

# CORPORATE PARENTING STRATEGY 2020-2023



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## **Letter to Corporate Parents:**

Dear Corporate Parents,

As an employee or councillor at Bury Council you are our Corporate Parents and we are relying on you to make the right choices for us. We want you to take this role seriously, we need you to be a champion for our rights.

Some of us have had to overcome enormous challenges already, our lives have not started out the way we or you would have hoped. We are all at different stages in our journey through life and we all need different levels of support. We need our support workers to build positive relationships with us, we need to be able to trust that there are people around who will help us in all aspects of our lives.

Some of us have been through traumas that you cannot begin to understand, unless you have walked in our shoes you simply cannot imagine all that we are feeling. We need more support than most to understand our own feelings and to effectively communicate these to others. We need to be able to access effective mental health support as soon as an issue is identified. If we don't always make the best choices we need you to show us compassion and understanding, it is hard to do the right thing all the time when so much is wrong in our lives.

Housing is the biggest issue that we face. We want you to ensure that we have a safe place to live but more than that we want it to feel like our home. We want it to be somewhere that you would be happy to live in or for your children to live in. We want to be able to decorate it as our own and cook and store food that we like to eat. Our homes should be every bit as comfortable as your homes are with access to the same facilities and with the security of knowing that we can stay there as long as we want to.

We need access to technology so that we can find work and progress our education. We need extra support and sometimes it takes us a bit longer to get where we want to be as we have so many things going on in our lives. We might need a few extra chances to get things right, you might need to try a few different ways of helping us before you find one that works. We want you to advocate for us and encourage our tutors and employers to be understanding of our individual circumstances. It is hard to get to college or work when you need to move house or if we don't have help from people like you to motivate us. We also need to be able to access suitable transport so that we can get where we need to go.

Being a care leaver it feels like we have this horrible title hanging around our necks that will bring judgement throughout our lives. Our ability as prospective parents and our character are both questioned. We ask you not to think the worst of us all the time. Don't expect us to fail. Give us the benefit of the doubt. Be proud of us. Expect great things from us and that will make those things so much easier to achieve.

We need you to really care about us, we need you to listen to us, we are all individuals with individual needs and we need you to be our champions. If we tell you that something isn't right we need you to hear us and take it seriously. We would really appreciate it if you could help us in whatever way you can.

Thank You,

Bury Care Leaver's Forum

## **Poems by Children in Care and Care Leavers**

### **"Our Dreams"**

**A poem by Bury's Care Leavers Forum, written on 20 January 2020**

I dream of travelling far away  
And working in the sun  
I'd have a place all of my own  
I'd feel like I had won  
I dream of having space  
Rolling hills and time to think  
No one telling me what to do  
What to eat and what to drink  
I dream of time to just relax  
To sleep per chance to dream  
To have a job that I enjoy  
With an amount of cash that's just obscene  
I simply dream of happiness  
To feel secure on my two feet  
To have a home I can share  
On my own nice, quiet street  
My future's mine and I decide  
What, why, where and when  
I just need a chance, a break, a hand  
I'll get there in the end

### **"Dreams"**

**A poem written by a Children in Care Council member, January 2020**

I don't know what I want to be when I'm older  
But I know how I want to feel  
I want to feel a sense of normality  
With relationships that are real  
I thought about being an air hostess  
Or a beautician doing nails  
Something I can earn my own money  
To spend in all the sales  
I'd like to live out in the sun  
Maybe the United States  
Somewhere by a golden beach  
Just hanging with my mates  
I hope wherever I end up  
My life is full of smiles  
I dream of feeling safe and loved  
Without social work files

## **Foreword**

Dear Children and Young People in Care and Care Leavers,

Corporate Parenting in Bury the responsibility of all employees of Bury Council, Bury CCG and its partners such as the Health Service, Housing and schools. All partners take our Corporate Parenting duties very seriously. We have made a promise to act as responsible parents to you. It is about how everyone, including councillors, council officers, teachers, GP's, and others all recognise that we have an obligation to be the best Corporate Parents possible to all the young people in our care.

To do this we will challenge ourselves by asking "would this be good enough for my child?" when providing a service for you. We also need to make sure you feel safe and secure, have stability in your lives and that we help you to achieve your full potential by supporting your ambitions and aspirations. We will continue to work hard to improve the opportunities, experiences and support you receive to ensure you are able to create your aspirations and achieve your goals.

Since the last Corporate Parenting Strategy was produced in 2017, we have made progress to improve our corporate parenting offer by the introduction of Corporate Parenting Champions, the Friends of Bury Care Experienced Young People constituted Group, put greater emphasis on participation and engagement and the Care Leaver Offer Website to name but a few. We will continue to use Bury's Corporate Parenting Strategy to detail how Bury Council, the health service and all our partners, will act as responsible parents to you, as well as those of you who have left our care and are entitled to our support.

As Corporate Parents, we recognise that there are a whole range of reasons why you come into our care and that it is the duty of your corporate parents to take responsibility for you, your safety, your health and your education. Above all, we will ensure that as your Corporate Parents we will play our part in making sure that our services help you live life to the fullest both whilst you are in our care and into your journey into adult life.

**Cllr Rhyse Cathcart**

**Chair of the Corporate Parenting Board**

## 1. Introduction and Purpose

Throughout this document the term 'our children' will refer to all children and young people in care and care leavers for whom Bury Council has corporate parenting responsibility.

Once a child/young person becomes a child in care (Looked After Child), the duty of "Corporate Parent" is placed on all Members, Officers and partners of the council and CCG. Everyone acting in their individual roles within the partner organisations should strive to ensure the same childhood for 'our children' as every good parent would want for their own children.

This duty encompasses the health, education and wellbeing of our children as well as what they do in their leisure time and holidays, how they celebrate their culture and heritage and how they receive praise and encouragement for their achievements. This duty also extends to providing appropriate support once young people have left care in order to enable them to achieve independence in their community. This continued support includes education, training and employment post 16 years old and up to the age of 25.

In addition it is important to us that our children have the opportunity to shape and influence the parenting they receive.

Corporate Parenting is defined as:

*"The responsibility of local authorities to improve outcomes and actively promote the life chances of children they look after is referred to as "corporate parenting" in recognition that the task must be shared by the whole authority in partnership with partner agencies along with parents.*

*The role of corporate parent is to act as the best parents for each child they look after and to take action to speaking out on their behalf, arranging for appropriate services to meet their needs, standing up for them and representing them as needed, to ensure they grow up in the best possible way".*

In Bury children and young people have stated that they wish to be to be known as Children and Young People in Care (CYPiC) and not Looked After Children (LAC).

## **Legislative Framework**

It is important to recognise that the vision for Children & Young People in Care and Care Leavers in Bury is driven by a range of legislation, policy and guidance that underpins Corporate Parenting. This list is indicative and by no means indicative.

Legislation and National Guidance includes

- The Children Act 1989 and 2004
- The Adoption and Children Act 2002
- The Children and Young Persons Act 2008
- The Equality Act 2010
- Leaving Care Guidance 2010
- Care Planning, Placement and Case Review Regulations 2015
- Independent Reviewing Officer Handbook 2010
- The Health and Social Care Act 2012
- Making not Breaking; Building Relationships Care Inquiry 2013
- The Children and Families Act 2014
- Working Together 2015
- Children and Social Work Act 2017

Local drivers include:

- Bury's Promise to Children and Young People in Care
- Care Leavers Charter
- Bury Integrated Safeguarding Partnership
- Bury Children in Care Strategy
- Corporate Parenting Champions Programme
- Supported Employee Volunteering Policy
- Fostering Friendly Policy
- Care Leavers Offer
- Bury EET Strategy

## **The Children Act 1989**

The role corporate parent extends beyond Children's social care and instead is the responsibility of each elected Councillor, every member of staff and wider partner agencies.

## 1. Who are our Children and Young People in Care?

As of the 31<sup>st</sup> March 2020 there were a total of 342 children and young people in care from Bury (0 – 17 years).

	<b>2017</b>	<b>2020</b>
Periods of care commencing during the year (a child could have more than one)	159	94
Periods of care ending during the year (a child could have more than one)	116	87
Number of children in care at 31 March	350	342
Child population estimate for 30 June of previous year	42,879	43,289
LAC rate per 10,000 children	81.6	79.0

The largest cohort by age (at 31 March 2020) was between 10 to 15 years, ie 40.4% of children and young people in care. There are more males than females.

<b>Age at 31 March 2020</b>	<b>Male</b>	<b>Female</b>	<b>Total</b>
Under 1	7	9	16
1 to 4 years	31	27	58
5 to 9 years	29	38	67
10 to 15 years	70	68	138
16/17 years	41	22	63
Total	178	164	342

Our children come from a range of backgrounds with the largest ethnicity cohort being White/British.

<b>Ethnicity</b>	<b>Number of Children</b>
White	251
Mixed	55
Asian or Asian British	21
Black or Black British	7
Other ethnic groups (including refused and not yet obtained)	8
Total	342

The predominant reason of need resulting in our children being in care is determined as abuse and neglect.

<b>Category of Need (Primary Need Code)</b>	<b>Number of Children</b>
N1: Abuse or neglect	284
N2: Disability	1
N3: Parental illness or disability	14
N4: Family in acute stress	22
N5: Family dysfunction	8
N6: Socially unacceptable behaviour	1
N7: Low income	0
N8: Absent parenting	12
Total	342

## **2. The Role of Corporate Parents including Members, Officers and Partner Agencies**

Corporate parenting is a whole-council and Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG) endeavour and not the sole responsibility of the Department of Children and Young People. It requires services across the whole council and CCG to work together with partner agencies to achieve the best outcomes for our children in care and care leavers.

The role of Corporate Parent is not a passive one.

Bury's corporate parents work closely with their partners to ensure that the needs of our children are clearly identified and met at every level. This should encompass the strategic planning, commissioning and integrated delivery of services.

The Executive Director of Children and Young People and the Lead Member for Children and Families will take the lead on behalf of the Local Authority and CCG for services provide to our children and young people in care and care leavers.

## **3. Children In Care Council**

The Children in Care Council (CiCC) is a group of children and young people in care and care leavers who work to ensure that our children have their voices heard. The CiCC actively promote the voice of the young person and promote this to ensure that our children have a right to be part of the decision making process that affect all aspects of their lives. The CiCC work collaboratively with the corporate parents to share children and young people's experiences, ideas and suggestions on how to improve local practice. The CiCC are members of the Corporate Parenting Board and attend meetings to give updates, share information and discussion decisions affecting their future.

## **5. Bury Childrens Rights**

Bury Childrens Rights service undertakes a role of promoting the right of children and young people in care to be part of the decision making processes that affect their lives. They also undertake visits to children and young people age 8 plus in the period after they first come into care. The visit is to inform young people about how Childrens Rights can support them in terms of advocacy, the Independent Visiting Service (mentoring) and other services available to them as children in care.

Bury Childrens Rights also provide a confidential and independent Advocacy service for children and young people in care who may not feel heard or who wish to make a complaint about the service they have received.

## **4. Bury Care Leavers Forum**

Bury Care Leavers Forum meet once a month and is a chance for care leavers to socialise, find out more about what is going on and share their experiences and news with both officers and other care leavers.

The meetings are an opportunity to ensure that their voices are heard within decision making processes. The meetings are attended by officers who wish to get the views and ideas of young people and let them know about events, support, opportunities currently on offer.

## **5. Corporate Parenting Champions Programme**

The Corporate Parenting Champions Programme is a volunteering role for employees at all levels across Bury Council and Bury CCG. On 25th March 2020 there were 62 champions signed up to the programme. The aim is to allow staff to ensure the needs and aspirations of children and young people in care and care leavers are heard and considered during the daily business of the Council and CCG beyond the Corporate Parenting Board and the Department of Children and Young People. There are volunteering opportunities, events and training for champions to take part in. The Programme is proving a great way to share resources and solve problems and issues by working together to break down barriers and solve problems.

## **6. Corporate Parenting Week**

Bury has a commitment to host a Corporate Parenting Week each year in November to highlight the importance and impact of good corporate parenting to the employees of Bury Council, The CCG and wider partners.

The week includes daily emails with information to all Corporate Parents, events, information sessions, training and information on how to get involved. The week will continue to be held and will develop over time.

## 6. The Promise

### **Bury Council Corporate Parents Promise to Children and Young People in Care (2020-23)**

We promise:

- We will tell you why you are in care and help you to understand these reasons, we will keep explaining this as you grow.
- We will keep you safe both physically and emotionally.
- We help you to access all the money you are eligible to receive so that you have the same financial opportunities as children and young people not in care.
- We will listen to your wishes and feelings and respond to what you have said with a full and reasonable explanation.
- We will make decisions together with you and not simply decide things for you without discussion.
- We will be honest with you about what is possible. We will not commit to promises that we cannot keep.
- We will strive to provide you with as many opportunities as possible to help to give you the best possible chances in your future career and in fulfilling your aspirations.
- If it's suitable and safe, we will support you to return to your birth family. If this is not possible, we will explain the reasons why. We will continue to offer you support after you have moved back to birth family.
- Where possible and appropriate, we will always endeavour to place you with your siblings. If this is not possible, we will explain the reasons why not.
- We will ensure that you have a safe place to live with people who care about you for as long as you need it.
- We will ensure that the foster carers, key workers and professionals where you live are well supported and well trained to ensure they are able to support you and help you access all possible experiences and opportunities available.
- We will make sure you have access to good quality accommodation when you leave care that we would be happy to live in ourselves.
- We will give you access to an advocate who can support you to have your voice heard.
- If you want to we will ensure you are able to have as much contact with your family and friends as is possible and will continue to negotiate with you about this.
- We will support you in your education for as long as you want to continue learning. We will ensure that your teachers are aware of how they can help you and ensure they empathise with your situation and act as your advocates in your learning
- We will challenge what we believe to be unfair exclusions and where we believe your teachers are not supporting you well enough or setting appropriate targets needed to help you achieve your full potential
- We will seek to provide opportunities for work experience and apprenticeships as well as jobs and training, using our influence and resources as a major employer in the Borough including giving you access to high quality careers advice and guidance.
- We will support you to pursue your passions and take part in hobbies and clubs outside of school wherever possible.
- We will make you aware of your rights as Children and Young People in Care.
- We will support you with any health concerns.
- We will ensure that all members of Bury Council understand their responsibility to care about you, understand your needs and empower you as we would our own

children. We will report this to you via the Corporate Parenting Board, Newsletters, CiCC and Care Leavers Forum.

- We recognise that changes in your social worker is disruptive. We will therefore strive keep changes in Social Worker to a minimum. When changes are necessary, we will do our best to ensure your old social worker introduces you to your new social worker.
- We will involve young people in your situation in the training of staff who support you so that they understand your point of view.
- We will protect your privacy and only share information that is necessary and will always speak with you about what we are sharing and why.

## 7. Bury Care Leavers Charter

### Care Leavers Charter

#### **We Promise:**

#### **To support you to be who you are**

- We will support you to be who you are and honour your identity.
- We will help you develop your own personal beliefs and values and accept your culture and heritage.
- We will value and support relationships that are important to you.

#### **To believe in you**

- We will value your strengths, gifts and talents and encourage your aspirations.
- We will help, encourage and support you to pursue your goals in whatever ways we can.
- We will support you to make positive decisions about your future.

#### **To listen to you**

- We will take time to listen to you and respect what you are telling us.
- We will ensure you know how to complain and appeal and we will make sure that you know how to access independent advocacy when necessary and encourage you to use it.

#### **To inform you**

- We will give you the information you need and present it in a way that you understand. This will include advice on your legal entitlements and the level of service you can expect to receive from us.

#### **To support you**

- We will support you to develop the skills you will need to be independent in the future.

#### **To find you a home**

- We will help you think about the choices available to you and to find accommodation that is right for you. We will do everything we can to ensure you are happy and feel safe when you move to independent accommodation.

#### **To be a lifelong champion**

- We will do our best to help you break down barriers encountered when dealing with other agencies. We will work together with the services you need, including housing, benefits, colleges and universities, employment providers and health services to help you yourself as an independent individual.
- We will treat you with respect and humanity, whatever your age.
- We will remain your supporters in whatever way we can, even when our formal relationship with you has ended.

These commitments set a benchmark for all our staff and should be readily referred to if any child in care or care leaver believes that their care is not up to the standard they should reasonably expect.

The Promise and the Care Leavers Charter is distributed to all our children who are in care or care leavers in Bury.

## **8. Corporate Parenting Principles**

In order to thrive, children and young people have certain key needs that good parents generally meet. The Children & Social Work Act 2017 sets out seven corporate parenting principles that local authorities must have regard to when exercising their functions in relation to looked after children and young people, as follows:

- to act in the best interests, and promote the physical and mental health and well-being, of those children and young people
- to encourage those children and young people to express their views, wishes and feelings
- to take into account the views, wishes and feelings of those children and young people
- to help those children and young people gain access to, and make the best use of, services provided by the local authority and its relevant partners
- to promote high aspirations, and seek to secure the best outcomes, for those children and young people
- for those children and young people to be safe, and for stability in their home lives, relationships and education or work; and
- to prepare those children and young people for adulthood and independent living.

The corporate parenting principles do not exist in a vacuum. They should shape the mind-set and culture of every part of a local authority in how it carries out all of its functions in relation to looked after children and care leavers.

As Bury Council Corporate Parents we strongly believe:

- Children and young people in our care are entitled to the same care, support, stability, health and education as our own children.
- We need to ensure that services are flexible enough to support children and young people in our care to have high quality lives and have a happy childhoods and adolescence.

- In developing new practices and initiatives the Council considers the needs of children and young people in our care and care leavers.
- Children in our care are actively encouraged to participate in decisions made about their lives, so that their experiences influence policy and practice.
- Access for children in our care to universal services is actively promoted, encouraging young people's sense of community and belonging.
- Service provision, communication and policies meet the needs of children with additional needs, disabilities and children from a range of cultural and religious backgrounds.
- Transition to adult services should be timely and well planned with services working together.
- In challenging negative perceptions and stereotypes of children in our care and raise awareness at all levels across the council.
- Corporate parenting is about commitment and teamwork to bring about positive change.

## **9. Governance – Meeting Our Responsibilities**

### **Corporate Parenting Board**

The Corporate Parenting Board has responsibility to ensure that the Council fulfils its Corporate Parenting duties in partnership with other statutory agencies. The Board ensures that the strategic Corporate Parenting objectives are delivered and that the Promise and the Care Leavers Charter are adhered to. Both qualitative and quantitative data is analysed in order to ensure that strategic objectives are met. The Corporate Parenting Board consists of a cross party group of elected members supported by the Executive Director of Children and Young People, officers and partners. We expect all corporate parents to have the knowledge and understanding of the diverse needs of our children in care and care leavers.

The Executive Director of Children and Families along with key officers from Childrens Social Care and relevant partner agencies also attend Corporate Parenting Board meetings. These officers include representatives from Health, Education, Housing, Childrens Rights and Independent Reviewing Services, and other services and agencies as required by the Corporate Parenting Board. The Children in Care Council, Care Leavers Forum and Foster Care Ambassadors are also active members of the Corporate Parenting Board.

The Corporate Parenting Board ensure that we are meeting our corporate parenting responsibility in the following ways:

- By providing support, guidance and challenge. The Corporate Parenting Board will examine all aspects of the provisions made to our children and young people in care and care leavers.
- Ensure there is transparent communication between children and young people in care and care leavers, their carers/parents and the corporate parent.
- Actively promote best practice and have high ambitions for children and young people in care and care leavers
- Support the development of strong partnerships with other internal Corporate Parents including education, health, police, housing and youth offending services.
- Ensure there are regular training opportunities for all those with Corporate Parenting responsibilities and those on the Corporate Parenting Board.
- Promote our moral and legal responsibilities as Corporate Parents and ensure that this is continually owned by the whole council and its partners.
- Have a clear framework at all levels for responsibility and accountability.

## **10. The Voice of Young People**

The Corporate Parenting Board takes every opportunity to actively engage with Our children in care and care leavers whether directly or indirectly in partnership with the Children in Care Council and the Care Leavers Forum.

Other examples of participation and engagement are:

Care Leavers Forum

Children in Care Council

Childrens Rights

Take Over Day

Corporate Parenting Champions

Mind of My Own App

Personal Advisors and Independent Visitors

Circles of Influence Events

Care Leaver Offer Website

## **10. Corporate Parenting Board Strategic Objectives**

Listed below are highlights of the objectives of the Corporate Parenting Board. Bury will continue with its commitment to work with Greater Manchester initiatives and in particular the GM Care Leaver Covenant and GM Care Leaver Offer.

### **Objective 1**

#### **Ensure Children and Young People in Care receive a Good Education and Achieve the Best Educational Outcomes.**

##### **HOW WE INTEND TO DO IT**

- We seek to place our children in Good or Outstanding Schools and where this is not the case (exceptionally) we will regularly monitor to ensure they are making good progress in their educational placement.
- Through the Virtual School we strive to improve performance and outcomes for children and young people in care and care leavers. We seek to do this through supporting, training and challenging our schools, removing barriers to progress for our children and young people and being champions and advocates for their education.
- Personal Education Plans (PEPs) will be reviewed each term and this will include the child and young person's voice. PEPS will be explained to children young people and their carers and they will be encouraged to actively contribute to them. We will also undertake regular training for social workers and designated teachers on how to lead a PEP review and complete a good PEP. This will be backed up by a quality assurance process.
- Through the Virtual School the needs of children and young people in care will be championed by designated teachers and the specific needs of our children and young people will be responded to sensitively. We will strive to ensure that our children will feel safe and included. Incidents of bullying will be dealt with promptly and action taken and communicated to the Virtual Head teacher.
- The Virtual Head teacher will promote practice in Schools of having a named key person in School who our children could go to such as the designated teacher or a senior member of staff and this could be a barrier to effective engagement.
- A Virtual School Governing body to be refreshed and embedded to highlight the needs of children and young people in care and to hold Schools to account for improving performance and educational outcomes.
- A refresh of the Governing Body and revised membership will take place during 2020-21.

### **Objective 2**

**Provide good opportunities to maintain and improve Emotional Health and Wellbeing for Children and Young People in Care and Care Leavers.**

**HOW WE INTEND TO DO IT**

- Promotion of the "Mind Of My Own" App for children and young people in care and care leavers to improve participation and consultation and assist us to understand the needs, wishes and feelings of our young people.
- Ensure children and young people in care and care leavers have the opportunity to have good mental health, build and sustain positive relationships, feel safe, have access to leisure opportunities and sporting activities.
- Ensure that CYPiC and Care Leavers have access to cultural experiences and opportunities and have a voice in The Town of Culture activities and events in Bury during 2020.
- Statutory health assessments are undertaken in timescale and for those children who are placed out of the Bury area prompt arrangements are made to ensure assessments are completed.
- All care leavers to hold their own Health Information Guidance booklet.
- Regular Emotional Wellbeing drop in sessions held at The Hub for older children and young people in care and care leavers. From the drop in sessions, bespoke 1:1 sessions can be booked and groups sessions, such as Mindfulness and Peer Support.
- Ensure that robust Transition arrangements are in place for our young people and care leavers.
- Children in Care and Care Leavers to have access to Bury Leisure Centre passes free of charge from the age of 16.
- Scoping exercise to be undertaken on the need for free prescriptions for care leavers.
- Ensure that the dedicated Care Leaver Offer website is kept up to date with the latest events, opportunities, information and guidance.

**Objective 3**

**Improve Education, Employment and Training for Care Leavers**

**HOW WE INTEND TO DO IT**

- Further develop and embed the Traineeship and Apprenticeship programme. Greater Manchester Youth Network (GMYN) successfully applied to the European Social Fund (ESF) Community Grant, to fund a programme that supports care leavers aged 19+. This provides support for care leavers up to 24 years old. The service will support 15 young people.

- Look to provide a dedicated worker to focus on Traineeship, apprenticeships and the NEET cohort through a dedicated EET worker post.
- Support and encourage self-employment as an employment option for Care Leavers. The two programmes we run are:
  - Start Smart – From conception of an idea to the 3<sup>rd</sup> year of trading. This includes lifestyle businesses and hobbies that an individual wants to scale-up.
  - Enterprising You – Support to grow an existing business.
- Develop stronger links with local business and learn from the model for care leavers currently being developed by Carrick Signs Ltd.
- Ensure that young people are engaged in a number of activities and workshops at The Hub. Proactively look at promoting workshops that could be run and be implemented as part of our care leaver offer.
- Promote the work experience opportunities are available to children and young people in care and care leavers across the council, via corporate parenting champions and with partners.
- Ensure closer links with Department of Work and Pensions to widen the options within mainstream employment opportunities.
- Ensure Care Leavers are informed and linked with the Bury Health Employment and Skills Task Group event, with live job vacancies and more, planned for late in 2020.
- Look to identify training opportunities for those young people whom may have completed a short course such as Rathbones and Princes Trust.
- The Adult Education Budget devolution agenda, worth £92m across GM, provides an opportunity to influence what providers deliver for those aged 19+. Professionals to increase the feedback on training requests as per the needs of our young people, to influence the delivery of suitable provision. Email [investin@bury.gov.uk](mailto:investin@bury.gov.uk).
- Ensure it pays to work, have a clear financial entitlement policy that is widely distributed to all our care leavers. Investigate solutions for those who do not fit into the criteria for this. Continue the Council tax exemption for our care leavers up to age 25.
- Commence planning of services for Care Leavers age 21+ that could access support and provision from Bury following the implementation of Children & Social Work Act 2017. Being proactive rather than reactive to this cohort. Ensure partners in housing and education is involved in planning as part of a wider strategic overview of our corporate parenting responsibility.
- The new GM Working Well Specialist Employment Service is a unique support package:

1. Supported employment for people with a learning disability and/or autism
  2. Individual Placement and Support (IPS) for people with a severe mental illness
- Ensure the Corporate Parenting Strategy feeds into the Local Industrial Strategy and supplementary employment and skills strategy, which will be launched late 2020.

#### **Objective 4**

**Ensure that the role of Corporate Parent is promoted across the Council and amongst Partners.**

#### **HOW WE INTEND TO DO IT**

- Members of the Corporate Parenting Board to attend Total Respect training which is delivered by children and young people in care and care leavers.
- Ensure that the needs of children and young people in care and care leavers are considered when making decisions for other strategic priorities across the councils.
- The Corporate Parenting Newsletter is to be promoted across the council and partners and to promote the role of corporate parenting.
- Continue to hold and develop the Corporate Parenting week each November to provide information and awareness raising across the Council and with partners.
- Support the Children in Care Council and Care Leavers Forum in actively promoting awareness and to provide insight into their unique needs.
- Continue to develop and grow the Corporate Parenting Champions Programme to enhance the Corporate Parenting Offer. Corporate Parenting Champions will advocate for children and young people in care and carer leavers in all areas of business across the council and amongst partners including strategic planning, commissioning and service delivery.
- Develop a volunteering and mentoring scheme for Corporate Parenting Champions to run alongside the current Independent Visitor Scheme to add an extra method of independent support to our young people.
- Continue with donation appeals to corporate parents via the corporate parenting champions for much needed items that cannot be supplied via the statutory sources.
- Monitor the new Care Leaver Fund to ensure young people are accessing the fund for the items they most require.

- Support and monitor the activity of the constituted group “Friends of Bury Care Experienced Young People” which as set up to support CYPiC and Care Leavers.
- Continue to monitor and promote the online Corporate Parenting Training and ensure all Board Members and Champions have completed the training
- The ongoing production and sharing of newsletters: Corporate Parenting Newsletter (6 monthly), Corporate Parenting Champions (quarterly), Care Leavers Newsletter (quarterly).

## **Objective 5**

**Ensure that placements are of the highest standard, there is a wide range available and support is in place**

### **HOW WE INTEND TO DO IT**

- Continue to promote Fostering and Supported Lodgings via the Fostering Marketing Team, Fostering Ambassadors, Corporate Parenting Champions, dedicated website and social media.
- Continue to support and enhance the Fostering Ambassadors model and promote events as widely as possible.
- Promotion of Fostering Friendly Policies to employees of Bury Council, The CCG and wider partners to encourage the uptake of fostering households in Bury.
- Promotion of volunteering and mentoring opportunities available within CYPiC and Care Leavers and the Supported Employee Volunteering Policy
- Continue to listen to care leavers and CYPiC and work with commissioning to ensure placements are high standard and meet the needs and wellbeing of our children and young people
- Continue to build and grow links with housing partners
- Bury Council will continue to promise it will never make a care leaver intentionally homeless
- Tenancy Sustainment Worker is now in place to support care leavers.

## **Appendices**

### **CORPORATE PARENTING BOARD – Terms of Reference**

#### **1. Purpose**

1. To ensure that the Council acts as a good corporate parent to Children and Young People in Care (CYPiC) and Care Leavers, and fulfils its duties corporately and in partnership with other statutory agencies.
2. To consider matters referred to the Board within its terms of reference and to drive forward improvements for CYPiC and Care Leavers

#### **2. Responsibilities of the Panel**

1. To take an overview of the Council's and partner agencies responsibilities towards all CYPiC and Care Leavers and examine ways in which the Council as a whole and partner agencies can improve their life chances.
2. To ensure there are good joint working arrangements between Council departments and partner agencies, including working arrangements with the Children's Trust Board, Bury Safeguarding Children's Board and the Health & Wellbeing Board
3. To monitor and scrutinise the performance of services for CYPiC and Care Leavers, supporting good practice and challenging and holding to account for poor practice
4. To provide a forum for CYPiC and Care Leavers to participate and influence policy and to have an opportunity to talk about issues relating to their own direct experiences of services they have received.
5. To ensure that positive experiences are maintained and lessons are learnt and changes made in the areas that require improvements.
6. To maintain a strategic overview of all developments, plans, policies and strategies for CYPiC and Care Leavers and to make appropriate recommendations for action.
7. To monitor and scrutinise the plans/needs of children in secure accommodation.
8. To ensure Members are regularly updated on issues affecting CYPiC and Care Leavers.
9. To meet with looked after children and their carers on a regular basis to consult and celebrate achievements.
10. To act as the governing body of the Virtual School for CYPiC.

#### **3. Principles for effective Corporate Parenting**

Ofsted has identified that where looked after services are good, Corporate Parenting Boards:

- Demonstrate strong cross-party commitment to looked after children, by championing their rights, having high aspirations for their achievement, monitoring children's progress and challenging outcomes
- Clearly understand its role and the responsibilities of the local authority towards looked after children, and plan for and prioritise their needs, resulting in a greater focus for improving outcomes
- Actively engage with young people, for example through children in care councils that are well-established and have effective and regular links with senior management and elected members

#### **4. Principles for effective Scrutiny**

The Board will also include a scrutiny role to enable Members to fulfil their corporate parenting responsibilities. The Centre for Public Scrutiny has outlined four principles of effective scrutiny;

- To provide a “critical friend” challenge to policy and decision makers
- To enable the voice and concerns of the public and its communities to be heard
- To carry out scrutiny in an independent minded way
- To drive improvement

As a member of the Corporate Parenting Board it will be important to ask and receive satisfactory answers to the following sorts of questions:

- Are looked after children safeguarded?
- Have they got good homes in a secure, caring environment?
- Are they thriving and developed socially and emotionally as they should be?

## **5. Membership**

The Corporate Parenting Board will comprise;

Voting Members

- The Cabinet Member for Children and Families
- Nine other elected Members (appointed on the basis of political balance)

Non-voting Members

- Service user representative
- Representatives from Bury Children’s Rights
- Representatives from the Children in Care Council
- Virtual Head Teacher
- Designated teacher for looked after children (Primary and Secondary)
- A representative from Bury College
- A voluntary sector representative
- A foster carer
- Representative from the Clinical Commissioning Group

Also in Attendance

- Executive Director of Children’s Services
- Assistant Director – Social Care and Safeguarding
- Strategic Lead – Placement Services
- Senior officers (as advisors to the Panel – to attend as appropriate to the work of the Panel).

The panel may also decide to co-opt additional members to advise in respect of other areas which fall within the remit of the Panel (health, housing, adult care, leisure etc).

Any elected member or officer from Bury MBC or a partner agency can ask to attend the Board to observe its activity.

## **Expectation of Members**

**Board members are also expected outside of Board meetings to:**

- Champion corporate parenting in other forums
- Participate in development workshops
- Meet with children and young people at formal and informal CICC network events.

## 6. Operational Arrangements

- **Chair** – The Chair will be appointed by the incumbent party as part of its annual appointing arrangements. The Cabinet Member for Children and Families will not be eligible for appointment to the Chair.
- **Deputy Chair** – To be agreed by a majority of Core Members.
- **Absence of the Chair or Deputy Chair** - A replacement Chair will be elected for the duration of the meeting from the Core Membership by a majority of those eligible to vote.
- **Quorum** - At least two councillors.
- **Support** – The Assistant Director of Social Care and Safeguarding will act as the lead officer with assistance from other officers within Children Services. Lead officer responsibility will include ensuring that agendas are appropriate to the work programme of Corporate Parenting Board.
- **Workload** – Work Programme to be determined annually by the Board. The Board must also have regard to any issue referred to it by the Overview and Scrutiny Committee, Council and its leadership, or Executive Director Children and Families.
- **Frequency of Meetings** – 6 times per year, in accordance with a timetable determined at the first meeting of the Municipal Year. Ad hoc meetings may be called by a decision of the Board, or by the Chair after consultation with the officers
- **Clerk to the Committee** - Meetings will be clerked by a representative of Democratic Services
- **Reporting** – The Board may make reports and recommendations on the work of the Board directly to any relevant Council body, officer, partnership or partner body and will report to the full Council on an annual basis.
- **Access to Information** – It is important to ensure that all Councillors are kept aware of the work of the Panel and a copy of the minutes will be circulated to all Bury Councillors. In general, papers being considered by Corporate Parenting Board are not confidential, unless this is clearly stated.
- **Notice of Meetings** – Agendas and papers for the meetings will normally be circulated by Democratic Services five clear working days before the meeting.

## 7. Accountability

- The CPB is accountable for reporting on an annual basis to Full Council.
- Political accountability is also through leadership of discussions with Cabinet and other Members for the effectiveness, availability and value for money of all Councils children's services by the Cabinet Member.
- The Cabinet Member will ensure that services delivered within the local area are planned, designed, delivered and quality assured with the involvement of children, young people and their families.
- The Cabinet Member will ensure that the Council maintain a clear focus on effective safeguarding arrangements and promotes, health, safety and welfare across the Borough.

## Bury Council Employee Role Profile

<b>CORPORATE PARENTING CHAMPION</b>		
<b>Aims:</b>		
<p>The principal aims of the Corporate Parenting Champions Programme are to promote the importance of ensuring the children and young people in care and care leavers get the same support and opportunities as every other child or young person in Bury. This is in terms of their health, wellbeing, education, support and access to opportunities. The programme will provide an opportunity for Council employees to fully embrace their role as a Corporate Parent and will look to recruit positive and motivated members of our workforce to highlight the importance of supporting Bury Children and Young People in Care/Care Leavers.</p>		
<b>Organisations:</b>		
<p>The Corporate Parenting Champions programme covers Bury Council employees (with a view to extending to NHS and partner agencies as the programme progresses).</p>		
<b>Arrangements:</b>		
<p>The Corporate Parenting Development Officer (CPDO) will co-ordinate the Corporate Parenting Champions Programme. The CPDO will meet with each Champion to discuss their role, and a copy of this role profile document will be given to each Champion and their line manager, which they will both need to sign to agree. Champions will perform an important role in ensuring that the needs and aspirations of children and young people in care/care leavers are at the forefront of any available opportunities, organisational changes and service developments. The role of Champion is not anticipated to take up a great deal of time, but if time becomes a problem this should be raised by the champion's line manager with the CPDO. Champions will be expected to undertake the e-learning package on Corporate Parenting to provide them with basic information.</p>		
<b>Recognition:</b>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Although this role is voluntary, Champions should be recognised by their line managers for their positive contribution to the lives of children and young people in care/care leavers and credit given in appropriate ways – for example in employee reviews.</li> </ul>		
<b>Role of the Champion:</b>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Corporate Parenting Champions will help to raise awareness and promote the role of corporate parenting within their team/department/partners with the aim of improving opportunities and support for children and young people in care and care leavers from Bury.</li> <li>▪ To ensure that children and young people in care/care leavers are at the forefront of council/partners opportunities. Champions will promote the benefits of supporting children in care/care leavers through initiatives such as work experience, activities, volunteering, being a spokesperson etc.</li> <li>▪ To promote services/initiatives that would benefit children in care/care leavers such as fostering, Childrens rights volunteers, clubs and groups.</li> <li>▪ Informal support and a point of contact for any young person in care/care leaver working or undertaking work experience at the Council</li> <li>▪ To ensure the themes of and messages relayed from the Corporate Parenting Board are reflective of what the children and young people in care/care leavers are saying</li> <li>▪ A point of contact for employees within the council. Offering support and signposting to other employees wishing to get involved. Sharing information about initiatives that could benefit children and young people in care/care leavers</li> <li>▪ Contribution to the corporate parenting newsletters as appropriate</li> <li>▪ Champions will help support and promote the corporate parenting communications such as the Corporate Parenting Awareness Week and get involved with awareness raising events</li> <li>▪ Champions will be expected to provide brief updates to the CPDO which will be shared at the Corporate Parenting Board.</li> <li>▪ Requires strong listening skills, be non-judgemental and ensure confidentiality is a priority.</li> </ul>		
<b>Agreed by Champion:</b>	<b>Sign:</b>	<b>Date:</b>
<b>Agreed by Supervisor/Manager:</b>	<b>Sign:</b>	<b>Date:</b>

## Elected Members Role Profile

<b>CORPORATE PARENTING CHAMPION</b>		
<p><b>Aims:</b> The principal aim of the Elected Members Corporate Parenting Champions Programme is to ensure that the Council and partner agencies are doing all they can to support children and young people in care (CYPiC) at all ages and across all aspects of their lives. All councillors on the Corporate Parenting Board will have a good grasp of a wide range of issues, interventions and statutory duties relating to children and young people in care and care leavers, however, Elected Member Corporate Parenting Champions will focus on a particular area of interest and champion this area. This will allow them to be able to understand in detail the issues that CYPiC and care leavers face in a particular areas eg education, and recognise where services could be working more effectively to support them and check and challenge these as appropriate.</p>		
<p><b>Organisations:</b> The Elected Members Corporate Parenting Champions programme covers Bury Elected Members who are members of the Corporate Parenting Board.</p>		
<p><b>Arrangements:</b> At Corporate Parenting Board meetings Champions will be able to recognise and support good practice and challenge poor practice in their area of interest. This will not take away from the role of other Board Members but it will help to increase the overall knowledge, understanding and experience on the Board in order to drive improvements. Coordination and information dissemination will be via the Corporate Parenting Development Officer.</p>		
<p><b>Recognition:</b> Although this role is voluntary, Champions should be recognised as Corporate Parenting Champions for their positive contribution to the lives of children and young people in care/care leavers.</p>		
<p><b>Role of the Champion:</b> Councillors appointed to the Board have differing levels of knowledge and understanding of the lives of CYPiC and Care Leavers. However, Board members often have areas of particular interest where their knowledge, experience and motivation could strengthen the capacity of the Board to be a force for improvement and good practice. Therefore, Councillors on the Board would be invited to become Corporate Parenting Champions for a particular outcome or "area of interest". For example, this could be to improve employment amongst care leavers; to ensure schools meet the needs of CYPiC or to ensure CYPiC and Care Leavers are not subject to child sexual exploitation. This will include developing a good understanding and knowledge in the area of interest of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ The needs of children and young people in Bury</li> <li>▪ Services and support that is in place</li> <li>▪ What Bury children and young people say</li> <li>▪ Government guidance and Statutory requirements</li> <li>▪ Gaps in provision</li> <li>▪ Plans and proposals for improvement</li> <li>▪ Examples of good practice (locally and further afield)</li> </ul> <p>In addition, Champions will be in a strong position to advocate on behalf of CYPiC and Care Leavers in other Council groups and forums in order to ensure that their interests are reflected in Council decision making and to strengthen corporate parenting across the Council.</p>		
<b>Agreed by Elected Member Champion:</b>	<b>Sign:</b>	<b>Date:</b>
<b>Agreed by Corporate Parenting Board Chairperson :</b>	<b>Sign:</b>	<b>Date:</b>

