

MEETING:

CORPORATE PARENTING PANEL

VOTING MEMBERS

Councillors Dauti, Gill, Hulme, Kelly, Rana and Qaseem

NON VOTING MEMBERS

(Required to attend all meetings, or to nominate a substitute in the event of their absence)

Executive Director of People (Children) and CE of Slough
Children First (SCF) – Sue Butcher
Accommodation Group Manager, Housing – Caroline
Bartos (SBC)
Foster Carer – Lianne Garstang (SCF)
NHS Frimley CCG – Lynette Jones-Jardine
Localities, Community Development & Leisure Lead –
Kam Birdie (SBC)
Thames Valley Police - TBC
Virtual School Head – Cherie Sears ((SCF)

DATE AND TIME:

TUESDAY, 18TH JULY, 2023 AT 5.00 PM

VENUE:

COUNCIL CHAMBER - OBSERVATORY HOUSE, 25
WINDSOR ROAD, SL1 2EL

**DEMOCRATIC SERVICES
OFFICER:**

NADIA WILLIAMS

(for all enquiries)

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NOTICE OF MEETING

You are requested to attend the above Meeting at the time and date indicated to deal with the business set out in the following agenda.

AGENDA

PART I

**AGENDA
ITEM**

REPORT TITLE

PAGE

LEAD

Apologies for absence.



<u>AGENDA ITEM</u>	<u>REPORT TITLE</u>	<u>PAGE</u>	<u>LEAD</u>
1.	Declarations of Interest <i>All Members who believe they have a Disclosable Pecuniary or other Interest in any matter to be considered at the meeting must declare that interest and, having regard to the circumstances described in Section 9 and Appendix B of the Councillors' Code of Conduct, leave the meeting while the matter is discussed.</i>		
2.	Welcome	-	Sue Butcher/ Lead Member for Children's Services
3.	Election of Chair	-	DSO
4.	Corporate Parenting Panel Terms of Reference - To Note	1 - 4	-
5.	Minutes of the last meeting held on 27 April 2023	5 - 8	-
6.	What is Corporate Parenting? Purpose, Membership and Frequency of Meetings	-	Kay Jones/ Ben Short
7.	Local Government Association (LGA) - Review Headlines and Recommendations	9 - 16	Reshma Bessesar
8.	Corporate Parenting Panel Score Care	To Follow	Kay Jones / Reshma Bessesar
9.	Next Steps and Forward Plan	-	Ben Short / Sue Butcher / Kay Jones
10.	Date of the next meeting: 26 October 2023	-	-

This meeting is not open to the public.

CORPORATE PARENTING PANEL – TERMS OF REFERENCE

Purpose of the Corporate Parenting Panel

- 1.1 The Corporate Parenting Panel assists the Council to fulfil its legal obligations and responsibilities towards looked after children and care experienced young people, under the Children Act 1989 and associated legislation, including the corporate parenting principles set out in section 1 of the Children and Social Work Act 2017.
- 1.2 The Corporate Parenting Panel (the ‘Panel’) is a collaborative forum. It is not a decision-making body of Slough Borough Council. Its role is to advise the Lead Member for Children’s Services and other elected member bodies on how to deliver better outcomes for children and young people in care and care experienced young people.
- 1.3 In particular this includes ensuring the Council and its relevant partners comply with the corporate parenting principles:
 - to act in the best interests, and promote the physical and mental health and wellbeing, 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.

2. Responsibilities of the Corporate Parenting Panel

- 2.1 The Panel should:
 - Champion and provide clear strategic and political direction in relation to corporate parenting
 - Support the development of a corporate parenting strategy and to monitor and review its implementation.
 - Focus on improving outcomes for looked after children and care experienced young people.
 - To consider recommendations from internal and external inspections and reviews.
 - To hear the voice of looked after children and care experienced young people, including involving them in meetings.
 - To monitor the education needs of care experienced children, promoting positive engagement of education partners in corporate parenting.

- To ensure the Council actively promotes opportunities for children looked after and care experienced young people across the whole Council
- To ensure that the voice and opinions of as wide a range of care experienced children and young people, including those with disabilities, are heard and that their views are used to co-produce services, shape policy and monitor performance.
- To advise the Lead Member for Children’s Services, Cabinet and other relevant member bodies on issues relating to corporate parenting.
- To advise the Slough Children First board and other partners on issues relating to corporate parenting.
- To report annually to the Council on the work of the Panel.

2.0 Membership

2.1 Membership will be reviewed annually as follows:

- (a) For the council by the relevant political groups, at the commencement of each municipal year.

2.2 All seven elected member appointments to the Panel by the Council will be made on a politically proportionate basis.

2.3 Attendance at meetings

Looked after children and care experienced young people and carers will be invited to attend meetings on a topic by topic basis and provided with opportunities to facilitate their involvement, including informal meetings to allow views to be sought and represented to the panel by members. In addition the Panel members are expected to attend events to meet relevant children and young people and people associated with corporate parenting responsibilities.

Chairing the Panel

2.4 The Panel shall elect a chair at its first meeting each municipal year.

2.5 The Lead Member for Children’s Services shall be entitled to attend the panel as a participating observer.

2.6 The co-opted members of the Panel shall be as follows:

- The council’s Executive Director of People - Children
- Chief Executive, Slough Children First (if different to the Executive Director)
- Director of Education
- Foster carer
- The council’s Service lead for strategic housing services
- Thames Valley Police representative (will attend when necessary)
- Designated Nurse for Children in Care
- Virtual School Headteacher

- The council's service lead for Communities and Leisure

The panel can elect to invite representatives of the children in care council, care experienced children and carers and other relevant representatives on a topic by topic basis or for the whole of a municipal year. Consideration should be given to a representative for specific groups of children and young people, for instance unaccompanied asylum-seeking children and children with disabilities.

3.0 Operation of the Panel

Meetings

- 3.1 The Panel will meet a minimum of four times a year.
- 3.2 Each meeting of the Panel will be based on one or more of the key corporate parenting principles set out in the Children and Social Work Act 2017.
- 3.3 Where possible the meetings should be available to view by the public, even if public attendance is not possible. Due to the nature of some of the work of the panel, some meetings are not held in public, however in these situation agenda papers and minutes should be made public where these do not disclose confidential information. The annual report must be published.
- 3.4 The Panel will provide an annual report to the Council and has the right to report to Cabinet or other elected member forums such as overview and scrutiny.

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Corporate Parenting Panel – Meeting held on Thursday, 27th April, 2023.

Present:- Councillors Hulme (Chair), Anderson and Basra

Sue Butcher, Executive Director of People (Children) & CE of Slough Children First (SCF)
Tony Hunter, Chair of SCF
Sharon Stephenson, Participation Officer (SCF)
Lynette Jones-Jardine, NHS Frimley CCG
Cherie Sears, Virtual School Head (SCF)

In Attendance

Ben Short, Director of Operations (SCF)
Reshma Bessesar, Head of Service, Children Looked After

Apologies for Absence:- Councillor Akbar and Lianne Garstang

WELCOME AND VOTE OF THANKS

The Chair welcomed everyone to the last meeting of the Corporate Parenting Panel (CPP) for this municipal year, and extended appreciation and thanks to all Panel members and officers.

1. Declarations of Interest

Cllr Basra declared an interest by virtue of working in the education sector.

2. Minutes of the last meeting held on 14 March 2023

Resolved – That the minutes of meeting held on 14 March 2023 be agreed as a correct record.

3. Feedback from Local Government Association (LGA) Review of Corporate Parenting Panel

The Panel received a presentation on the Corporate Parenting Peer Diagnostic following the Peer review, which took place on 13 & 14 March 2023. The review had been conducted by the LGA as a 'critical friend'.

Members acknowledged and thanked the LGA Peer team for carrying out the review. The team included:

- Jayne Ivory, Former Strategic Director of Children Services and Education – Blackburn with Darwen Borough Council.
- Fiona Venner, Executive Board member for Children and Families, Leeds City Council.
- Andrew Winfield, LGA Associate and Peer Challenge Manager.

Corporate Parenting Panel - 27.04.23

Members were provided with feedback from the review and invited to discuss the next steps for developing the effectiveness of corporate parenting.

The Chair highlighted the following areas of focus for this diagnostic and questions and points of consideration:

- What are the levels of understanding and ownership of corporate parenting across the Council?
- Partner understanding of their role as corporate parents and how to promote their engagement.
- How effectively are we at hearing the collective voice of care experienced young people and children we care for and how can we improve this?

Also highlighted from the potential areas of focus to support improvement included:

- Members of CPP should all access specialist training Total Respect, and My Things Matter <https://www.nyas.net/news-and-campaigns/campaigns/current-campaigns/my-things-matter/>
- Refresher training for all elected members, staff and partners as an annual event with different themes.

During discussion, the following comments and points were raised:

- The reviewed had recognised the challenges (Context 1) faced by the Slough Borough Council (SBC) and Slough Children Frist (SCF). One such challenge was that the voice of the child was not being heard and that the children's views were not taken forward to influence services and foster change.
- Acknowledged that there was a need for SBC and SCF to work closely together and to improve the service culture journey.
- Accepted that housing was the biggest issue for young people and should therefore be a corporate responsibility.
- Children didn't know who their leaders were.
- Data should be provided to enable challenge and to document the help being provided to children and young people, and also to manifest accountability. The Executive Director of People (Children) & CE of SCF advised that such data could be reported quarterly to CPP as a standard item.
- Members on CPP should each have a key area of responsibility and ownership.

Members noted that there had been substantial investments on young people to provide them with the best opportunities, whilst also being aware of other facets around them.

Corporate Parenting Panel - 27.04.23

The question of building resilience was raised and it was noted that one of the ways in which this was being fostered was through celebratory and wider events.

With regard to the areas highlighted in the potential areas of focusing to support improvement, members discussed the possible cost implication of taking up potential LGA support. Officers advised that there was no cost implications for either the initial review, or the further four days remaining.

The Chair suggested that workstreams would need to be set up with a small group of people (including young people) to work on the potential areas of focus to support improvement. The LGA could then subsequently be invited to a follow up visit at the conclusion of the work streams.

The Panel noted that the Participation Officer would be working with young people to review the Pledge. They could also be invited to deliver training on their 'In Our Shoes' at a CPP meeting but acknowledge that ultimately, strengthening young people's participation was a priority.

It was noted that governance would need to be streamlined in order to avoid multiple reporting, and consideration should also be given to changing the current meeting start time from 5pm to 6pm.

Resolved – That the Feedback from the Local Government Association Review of Corporate Parenting Panel be noted.

4. **Members Attendance Record**

Resolved – That the Members' attendance record be noted.

5. **2023-2024 Meeting Dates**

Resolved – That the meeting dates for 2023-2024 municipal year be noted.

Any Other Business

Members were invited to the forthcoming celebration day on Tuesday 20 May 2023. Further details will be circulated by email.

The Chair announced the departure of Tony Hunter, Chair of SCF at the end of May and thanked him for his participation on the Panel.

Chair

(Note: The Meeting opened at 5.02 pm and closed at 6.18 pm)

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Corporate Parenting Peer Diagnostic

LGA Peer Review March 23

The Review process

- Jane Ivory (previous DCS BWD); Fiona Venner (Member CF Leeds); and Andrew Winfield (LGA Associate)
- ‘Critical friend’ approach to a diagnostic of where we are at – not an inspection and we know we aren’t where we should be!
- Interviews with Leaders, Senior Managers and frontline staff
- We asked them to support with a ‘what next’ and development plan

Focus areas

1. What are the levels of understanding and ownership of corporate parenting across the council
2. Partner understanding of their role as corporate parents and how to promote their engagement
3. How effectively are we hearing the collective voice of care experienced young people and children we care for and how can we improve this?

Strengths

- The (then) Lead Member is energetic and committed
- Chief Executive of the Council and the DCS are keen advocates
- Some good examples in the local offer – Council Tax exemption, gym membership and leisure pass
- Celebration Event established – consider more of these events!
- Virtual School is a strength – positive advocate for our children
- Good Fostering Service
- Positive results form health navigator role

Areas for development

- Corporate Parenting reset and a focus on a small number of priority areas with laser like focus – including Housing
- Whole council prioritisation of Children's Services is needed
- Updating sufficiency strategy – including edge of care as an invest to save.
- Senior Leader and Members need to engage with children and young people
- Update Corporate Parenting Strategy
- Participation urgently needs to be strengthened
- Performance information at CPP needs to be focused – including stability of staff, caseloads etc.
- High support and high challenge needed

The Corporate Parenting Panel

- Discuss and agree what would help the meeting to be more engaging
- Needs to meet more often to have impact. Items presented should have a clear purpose with an outcome identified and followed through.
- Strengthen the Membership – key strategic partners!
- Voice of children and young people through a variety of means
- Change the Pledge to a Promise (feedback from young people) and deliver!
- Development session needed – what is our responsibility as a Member or Officer?

Offer of LGA support

- Learning from other local authorities
- Facilitated workshops
 - Governance and impact of the panel
 - Induction and training for new Members, staff and partners
 - Improving the agenda, reports and participation

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