



Future Governance of Corporate Parenting Board

*Prepared by Colleen Male
Director of Children's Social Work*



Walsall Council

PROUD OF OUR **PAST** OUR **PRESENT** AND FOR OUR **FUTURE**

Corporate Parenting Board

The purpose of the Corporate Parenting Board is to assist the Council fulfil its legal obligations and responsibilities towards children in care and leaving care by providing strategic direction to ensure they are effectively supported to reach their full potential.

The board convenes six times a year and comprises of Councillors, advisors and officers. It works hard to secure the engagement of children and young people.

The board is currently organised as a formal Council committee meeting, which means that the functioning and business of the board is in the public domain.

History of Corporate Parenting Board

Walsall's Corporate Parenting Board became a formal committee meeting following a full Ofsted inspection of Children's Services in 2017. As part of this inspection the following recommendation was made;

'Improve the functioning of both the Scrutiny Committee and Corporate Parenting Board to ensure that their work has a positive impact on improving services for children and the outcomes they achieve'.

Progress of Corporate Parenting Board

Over recent years the Board has gone from strength to strength;

- Chaired by Portfolio Holder for Children's Services.
- Good member, advisor and officer attendance and engagement.
- Has advocated on behalf of children and young people which has led to enhanced support to children and young people i.e. increases to setting up home grant for Care Leavers.
- Overseen implementation of the Corporate Parenting Strategy and the associated Action Plan.

However.....

1. Children's Services are now in a different place compared to 2017 and in their last Ofsted inspection were judged to be good.
2. We are keen to develop Corporate Parenting Board with children at its heart, with increased attendance and participation of children and young people.
3. The sensitivity of matters to be discussed at Corporate Parenting Board are not always suitable to be in the public domain.
4. Over the last 6 years the functioning of Children's Overview and Scrutiny Committee has significantly improved. Children's Overview and Scrutiny Committee already has responsibility for scrutinising children in care and care leavers.

Cabinet portfolio(s)

Children's

Services for children in need of help and protection, children looked after and care leavers, early help, schools meals commissioning, involvement of children and young people, transition arrangements between Children's and Adult Social Care, and Walsall Children's Safeguarding Board and Chair of Corporate Parenting Board.

Remit

All aspects and general services related to serving children and young people (excluding education and learning). The scrutinising of performance in relation to the following Corporate Plan priority:

- **Children have the best start in life and are safe from harm, happy, healthy and learning well.**

Proposal

1. We are seeking your support to de-establish Corporate Parenting Board as a formal committee meeting.
2. Agree to Children's Services Overview and Scrutiny Committee becoming the scrutineer of services to children in care and care leavers.
3. To re-establish Corporate Parenting Board as a Children's Services Board, chaired by Children's Services Portfolio Holder, with continued attendance, support, and challenge of Councillors.
4. Develop a model that is more inclusive of children and young people where their confidentiality is maintained.