

WEST NORTHAMPTONSHIRE COUNCIL COUNCIL

3rd November 2022

Cabinet Member for Children Families, Education and Skills: Cllr Fiona Baker

Report Title	Northamptonshire Corporate Parenting Board Annual Report 2021-22
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List of Appendices

Northamptonshire Corporate Parenting Board Annual Report 2021-22

1. Purpose of Report

- 1.1 This is the Annual Report of the Northamptonshire Corporate Parenting Board for 2021-22.

2. Executive Summary

- 2.1 The report is structured as follows:

Foreword. From Cllrs Fiona Baker and Scott Edwards.

Executive Summary. Summarising the report as a whole.

Governance and Statutory Context. Sets out the legal underpinning of corporate parenting, and the structure and role of the Board, including in light of the creation of the Trust and creation of two unitary councils.

Board activity. Summarises the activity of the Board during the reporting period, including meeting arrangements, service reports, and young people's participation.

NCT Improvement Plan and Priorities. Sets out the Board's performance against the priorities set out in the Trust Improvement Plan, and the Board's future priorities. This section includes recommendations for council's attention.

Appendix. Reproduces the four priorities as set out in the Trust's corporate parenting strategy 2021-25.

3. Recommendations

3.1 It is recommended that the council:

- a) Approves the establishment of Corporate Parenting Operational Groups as set out in Section 3 (page 19) of the annual report.
- b) Approves the inclusion of corporate parenting responsibilities being set out in every job description with NCT and West Northamptonshire Council, as set out in Section 3 (page 19) of the annual report.
- c) Approves NCT and West Northamptonshire Council becoming a Fostering-Friendly employer, as set out in Section 3 (pp19-20) of the annual report.

4. Reason for Recommendations

4.1 Reason for Recommendations:

- To promote and monitor the Trust's corporate parenting strategy.
- To encourage all members and employees to recognise their role as corporate parents.
- To promote in-house fostering sufficiency.

5. Report Background

5.1 The report sets out the role, structure and activity of the Corporate Parenting Board, including proposed priorities.

6. Issues and Choices

6.1 The council asked to consider the recommendations set out in section 3.

7. Implications (including financial implications)

7.1 Resources and Financial

7.1.1 There may be some financial and resource impact in terms of the recommendations set out in section 3. Becoming a fostering-friendly employer could for example include allowing paid leave

to employees in order to help children settle into placement, or for carers to complete training. There could also be some resource impact in terms of amending job descriptions to feature corporate parenting responsibility. If there are financial implications of becoming a foster friendly employer they will form the basis of a further report to Cabinet on the matter for consideration.

7.2 Legal

7.2.1 The annual report sets out the legal framework for local authorities' corporate parenting responsibilities. The recommendations of the report are intended to help the local authority meet its legal corporate parenting responsibilities.

7.2.2 Board itself is not a statutory body. However, selected service reports are required to be seen by a suitable oversight body, and Board fulfils this function.

7.3 Risk

7.3.1 Risks associated with the recommendations of the report include:

- NCT lacks sufficient in-house foster places for children in care.
- NCT and council employees who are foster-carers do not receive adequate support from their employer in their fostering role.
- NCT and council employees do not recognise their role as corporate parents.

Overall, these risks imply a deleterious impact on the outcomes for children in care.

7.4 Consultation and communications

7.4.1 The report was submitted to and agreed by the Corporate Parenting Board on the 29th of September. The Board includes the Trust CEO, Director of Children's Services for the Trust and two councils, and both cabinet members for Children and Families.

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

7.5 Consideration by Overview and Scrutiny

7.5.1 See above.

7.6 Climate Impact

7.6.1 There are no major climate considerations of the report, however, the report does recommend councillor inclusion in operational groups, which implies travelling to meetings and increasing the members' carbon footprint. This is likely to be mitigated by holding virtual meetings through MS Teams.

7.7 Community Impact

7.7.1 The report considers the safety and wellbeing of Northamptonshire children in care and care leavers, including those living out of county.

8. Background Papers

8.1 None.