

EXECUTIVE

8th June 2023

Report Title	Corporate Parenting Board Update
Report Author	AnnMarie Dodds, Executive Director of Children’s Services Susan Tanner, Assistant Director, Commissioning & Partnerships
Lead Member	Councillor Scott Edwards - Executive Member for Children, Families, Education and Skills

Key Decision	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No
Is the decision eligible for call-in by Scrutiny?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No
Are there public sector equality duty implications?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No
Does the report contain confidential or exempt information (whether in appendices or not)?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No
Applicable paragraph number/s for exemption from publication under Schedule 12A Local Government Act 1972	

List of Appendices

Appendix A – Draft Terms of Reference

1. Purpose of Report

- 1.1. To update Executive on new arrangements for a North Northamptonshire Corporate Parenting Board.

2. Executive Summary

- 2.1. The Councils’ Corporate Parenting Board, a statutory function, was operated as a joint board with West Northamptonshire Council until April 2023.
- 2.2. Following notification from OFSTED that West Northamptonshire Council and North Northamptonshire Council would be subject to separate inspections of Children’s Services, West Northamptonshire Council have agreed to establish a separate Corporate Parenting Board. A proposal is being made to form a separate Corporate Parenting Board for North Northamptonshire. This will

enable both councils corporate parenting responsibilities to be fulfilled to children in care and care leavers in the respective areas, to facilitate the separation of relevant data. It is proposed that single boards would commence as soon as possible.

- 2.3. The new Board will be chaired by the Executive Member for Children, Families, Education and Skills.

3. Recommendations

- 3.1. It is recommended that the Executive:

- i) Establish a Corporate Parenting Board for North Northamptonshire
- ii) Note the Terms of Reference at Appendix A and agree the membership as set out therein

- 3.2. Reason for Recommendation – to ensure that statutory obligations are effectively discharged.

- 3.3. Alternative Options Considered: The alternative option is to not have a Corporate Parenting Board, however, to assist in effectively discharging the Council's obligations it is best practice to have a Corporate Parenting Board.

4. Report Background

- 4.1. Northamptonshire has two unitary Councils, West Northamptonshire Council and North Northamptonshire Council, these were established on 1st April 2021. Both Councils commission Northamptonshire Children's Trust (NCT) to deliver their social care functions for children. The Councils' Corporate Parenting Board, a statutory function, was operated as a joint board for the whole of Northamptonshire until April 2023.

- 4.2. On 1st April 2023, it was decided that both Councils will form their own Corporate Parenting Board to enable corporate parenting responsibilities to be fulfilled to children in care and care leavers in the respective areas. It was agreed that single boards would commence in May 2023.

- 4.3. When a child comes into care, the Council becomes the Corporate Parent. There is a collective responsibility to provide the best possible care and safeguarding for children who are looked after. Corporate parenting is enshrined in legislation (Children and Social Work Act 2017) and this defines the role of corporate parents. However, 'corporate parent' is generally understood to mean that officers and elected members of a local authority have a responsibility to take the same interest in the progress, attainments and wellbeing of children and young people who are looked after as a reasonable parent would be expected to have for their own children.

'A good corporate parent should have the same aspirations for a child in care or care leaver as a good parent would have for their own child. It means providing them with the stability and support they need to make progress; and helping them to access new opportunities and experiences that inspire them to set ambitious goals for themselves. It means celebrating their successes, but also recognising that they will sometimes make mistakes and need help to get back on track. It means supporting them to gain skills and confidence to live independent lives, while letting them know that they have someone to call on for help if the going gets tough.' Keep on Caring, Department for Education, 2016

- 4.4. The Corporate Parenting Board is responsible for monitoring the services local authorities and their partners deliver to children looked after and care leavers. It is responsible for the continual improvement of outcomes.
- 4.5. North Northamptonshire Corporate Parenting Board will be chaired by the Executive Member for Children, Families, Education and Skills, Cllr Scott Edwards, and membership will include other members, officers, partners, and young people's representatives.
- 4.6. Meetings will commence imminently following approval by Executive and will be held bi-monthly thereafter to coincide with partner requirements.
- 4.7. Draft Terms of Reference have been prepared and are shown at **Appendix A** for the Board to consider and agree. Likewise, there is a draft programme of work for the Board's approval.

5. Issues and Choices

- 5.1. It is a statutory requirement to have a Corporate Parenting Board. To not have a Corporate Parenting Board is not an option as it would not comply with statutory obligations.

6. Next Steps

- 6.1. Democratic Services, working with the Executive Director Children's Services, to set up meetings and to establish the forward plan with the initial meeting approving the terms of reference.

7. Implications (including financial implications)

7.1. Resources, Financial and Transformation

- 7.1.1. Financial and resource implications will be managed within business as usual and will form part of Children Services and Democratic Services officers' operations. There are no other resources or financial implications arising from the proposals.

7.2. Legal and Governance

7.2.1. The purpose of the board is to assist the Council in meeting its statutory obligations and aligns with the Council's Constitution, as reflected in the draft terms of reference.

7.3. Relevant Policies and Plans

7.3.1. This aligns to the corporate plan and associated priorities of giving children active and fulfilled lives, better brighter futures and delivering against our modern public service commitment.

7.4. Risk

7.4.1. The risk is that if the Council do not have a Corporate Parenting Board it will not fulfil its corporate parenting responsibilities as set out in the Children and Social Work Act 2017.

7.5. Consultation

7.5.1. Not applicable.

7.6. Consideration by Executive Advisory Panel

7.6.1. This report has not been considered by an Executive Advisory Panel.

7.7. Consideration by Scrutiny

7.7.1. This report has not been considered by the Council's scrutiny function.

7.8. Equality Implications

7.8.1 There are no equality implications arising as a result of this report.

7.9. Climate and Environment Impact

7.9.1. There are no climate and environment implications arising as a result of this report.

7.10. Community Impact

7.10.1. There are no community impact implications arising as a result of this report.

7.11. **Crime and Disorder Impact**

7.11.1. There are no crime and disorder impact implications arising as a result of this report.

8. **Background Papers**

8.1. None