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CORPORATE PARENTING PANEL

Wednesday, 12 October 2022

Present: Councillor K Hodson (Chair)
Councillors H Collinson S Powell-Wilde
C Cooke A Wright

1 WELCOME AND INTRODUCTION

The Chair opened the meeting and reminded everyone that the meeting was being webcast and a copy was retained on the Council's website

2 APOLOGIES

None were received

3 MEMBERS CODE OF CONDUCT - DECLARATIONS OF INTERESTS

Members were asked to consider whether they had any disclosable pecuniary interests in connection with any item(s) on the agenda and, if so, declare and state what they were.

Councillor Sue Powell Wilde declared a personal interest by virtue of her position as a foster carer in Wirral through a private fostering agency.

Councillor Helen Collinson declared a personal interest by virtue of her daughter's employment within Wirral's Foster Care Team

4 PUBLIC AND MEMBERS QUESTIONS

There were no public questions, requests to make a statement or petitions, or questions from members submitted.

5 CORPORATE PARENTING ANNUAL REPORT 2021-22

A report from the Director of Children, Families and Education was presented by the Head of Permanence Service, providing an annual overview of the Corporate Parenting work undertaken in 2021-22. Members were informed of the work undertaken by the Local Authority and partners to fulfil its corporate parenting responsibilities. In particular, Members were signposted to the work of the participation and engagement service with Children Looked After and Care Leavers within the report, including the creation of a Care Leavers Hub 'Our Space'. The report indicated how priorities relating to accommodation and housing, health and wellbeing, education and jobs, and transitions had

been met over the past 12 months. The progress made in Fostering over the past year was highlighted, particularly in recruitment, however it was noted that challenges in expansion and retention of staffing remained. Members were also provided with a background to the Children Looked After and Care Leavers Strategy 2022-2025 and the next steps included within the strategy.

Members queried differences between the previous Children Looked After and Care Leavers Strategy, which expired in 2021, and the new strategy. Officers emphasised that there was a greater focus on clearly articulating the voice of children and young people in the new strategy. Members also praised the 'Our Space' care leavers hub, and in particular the work of staff in empowering young people and preparing them for the world.

On a motion by Councillor Collinson, seconded by Councillor Powell-Wilde, it was:

Resolved – That the Annual work programme and the work undertaken to ensure that the local authority and partners are effective corporate parents be endorsed.

6 CORPORATE PARENTING WORK PROGRAMME 2022-2023

A report from the Director of Children, Families and Education was presented by the Assistant Director of Children, Families and Education, providing Members with an overview of the proposed Corporate Parenting Work Programme for 2022-23. The work programme was focused on the priorities of the Children Looked After and Care Leavers Strategy 2022-25, which were: emotional and physical health and wellbeing, independence and transition to adulthood, positive Lived Experiences, and education and employment. Members were informed that the work programme, which was to be delivered by the Corporate Parenting Board, would explore in detail these priorities with officers expected to report on progress and work undertaken to promote and support improvements in these areas. It was noted that the work programme also included consideration of performance data, feedback, and consultations from children looked after and care leavers and the annual report of the Head of the Virtual School.

Members queried how the voice of children would be collated and presented in meetings. Officers clarified that the work of the Children in Care and Care Leavers Councils, ensuring children and young people were well represented, was crucial in collecting views and insights. Members were informed that work was being undertaken to extend the reach of the Care Councils.

On a motion by Councillor Powell-Wilde, seconded by Councillor Wright, it was:

Resolved – That

- 1. The work programme for 2022-2023 be endorsed; and**
- 2. The delivery of the work programme be undertaken by the Corporate Parenting Board, meeting three times between November 2022 and March 2023.**

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