



**Council
Thursday 17th October 2024**

Report Title	North Northamptonshire Council Corporate Parenting Board Annual Report 2023 - 2024
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Executive Member	Cllr Scott Edwards, Executive Member for Children, Families, Education & Skills

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	
Which Corporate Plan priority does the report most closely align with? Our priorities for the future North Northamptonshire Council (northnorthants.gov.uk)	Brighter, Better Futures

List of Appendices

Appendix A – North Northamptonshire Council Corporate Parenting Board Annual Report 2023-2024

1. Purpose of Report

1.1. The purpose of the report is to seek approval of Northamptonshire County Council Corporate Parenting Board’s Annual Report for 2023/24.

2. Executive Summary

2.1. The annual report is structured as follows:

- **Executive Summary.** Summarising the report as a whole.
- **Governance and Statutory Context.** Sets out the legal underpinning of corporate parenting, the principles of corporate parenting, the Care Leavers Charter, and the structure and role of the Board, including in light of the creation of the Trust and creation of two unitary councils and the disaggregation of the Corporate Parenting Board.
- **Board Activity.** Summarises the activity of the Board during the reporting period, including meeting arrangements, membership, and thematic and ad-hoc reports.
- **Young people's Participation and Successes.** Details of the summer awards and celebration event for children in care, and how the Board includes and celebrates young people.
- **Corporate Parenting Board Diagnostic.** Details of foster care fortnight, the annual foster care awards ceremony which took place in March 2024 and NCT fostering Ofsted Inspection.
- **Next Steps.** Setting out six recommendations.
- **Conclusion.** Local and National challenges and how the Trust has been able to respond.
- **Appendix:** Appendix A - March 2024 Board Scorecard. Appendix B - Corporate Parenting Strategy Priorities and Progress in respect of the four priorities set out in the Corporate Parenting Strategy 2021-25.

3. Recommendations

3.1. It is recommended that Council:

- a) Approve the content of the North Northamptonshire Corporate Parenting Board Annual Report 2023 – 2024 which gives an overview of the Corporate Parenting Board's activities.
- b) Note that the Northamptonshire Children's Trust Corporate Parenting Strategy 2021-25 sets out four key priorities and the update on each areas progress contained in the annual report.

3.2. Reasons for Recommendations:

- To promote and monitor the Northamptonshire Children's Trust Corporate Parenting Strategy;
- To encourage all Members and employees to recognise their role as corporate parents;
- Provides Members with an overview of the work of Northamptonshire Children's Trust and supports the discharge of their Corporate Parenting duties.

3.3. Alternative Options Considered

Do Nothing – Councils have statutory duties as Corporate Parents for children in care and care leavers. Whilst the role of the Directors of Children’s Services and Lead Members are defined in legislation there are wider corporate responsibilities on all staff and elected Members. By not approving the Corporate Parenting Annual Report it would mean that the Council may fail to deliver all or parts of its statutory responsibilities in this area.

Report Background

- 3.4. Local Authorities and their partners are responsible for ensuring that children in care and care leavers are as safe and well cared for as any other child. This responsibility is called ‘Corporate Parenting’ and applies equally to children who have entered the UK from overseas and are separated from their families. Corporate Parenting responsibilities rests not only with social workers and their managers, but also Council Officers and Members and any other agency that provides services and support to children in care such as health services, housing departments, the police and schools. Corporate parents have specific duties for young people leaving care and making the journey to independence.
- 3.5. The report sets out the role, structure and activity of the Corporate Parenting Board, including progress achieved against the corporate parenting strategy priorities and progress.

4. Issues and Choices

- 4.1. Being a Corporate Parent means doing everything we can for every child in the Council’s care, and every care leaver, to give them the opportunities that other children get. This covers everything from keeping an eye on their progress at school, to looking after their health and wellbeing, to preparing them for life as independent adults – and supporting them when they get there.
- 4.2. The Council has statutory duties as Corporate Parents for children in care and care leavers. Whilst the role of the Directors of Children’s Services and Lead Member is defined in legislation there are wider corporate responsibilities on all staff and elected members.

5. Next Steps

- 5.1. For the North Northamptonshire Corporate Parenting Board Annual Report to be presented to Members in accordance with the Council’s governance framework.

6. Implications (including financial implications)

6.1. Resources and Financial

- 6.1.1. The annual report sets out the Council's Corporate Parenting responsibilities and aspirations for children and young people and are intended to help the Local Authorities devote appropriate finances and resources to meeting these aims.

6.2. Legal and Governance

- 6.2.1. The collective responsibility for Local Authorities in terms of Corporate Parenting is set out in the Children Act 1989 and the Children (Leaving Care) Act 2000. The central role of councils as effective Corporate Parents has been emphasised by government in the publications Care Matters: Time for Change (DCSF 2007), Care Matters: Time to Deliver (DCSF 2008) and consolidated in aspects of the Children and Young Persons Act (2008) alongside other legislation and statutory guidance that determines the councils duties as set out in the annual review. The Boards themselves are not a statutory body, however, selected service reports are required to be seen by a suitable oversight body, and the Board fulfils this function.

6.3. Relevant Policies and Plans

- 6.3.1 The Annual Report aims to help the Council and Northamptonshire Children's Trust meet their Corporate Parenting objectives and priorities.
- 6.3.2 North Northamptonshire Council has identified 'Brighter, Better Futures,' 'Active, Fulfilled Lives,' 'Safe and Thriving Places' and 'Building Connected Communities' as key priorities in its Corporate Plan recognising that children, young people and their families may need help at different stages in their lives. The Councils Corporate Parenting Boards Annual Reports supports these Council priorities.

6.4. Risk

- 6.4.1. Relevant risks are those associated with the Council and the Trust failing to meet their Corporate Parenting responsibilities and aspirations for children and young people, including:
- Children and young people have poor outcomes and do not achieve their potential.
 - Northamptonshire Childrens Trust and North Northamptonshire Council employees do not recognise their role as corporate parents
- 6.4.2. Overall, these risks imply a deleterious impact on the outcomes for children in care.

6.5. Consultation

6.5.1. The Council continues to work with partners including Northamptonshire Children's Trust to promote the objectives and outcomes within the report as needed.

6.6. Consideration by Executive Advisory Panel

6.6.1. This report has not been considered by North Northamptonshire Council's Executive Advisory Panel.

6.7. Consideration by Scrutiny

6.7.1 This report has not been considered by overview and scrutiny committee.

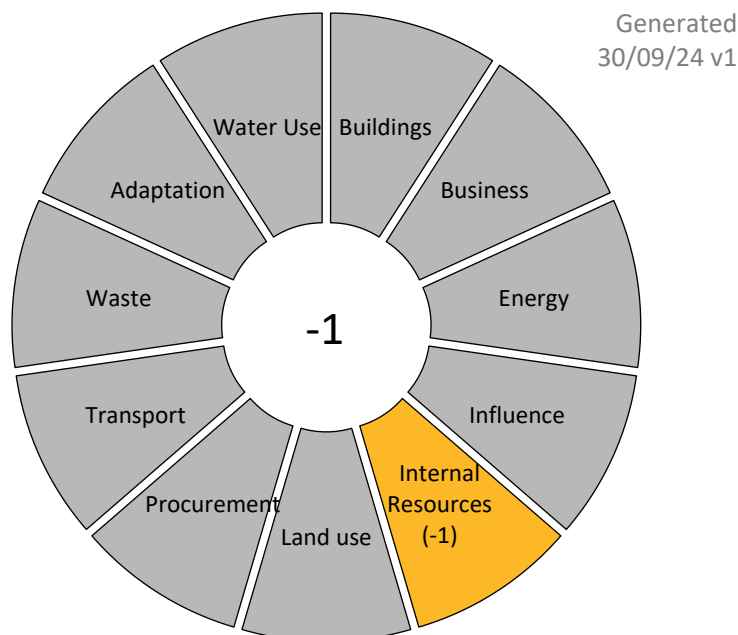
6.8. Equality Implications

6.8.1. The reports consider the safety and wellbeing of Northamptonshire children in care and care leavers, including those living out of county.

6.9 Climate Impact

6.9.1 There is no specific climate impact arising from this report, however North Northamptonshire Council is committed to considering impact on the environment which is managed via the individual strategic lead partnership organisation via organisational policy and commitments.

6.9.2 North Northamptonshire Council and Northamptonshire Childrens Trust are aware there are emissions associated with publishing web content and will seek to minimise the impact where possible.



North Northamptonshire Council has committed to being a carbon neutral organisation by 2030, 5 yrs & 3 mos away.

6.10 Community Impact

6.10.1 There is no specific community impact arising from these reports.

6.11 Crime and Disorder Impact

6.11.1 None specifically identified.

7 Background Papers

7.1 None.