

BARNSELY METROPOLITAN BOROUGH COUNCIL

This matter is not a Key Decision within the Council's definition and has not been included in the relevant Forward Plan

Report of the Executive Director (People)
to Cabinet

(24th August 2016)

ANNUAL REPORT OF THE BARNSELY CORPORATE PARENTING PANEL (2015/16)

1.0 Purpose of the Report

- 1.1 To inform Cabinet of the Barnsley Corporate Parenting Panel's Annual Report, which sets out the progress and outcomes of the Panel for the period 1st April 2015 to 31st March 2016 (Please see Appendix 1)

2.0 Recommendations

- 2.1 **That Cabinet notes the progress and achievements of the Panel in supporting children and young people in care.**
- 2.2 **The Annual Report be submitted to a meeting of Full Council for approval and adoption as a symbol of the Council's commitment for its 'Pledge' towards children and young people in care.**

3.0 Introduction

- 3.1 The Children Act (1989) and the Leaving Care Act (2000) place clear statutory duties upon the Council to protect children from suffering significant harm and to provide continued financial and transitional support to care leavers aged up to 21 (or 25 if in full time education).
- 3.2 The Barnsley Corporate Parenting Panel Annual Report (2015/16) reminds Members of the Council of key legislation and guidance, together with their role and responsibility as corporate parents to children in care in the Borough.

4.0 Consideration of Alternative Approaches

- 4.1 Please see Paragraph 5.1

5.0 Proposal and Justification

- 5.1 It is good practice for the Corporate Parenting Panel to draft an annual report on its work and achievements as part of ensuring its continued compliance with the responsibilities placed on it and on how its work adds value to the experience of children and young people in care, particularly in helping them to stay safe and healthy, improve their prospects and to enjoy enriching lives as part of the Council's 'Pledge' to children in care.

6.0 Implications for Local People and Service Users

- 6.1 The role of the Corporate Parenting Panel includes ensuring that all children in need of care in any part of Barnsley, together with those from other areas who are placed in the Borough, receive the help and support from local services which they need to stay safe and healthy, gain a good education and to lead rewarding lives.

7.0 Financial Implications

- 7.1 There are no direct financial implications arising from the consideration of the Annual Report.
- 7.2 The Corporate Parenting role of the Council in relation to looked after children and children in need is mainly discharged within the Children Social Care and Safeguarding business unit (within the People's Directorate). In 2015/16 actual net expenditure on children in care and those leaving care was approximately £15.1m. This exceeded the level of resources available in the year by +£2.1m, and is mainly attributable to the increasing cost and number of looked after children. This reported financial position covers spend on the following services; adoptions, fostering, children in care social worker teams, council owned children residential home, out of authority residential care and foster care placements, support to care leavers, etc. Work is ongoing to address the financial challenge through the medium term financial strategy and the refreshed sufficiency & placement strategy.

8.0 Employee Implications

- 8.1 There are no employee implications arising through consideration of the Annual Report.

9.0 Communications Implications

- 9.1 Following its proposed consideration and adoption at a meeting of Full Council, the Annual Report will be published on the Council's Web Site in order to make stakeholders aware of the importance of the Panel's work and the value it adds to supporting vulnerable children and young people in the Borough.

10.0 Consultations

- 10.1 The Panel's Annual Report has been drafted with the valuable help and input of children in care, including representatives from the Barnsley Care4Us Council.
- 10.2 The Council's Senior Management Team has also been consulted on the Annual Report.

11.0 The Corporate Plan and the Council's Performance Management Framework

- 11.1 The role and responsibilities discharged by the Corporate Parenting Panel support a number of the Strategic Priorities of the Barnsley Children and Young People's Plan

(2016-19) as they relate to children in care. These Strategic Priorities are indicated below:

- Keeping Children and Young People Safe.
- Improving Education, Achievement and Employability.
- Tackling Child Poverty And Developing Stronger, Resilient Families.
- Supporting All Children, Young People And Families To Make Healthy Lifestyle Choices.
- Encouraging Positive Relationships And Strengthening Emotional Health.

11.2 In addition, the Panel's work supports one of the Council's priorities in its Corporate Plan, notably by ensuring children and young people in care are kept safe from harm and overseeing the effectiveness of local services, as part of improving their potential.

12.0 Promoting Equality, Diversity and Inclusion

12.1 A crucial element of the Council's 'Pledge' to children in our care, is to promote, support and respect their identity. Therefore, one of the responsibilities of the Panel will continue to be ensuring the specific needs of any children in care, belonging to any of the groups with protected characteristics as defined by the Equality Act (2010) are met in a way which respects this identity.

13.0 Tackling the Impact of Poverty

13.1 Please see Paragraph 11.1.

14.0 Tackling Health Inequalities

14.1 A key responsibility of the Panel is helping ensure improvements take place in the health of children and young people in care. The Annual Report contains a performance summary which outlines the progress made in the number of such young people receiving regular health assessments and dental checks.

15.0 Reduction of Crime and Disorder

15.1 The Panel's role in supporting the Council's Pledge to children in care, includes overseeing the effectiveness of local services, responsible for keeping them safe from harm, including risky behaviours that can harm their own wellbeing as well as the safety of communities.

15.2 Through listening to children and young people's experiences of being in care and ensuring this perspective informs improvement, this approach nurtures esteem among young people in their care, enhances their wellbeing and minimises the risk of alienation which can contribute to them going missing from care and the risks this exposes them to.

16.0 Risk Management Issues

16.1 There are no direct risks emerging through consideration of the Annual Report.

17.0 Health, Safety and Emergency Resilience Issues

17.1 There are no direct health and safety implications for the public or Council employees emerging through the Annual Report.

18.0 Compatibility with the European Convention on Human Rights

18.1 The Panel’s Annual Report is compatible with the Articles and Protocols of the EU Convention, particularly in supporting the rights of children to be safeguarded from serious harm.

19.0 Conservation of Biodiversity

19.1 There are no implications for the conservation of biodiversity arising from the report.

20.0 Glossary of Terms and Abbreviations

20.1 None, applicable.

21.0 List of Appendices

21.1 Appendix 1: Barnsley Corporate Parenting Panel Annual Report (2015/16)

22.0 Details of Background Papers

22.1 Any background papers used in the compilation of this report are available by contacting the People Directorate, Barnsley MBC, PO Box 634, Barnsley, South Yorkshire S70 9GG

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Financial Implications/
Consultation <i>(to be signed by senior Financial Services Officer where no financial implications</i>