensure they are meeting their corporate parenting responsibility through agreed actions. This includes consultation and participation of looked after children and care leavers. Each department will be held to account for how it's delivered against the Children's Pledge and report on progress and outcomes to the Corporate Parenting Forum in line with the forums forward plan.

## **Council Department Commitment**

City Mayor	Peter Soulsby
Deputy City Mayor	Cllr Rory Palmer
Assistant Mayor	Cllr Vi Dempster

Chief Operating Officer Andy Keeling

Director Housing	Ann Branson
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Strategic Director City Development & Neighbourhoods  
Frank Jordan

Director, Planning, Transportation & Economic Development	Andrew L Smith
Director City Centre	Sarah Harrison
Director Property	Mark Lloyd
Director Culture and Neighbourhood Services	Liz Blyth
Director Environmental and Enforcement Services	Frank Jordan (pending appointment)

Strategic Director Adult Social Care, and Health  
Deb Watson

Director Adult Social Care & Safeguarding	Ruth Lake
Director Care Services & Commissioning (ASC)	Tracie Rees
Divisional Director Public Health	Rod Moore

Interim Strategic Director Children's Services  
Elaine McHale

Director Children,	Andy Smith
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Young People and Families	
Learning, Quality and Performance	Margaret Liberi
Director Strategic Commissioning and Business Development	Carl Edwards

### Corporate Resources and Support

Director Finance	Alison Greenhill
Director Information & Customer Access	Jill Craig
Director, Delivery, Communications & Political Governance	Miranda Cannon
City Barrister & Head of Standards	Kamal Adatia

## **Definitions**

### **Children and young people**

Children and young people looked after and leaving care are defined as between the ages of 0 to 21, and up to 25 years if in higher education.

### **Participation**

Participation is the process of involving children and young people in decision making. Participation can happen in lots of different ways, for example, group discussions, questionnaires, individual conversations, art based projects and many more. All participation must influence what we do and how we do it as a local authority.

### **Consultation**

Consultation is the process of listening to and gathering children and young people's views. Consultation is seen as one method of participation, in involving children and young people in decision making.

### **Involvement**

Involvement is used describe any form of engagement with children and young people in Leicester participation and/or consultation activities.