

Report to:	EXECUTIVE CABINET
Date:	24 March 2021
Executive Member:	Cllr Bill Fairfoull – Deputy Executive Leader (Children).
Reporting Officer:	Richard Hancock – Director of Childrens Services
Subject:	CARED FOR CHILDREN PLEDGE
Report Summary:	<p>As a Local Authority we have responsibility to act as the “corporate parents” for all our Care for Children and Care Leavers. In Tameside we take this responsibility seriously, including our responsibility to actively and meaningfully engage with children and young people and to listen to their voice in line with our LISTENing in Tameside framework. To this end our Corporate Parenting Panel Partnership and Engagement group for young people has developed a Cared for Children’s Pledge. This was considered and endorsed by the Corporate Parenting Panel on 13 October 2020, which resolved that the ‘New Pledge’ be taken through the Council’s formal governance process for adoption by the Council.</p>
Recommendations:	That Executive Cabinet be recommended to agree that the Cared for Childrens Pledge is agreed and actively supported and promoted across the Authority and our partners.
Corporate Plan:	This Pledge support a number of priorities across our Corporate Plan, including Very Best Start and Aspirations and Hope.
Policy Implications:	The Cared for Children’s Pledge will support and inform how we engage Cared for Children and young people in policy development
Financial Implications: (Authorised by the statutory Section 151 Officer & Chief Finance Officer)	<p>It is not anticipated that supporting this pledge will result in additional costs for the council, the recommendations are all practice lead listening pledges. It is therefore expected that this will be delivered from within the Children’s Services existing budget of £54m.</p>
Legal Implications: (Authorised by the Borough Solicitor)	<p>Cared for Children (legally referred to as 'Looked after Children') are the children that are subject to care orders and those who are voluntarily accommodated (they may be fostered or in residential homes or still living with their family).</p> <p>The Council is the ‘corporate parent’ for Cared for Children. This means that the Council has a collective responsibility to achieve good parenting for Cared for Children.</p> <p>In broad terms, a corporate parent should do at least what a good parent would do. Once the council has taken the profound and difficult decision to remove a child, short-term or long-term, from his or her family, it is the duty of the whole Council to ‘safeguard and promote his welfare’ (1989 Children Act). This includes the education department as well as social services, and school also have a key role to play. The responsibility of the corporate parent continues at least until the age of 21 and up to the age of 24 if the young person is still being supported in higher education or training.</p>

It is understood that the pledge has been prepared with the involvement of our Cared For Children and should embody the cornerstone principles of the care the council will provide them.

Risk Management:

It is not anticipated that this pledge raises any significant risk. Although challenge could arise if it was agreed and then seen not to have been delivered. Its implementation will be kept under review by the Corporate Parenting Panel.

Background Information:

The background papers relating to this report can be inspected by contacting - Richard Hancock, Director of Children's Services by:



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1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 The Children and Social Work Act 2017 introduced corporate parenting principles, which comprise of seven needs that local authorities in England must have regard to whenever they exercise a function in relation to looked-after children or care leavers.
- 1.2 In order to thrive, children and young people have certain key needs that good parents generally meet. The corporate parenting principles set out seven principles that local authorities must have regard to when exercising their functions in relation to looked after children and young people, as follows:
- 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

2. OUR PLEDGE

- 2.1 In Tameside we have a now well established Corporate Parenting Panel which as part of wide and active oversight and engagement with many aspects of our Care for Childrens Services, encompassing the above principles, also hears regularly from the Partnership and Engagement group for young people supported and facilitated by our engagement officer.
- 2.2 In Tameside we take seriously our responsibility to actively and meaningfully engage with children and young people and to listen to their voice in line with our LISTENing in Tameside framework. To this end our Corporate Parenting Panel Partnership and Engagement group for young people has developed a Cared for Children's Pledge.
- 2.3 This was considered and endorsed by the Corporate Parenting Panel on 13th October 2020, which resolved that: that the content of the report be noted and that the 'New Pledge' be taken through the Council's formal governance process for adoption by the Council.
- 2.3 Attached at Appendix 1 is the Cared for Childrens Pledge which encapsulates the thinking of our Cared for Children
- 2.4 Our Pledge to all our Cared for Children is that we will :
- Prioritise your health and wellbeing
 - Listen to what you say and take your views seriously
 - Help you understand your journey and what's happening in your life
 - Provide a place for you to live that make you feel safe
 - Make a plan with you that will explain how we will look after you
 - Ask you what you think you need
 - Act on what you have told us and get back to you quickly
 - Help you to participate in having your voice heard and in doing so help us make our services better for you
 - Provide opportunities to meet other young people

- Recruit permanent staff with you so that we are choosing the best workforce for our young people
- Expect all professionals who work with you such as social workers, support workers and Independent reviewing officers to give you the time you need to build relationships with them

3 CONCLUSION

- 3.1 Endorsing and actively promoting this Pledge will help and support engagement with our Cared for Children and enhance the delivery of our Corporate Parenting responsibilities.

4 RECOMMENDATIONS

- 4.1 As set out at the front of this report.