

## **Corporate Parenting Advocacy Panel – Terms of Reference**

### **1. AIM**

- 1.1 The aim of the Corporate Parenting Advocacy Panel (CPAP) is to advocate for children and young people in care in Bracknell Forest and support them to achieve their best outcomes. It will achieve this by providing a forum to enable the Council as Corporate Parent to engage with Children Looked After and care leavers.

### **2. OBJECTIVES**

- 2.1 The key objectives of the Corporate Parenting Advocacy Panel are to:

- Engage with and listen to the voice of Children Looked After and care leavers through representatives of SiLSiP.
- Inspire children and young people in care to have confidence, independence and ambition
- Act in the best interests, and promote the physical and mental health and wellbeing, of those children and young people in care
- Encourage children and young people in care to express their views, wishes and feelings, and take these into account.
- Make sure that children and young people in care are safe, with stable home lives, relationships and education or work
- Prepare children and young people in care for adulthood and independent living
- Actively encourage Members to engage with their corporate parenting responsibilities for Children Looked After and Care Leavers through training and awareness raising.
- Make recommendations to the relevant decision maker about matters relating to Children Looked After and Care Leavers to improve their experience of living under the care of Bracknell Forest Council.

- 2.2 The Corporate Parenting Advocacy Panel will not replicate the function of Overview and Scrutiny, but shall raise concerns and make recommendations under its advocacy role. Overview and Scrutiny will make use of scrutiny mechanisms to assist with maintaining and improving the standards of services for children who are in the care of Bracknell Forest Borough Council. The Executive Member and Executive Director will be held to account on performance matters through the Council's Scrutiny functions.

### **3. PERFORMANCE MONITORING**

- 3.1 The Corporate Parenting Advocacy Panel will track a small amount of data in order to understand the experience of Children Looked After.

### **4. MEMBERSHIP**

- 4.1 The Panel shall comprise six Elected Members according to the usual apportionment arrangements. Panel members shall be appointed annually by the Leader of the Council.

The following non-voting co-optees shall also be invited to all meetings:

- Executive Member for Children, Young People and Learning
- Two Foster Carers
- Two representatives of Say it Loud Say it Proud (SiLSiP)
- One Health Representative

The following representatives will also be invited to attend meetings as appropriate, and will be sent information relating to all Panel meetings:

- Representatives of the Children Looked After pod or Family Placement Team
- Virtual School Head
- Headteacher representative
- Care Leavers advocate
- Other specialist groups working with Children Looked After, as required.

- 4.2** The Chair and Vice-Chair shall be elected from the Elected Member group, and will be appointed annually at the first meeting in each municipal year.
- 4.3** Panel members shall be required to undertake ongoing training, and will have opportunities to engage (where appropriate) with representatives of children in care on behalf of all of the Council's Corporate Parents. Because Panel members will not be undertaking work alone with young people, a DBS check is not required.
- 4.4** The theme of each panel meeting will rotate between Partners groups to give opportunity to address key issues in their area, for example SiLSiP, social workers, health, education etc.
- 4.5** The Corporate Parenting Advocacy Panel welcomes the input and support of all Councillors.
- 4.6** Meetings of this Panel will not be open to the public but periodically information shall be made available of the recent work of the Panel.

## **6. REPORTING MECHANISMS**

- 6.1** The Corporate Parenting Advocacy Panel will meet quarterly, including an annual forum on a key issue relating to children looked after to which all partners and representatives shall be invited. The normal rules for a quorum for Panel meetings shall apply.
- 6.2** The Panel will have no direct decision-making powers but will make recommendations where appropriate to the appropriate decision maker or body.
- 6.3** The Chair of the Panel will provide regular updates to all Councillors by way of an Annual Report to update on the work of Corporate Parenting function.