

Corporate Parenting Board – discussion paper (Dec 2024)

“Looking after and protecting children and young people is one of the most important jobs that councils do and when a child, for whatever reason, can’t safely stay at home, it is up to us as the local authority to step in and give them the care, support and stability that they deserve. This isn’t just up to the lead member or director of children’s services – we need everyone looking out for our most vulnerable children and young people, and every councillor has a role to play. This pack aims to help them fulfil that role as effectively as possible.

Being a corporate parent means doing everything we can for every child in the council’s care – and every care leaver – to give them the opportunities that other children get. This covers everything from keeping an eye on their progress at school, to looking after their health and wellbeing, to preparing them for life as independent adults – and supporting them when they get there. We need to be ambitious for the children in our care, encouraging them to dream big and take chances even if they don’t feel like that’s been an option in the past.

It’s also about the smaller things that make life more fulfilling. It’s about making sure children receive birthday cards, are rewarded when they do well (and supported when they don’t), get to take part in the activities they enjoy and have new experiences. It’s about making sure someone’s on the end of a phone when a care leaver is having a hard day at work or university, or is there to help them navigate an application form. It’s about doing the things you’d do for your own children.” LGA Corporate Parent Resource Pack

It is really important that the Corporate Parenting Board understand from children and young people whether we are achieving the above.

The commitment from the members of our board is excellent however we think this is a good opportunity to review how we “do” the work of the board to ensure that we are being led by children and young people’s voices.

We currently have one formal meeting and one “Have your Say” meeting.

Questions to discuss:

- Do we feel that children and young people’s voice is driving our work as a board?
- How do we think we should be improving voice of children and young people?
- How do we balance “business” agenda items e.g data vs involving children/yp in our meetings?
- Our formal meeting meets in the council chamber – does that work?
- Would it be better to have themed meetings – would this enable us to invite wider partners to be involved in a specific area?