

Report

Report to:	Social Work Resources Committee
Date of Meeting:	20 February 2019
Report by:	Director, Health and Social Care

Subject:	Corporate Parenting - Update
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1. Purpose of Report

1.1. The purpose of the report is to:-

- ◆ update the Committee on South Lanarkshire's Corporate Parenting activity

2. Recommendation(s)

2.1. The Committee is asked to approve the following recommendation(s):-

- (1) that the contents of the report be noted.

3. Background

- 3.1. South Lanarkshire has prioritised Corporate Parenting as one of the themed sub groups that supports the Partnership work of "Getting it Right for South Lanarkshire Children". The work of the Corporate Parenting sub group is overseen by the Getting it Right for South Lanarkshire's Children (GIRSLC) strategy group.
- 3.2. South Lanarkshire's first Corporate Parenting Strategy and Action Plan 2016-2018 was concluded with the publication of the second annual report in July 2018 which provides an overview of achievements throughout the year (Appendix 1).
- 3.3. Below are some illustrative examples of our achievements over the course of the last plan:
- 3.3.1. Core Commitment 1 - corporate parents will fulfil their responsibilities, listen and respond to the voices of children and families/carers
- ◆ children and young people accessed independent advocacy 281 times and regularly used questionnaires and meetings to support them to have their views and wishes heard
 - ◆ they contributed to a variety of strategic forums including the South Lanarkshire Council Corporate Parenting, the development of a child friendly version of the South Lanarkshire Children's Services Plan and the children's hearing national advocacy model
- 3.3.2. Core Commitment 2 - every child will have an agreed child's plan which will be regularly reviewed within agreed timescales
- ◆ the looked after children and education review process was streamlined into a single system with new guidance to ensure that the children and young people's wellbeing needs are regularly reviewed. This means children are involved in fewer meetings and the child's plans are clearer, with a reduction in disruptions, bureaucracy and duplication

- 3.3.3. Core Commitment 3 - clear pathways and support will be provided through all key transition stages
- ♦ in 2017 of the 25 children registered with a plan for adoption, 60% had a timescale of less than 12 months from decision taken to registration. This improved on the figure of 39% for the previous year
- 3.3.4. Core Commitment 4 - children and young people will be supported to improve their physical, emotional and mental health and wellbeing
- ♦ following the Lanarkshire school nursing review, looked after children's nursing team, merged with the school nursing teams
 - ♦ South Lanarkshire Leisure and Culture, Health Development Officers have provided presentations to a variety of social work teams to increase awareness of leisure opportunities for children and young people
- 3.3.5. Core Commitment 5 - all children will be treated fairly, have equality of opportunity and have a sense of belonging in their learning environment
- ♦ Head Teachers now use the insight toolkit to monitor attainment and show looked after children attainment data
 - ♦ 26 looked after young people accessed a range of opportunities such as Duke of Edinburgh award/Links-2-Life/H20+/ASDAN PSD/Grass Routes. The outcomes they achieved included training as youth workers, volunteering in communities and sustained participation in centre based activities
- 3.3.6. Core Commitment 6 - young people moving into adulthood will be supported to achieve their full potential in life
- ♦ all care experienced young people are now tracked and offered bespoke employability packages to meet their individual needs
 - ♦ collaborative working with New College Lanarkshire ensures that the needs of care experienced learners are taken account of in planning and prioritising at the post school transition stage
- 3.4. The Corporate Parenting sub group continues to meet on a quarterly basis to monitor the progress of the strategy and actions, highlighting good practice, ensuring the views of service user and other stakeholders are included and links with other relevant activity across the GIRSLC Partnership.

4. Current Position

- 4.1. The new Corporate Parenting Strategy and Action Plan 2018-2020 was launched at the Corporate Parenting conference on 02 November 2018. It was developed following consultation with children, young people, parents and carers (Appendix 2).
- 4.2. The Corporate Parenting Strategy and Action Plan 2018-2020 has four core commitments and eight agreed actions to be taken forward for the next two years and provides a clear framework to achieve the planned improvements. The core commitments and associated activity are noted below:
- 4.2.1. Core Commitment 1 - corporate parents will provide a range of opportunities to listen and respond to the voices of children and families/carers
- ♦ our services will be as effective as they can be when influenced by the voices of care experienced children and young people by corporate parents who understand their responsibilities

- 4.2.2. A working group of corporate parents from Housing and Technical Resources, Social Work Resources, Education Resources, NHS Lanarkshire and Who Cares? Scotland is in place to take forward the development of the champions board. Different models will be explored that are in operation across the country that will ensure where children and young people are looked after and accommodated their needs are understood and their voices are heard.
- 4.2.3. Core Commitment 2 - sustain children with their families and within the community
- ◆ families will be supported to remain together within their communities
 - ◆ corporate parents will work effectively together to provide responsive, consistent and high quality assessment, planning, risk management and review
- 4.2.4. We are seeking to reduce the number of children being looked after outwith their family, aiming year on year to support children to live with their own families and/or kinship carers.
- 4.2.5. A new Under 12s Intensive Family Support Services (IFSS) is currently being developed. It will mirror the work that the over 12s IFSS provide. The new service known as Fás (Gaelic for Growth) will operate from a base in East Kilbride and support children and young people and their families across the Council area.
- 4.2.6. Core Commitment 3 - promote and support the health and wellbeing needs
- ◆ children and young people's health and wellbeing needs are regularly assessed, with bespoke multi-agency responses
 - ◆ children and young people will reach their potential across education, training and employment
- 4.2.7. The Scottish Attainment Challenge was launched by the First Minister in February 2015, focusing on improvement activity in literacy, numeracy and health and wellbeing in specific areas of Scotland and closing the poverty related attainment gap. Care experienced children and young people have been identified as a group who could benefit from the additional resources this workstream could provide. The Corporate Parenting group has identified a range of proposals including improving access to sport and leisure activities and mentoring support.
- 4.2.8. Core Commitment 4 - young people's rights to continuing care and aftercare will be respected and protected
- ◆ young people will be encouraged to remain in the care placements until ready to move on
 - ◆ young people will have bespoke pathways assessments and plans to support lifelong chances
- 4.2.9. The care leavers covenant supports the implementation of Part 10 of the Children and Young People (Scotland) Act 2014, supporting the 'aftercare' (advice, guidance and assistance) of care leavers transitioning into adulthood. It offers clear guidance on how to meet the needs of young people who are often disadvantaged as a result of their care experiences. South Lanarkshire has now signed the care leavers covenant and the related actions will be taken forward by the Corporate Parenting sub group. A mapping exercise has begun to align the care leavers covenant with the Corporate Parent Strategy and Action Plan.

4.2.10. Following from the Corporate Parenting Strategy and Action Plan 2016-2018, work continues to establish a multi-disciplinary throughcare and aftercare team. This will be delivered in two phases, firstly establishing a central team and secondly providing a core and cluster housing and support model.

4.3. Corporate Parenting Conference

4.3.1. The Corporate Parenting conference was held on 2 November 2018. Over 160 people, including young people, were in attendance from a range of corporate parents including Education Resources, Social Work Resources, Police, Councillors and the third sector.

4.4. There was an array of presentations drawing on personal experience and motivation on the theme of 'What Matters to Me' given by Kevin Browne-MacLeod, Director of Care Experienced Membership, Who Cares? Scotland, James Docherty, Violence Reduction Unit and care experienced young people from South Lanarkshire who spoke about their personal experiences of their personal relationships with their foster carers and Social Workers and Teachers.

4.5. The event included the signing of the care leavers covenant and demonstrating South Lanarkshire's commitment to an agenda for change for carer leavers.

4.6. Attendees evaluated the conference very positively, remarking on the personal testimonies of the speakers having an impact on their understanding of their Corporate Parenting role.

5. Employee Implications

5.1. There are no employee implications associated with this report.

6. Financial Implications

6.1. There are no financial implications associated with this report.

7. Other Implications

7.1. There are no additional risk implications associated with this report.

7.2. There are no sustainable development issues associated with this report.

7.3. The Children and Young Person (Scotland) Act 2014 names 24 public bodies and all local authorities, NHS Scotland Health Boards, National Special Health Boards as well as all colleges and universities in Scotland as corporate parents.

7.4. A corporate parent is an organisation or person in power who has special responsibilities to care experienced and looked after children and young people, a group that includes:

- ◆ those in residential care
- ◆ those in foster care
- ◆ those in kinship care, who live with a family member other than a parent
- ◆ those who are looked after at home

7.5. As a corporate parent the Council has clear legal statutory requirements to fulfil for its looked after young people under the Children and Young Person (Scotland) Act 2014. This includes having a clear strategy and action plan, which is reviewed on an annual basis. As a corporate parent it is intended the Council will carry out many of the roles a parent would. Importantly, it should be able to provide the children and young people it is responsible for with the best possible support and care.

8. Equality Impact Assessment and Consultation Arrangements

8.1. There is no requirement to carry out an equality impact assessment in terms of the proposals contained in this report.

8.2. The strategy and action plan has previously been widely circulated and consultation activity has taken place with children and young people, all stakeholder and senior managers and staff.

Val de Souza

Director, Health and Social Care

24 December 2018

Link(s) to Council Values/Ambitions/Objectives

♦ Accountable, Effective, Efficient and Transparent

Previous References

♦ Executive Committee of 24 February 2016

List of Background Papers

♦ Appendix 1 – Corporate Parenting Annual Report 2018

♦ Appendix 2 – Corporate Parenting Strategy and Action Plan 2018 - 2020

Contact for Further Information

If you would like to inspect the background papers or want further information, please contact:-

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