



**WOKINGHAM
BOROUGH COUNCIL**

**Terms of Reference Document:
Corporate Parenting Board**

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The Aim

Wokingham Borough council has a strong corporate parenting ethos recognising that the care system is not just about keeping children safe, but promoting recovery, resilience, and well-being.

All children need love and stability in order to thrive. A strong corporate parenting ethos means that everyone from the Chief Executive down to front line staff, as well as elected council members, are concerned about those children and care leavers as if they were their own. This is evidenced by an embedded culture where council officers do all that is reasonably possible to ensure the council is the best 'parent' it can be to the child or young person and to consider whether the care given would be good enough for our children.

The Corporate Parenting Board should ensure that all elements of the council work collectively together to make sure the children in Wokingham's care get the best possible support and service that can be offered. Corporate parenting requires ownership and leadership at a senior level, including from elected members in the council.

The Objectives

The key objectives of the Corporate Parenting Board are as follows:

- To routinely examine and challenge performance relating to children in care and inquire into those areas where performance is poor or of concern.
- To explore the extent to which the Council is contributing to meeting the needs of children in care and care leavers.
- Ensure that the strategic plans for children in care and care leavers are being effectively delivered.
- Identify and celebrate the achievements of individual children in care and care leavers.
- Meet and listen to children and care leavers in their context or environment. Respond to what they or their representatives (on the Board) say about their experiences of being in care and the kinds of services they want.
- Be a champion for children in care and care leavers in the Council using the standard: **"is this good enough for my child?"** to challenge and champion services provided by the Council and partners.
- Ensure national initiatives in relation to children in care and

care leavers are disseminated and embedded in practice.

- Ensure those planning, delivering, and monitoring services have taken account of inclusion, diversity and equality issues affecting children in care and care leavers.
- Monitor the implementation of agreed actions, in particular actions taken in response to the views of children and young people.

This will be done by:

- Listening to the feedback from children and young people and making proposals for action within the Council to improve services to children in care and care leavers.
- Monitoring progress and development of children and young people in key areas such as education, health, accommodation, and employment opportunities by using regular management information.
- Making recommendations to the Council on ways of improving development opportunities for children and young people, and the quality of care offered to children in care and care leavers in Wokingham.
- Having the opportunity to obtain direct feedback and experiences of those in receipt of or who deliver our services. To create the opportunity for the Board to have a fuller understanding of the services we deliver and lived experience of children and young people, through both direct engagement and also scrutiny and overview of the reports presented.

To do this the Corporate Parenting Board will need:

- Statistical data set which shows numbers, progress and outcomes for children in care and care leavers
- The views of children and young people
- The views and impact of key stakeholders
- Opportunities to observe service delivery and engage with Children in care and care leavers.

Membership

The Board will be comprised of a group of Core Members. Each political group will be represented in proportion to their wider representation on the Council.

Officer support for the Board will be led and co-ordinated by the Director of Children Services and the Assistant Director of Children's Social Care. Further input and advice will be provided by the following persons, as appropriate:

- Foster carer representative
- Service manager, quality assurance
- Children's Rights and Advocacy Officer
- Virtual school
- Health representative
- Service Manager, Looked After Children Service
- Housing representative

Plus, anyone else who the Panel considers should be represented.

Reporting Mechanisms

The Corporate Parenting Board will meet four times a year. The quorum for Panel meetings shall be three core members.

An agenda for each Board meeting is agreed via the Board's operational group, which will detail the reports that need to be submitted. There are no set times for when reports should be presented to the Board during the year.

The documents will be uploaded on Mod.Gov, 10 working days before the Corporate Parenting Board takes place allowing time for Board members to ask questions prior to the meeting.

The Board will have no direct decision-making powers. It will report to the Council annually, making recommendations to Executive and Council where appropriate.