

Draft Terms of Reference for Corporate Parenting Board

Guiding Principles and Responsibilities

Introduction

The Corporate Parenting Board (CPB) is established to act as a governing body that ensures the welfare, development, and well-being of children and young people who are in the care of local authorities. This document outlines the terms of reference for the CPB, including its guiding principles, objectives, membership, roles, and responsibilities.

Guiding Principles

The CPB operates under the following principles:

- **Child-Centred Approach:** All decisions and actions taken by the CPB shall prioritise the best interests and well-being of the children and young people in care.
- **Inclusivity and Respect:** The CPB shall ensure that the voices of children, young people, and their families are heard, respected, and considered in all discussions and decisions.
- **Accountability and Transparency:** The CPB shall operate with high standards of accountability and transparency, regularly reporting on its activities and outcomes to relevant stakeholders.
- **Collaboration and Partnership:** The CPB shall work collaboratively with other agencies, organisations, and stakeholders to provide comprehensive support for children and young people in care.
- **Continuous Improvement:** The CPB shall continuously seek to improve the services and support provided to children and young people in care through regular review and evaluation of its practices and outcomes.

Objectives

The primary objectives of the CPB are:

- To ensure that the local authority fulfils its responsibilities as a corporate parent to children and young people in its care.
- To promote the educational, emotional, social, and physical well-being of children and young people in care.
- To monitor and review the quality and effectiveness of services provided to children and young people in care.
- To ensure that children and young people in care are supported to achieve their full potential and lead fulfilling lives.

- To provide strategic leadership and direction on matters related to corporate parenting.

Membership

The CPB shall be composed of a diverse group of members, including but not limited to:

- Lead Member for Children’s Services and Education
- Local authority elected members
- Senior officers from relevant departments (e.g., Children’s Services, Education, Health)
- Representatives from partner agencies (e.g., police, health services – public health when needed, housing, voluntary organisations)
- Foster carers
- Care leavers and representatives of children and young people in care
- Independent advisors and experts
- DCS
- Service Director for Targeted Support and Safeguarding
- Service Director for Education
- Virtual School Head
- Head of Service Corporate Parenting
- Head of Housing
- Corporate Directorate representative(s) – minutes only member
- Chief Financial Officer – minutes only member
- Chief Executive Officer – minutes only member

The Chair of the CPB shall be appointed by the Board.

Roles and Responsibilities

Chairperson

The Chairperson’s roles include:

- Providing leadership and direction to the CPB
- Ensuring the effective functioning of the CPB
- Facilitating meetings and ensuring all members have an opportunity to contribute
- Representing the CPB in external forums and advocacy

Corporate Parenting Board Members

The roles and responsibilities of CPB members include:

- Attending and actively participating in CPB meetings
- Contributing to the development and review of corporate parenting strategies and policies
- Monitoring the implementation and impact of corporate parenting initiatives
- Engaging with children and young people in care to understand their needs and experiences
- Ensuring that the voices of children and young people in care are represented in decision-making processes

- Promoting the corporate parenting agenda within their respective organisations and networks
- Reporting back to the CPB on relevant developments and issues within their areas of responsibility

Subgroups and Working Groups

The CPB may establish subgroups and working groups to focus on specific areas of work, such as:

- Education and training
- Health and well-being
- Placement stability and sufficiency
- Transition to adulthood

Subgroups and working groups shall be chaired by Board Members and shall report back to the CPB on their findings and recommendations.

Meetings

The CPB shall meet on a bi-monthly basis, with additional meetings scheduled as necessary. The agenda for each meeting shall be prepared by the Chairperson in consultation with CPB members. Meeting minutes shall be recorded and circulated to all members, and actions shall be tracked and reviewed at subsequent meetings.

Accountability and Reporting

The CPB shall report annually to the Children's Services Leadership Team (CSLT) and Children and Education Scrutiny Committee. The annual report shall include:

- An overview of the CPB's activities and achievements over the past year
- Data and analysis on the outcomes for children and young people in care
- Feedback from children and young people in care
- Recommendations for future action and improvement

Review and Evaluation

The terms of reference for the CPB shall be reviewed on an annual basis to ensure they remain relevant and effective. The review process shall involve consultation with CPB members, children and young people in care, and other stakeholders.

Conclusion

The Corporate Parenting Board plays a crucial role in safeguarding the rights and well-being of children and young people in care. By adhering to these terms of reference, the CPB aims to provide effective governance, strategic direction, and meaningful support for those in the care of the local authority.

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