

## **CORPORATE PARENTING PANEL**

<b>Date and Time :-</b>	<b>Tuesday 15 February 2022 at 5.00 p.m.</b>
<b>Venue:-</b>	<b>Virtual</b>
<b>Membership:-</b>	<b>Councillors Bird, Browne, Castledine-Dack, Z. Collingham, Cooksey, Cowen, Cusworth (Chair), Griffin, Pitchley (Vice-Chair), and Yasseen</b>
<b>Contact</b>	<b>Katherine Harclerode, Governance Advisor katherine.harclerode@rotherham.gov.uk</b>

The items which will be discussed are described on the agenda below and there are reports attached which give more details.

Rotherham Council advocates openness and transparency as part of its democratic processes. Anyone wishing to record (film or audio) the public parts of the meeting should inform the Chair or Governance Advisor of their intentions prior to the meeting.

### **AGENDA**

**1. Apologies for absence.**

To receive the apologies of any Panel Member who is unable to attend the meeting.

**2. Minutes of the previous meeting held on 23 November 2021 (Pages 3 - 5)**

To consider the minutes of the previous meeting of the Corporate Parenting Panel held on 23 November 2021, and approve them as a true and correct record of the proceedings.

**3. Declarations of Interest.**

To receive declarations of interest from Members in respect of items listed on the agenda.

**4. Exclusion of the press and public.**

To consider whether the press and public should be excluded from the meeting during consideration of any part of the agenda.

**5. LAC Council Update (Pages 7 - 9)**

To receive a presentation from the Looked After Children's (LAC) Council in respect of recent activities and renewed priorities.

**6. Leisure Cards for LAC and Leaving Care (Pages 11 - 16)**

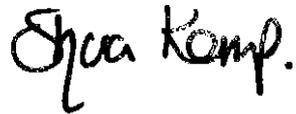
To receive a progress update in respect of the request for leisure passes for LAC and Care Leavers living in Rotherham.

**7. Urgent Business**

To determine any item which the Chair is of the opinion should be considered as a matter of urgency.

**8. Date and time of the next meeting**

The next meeting of the Corporate Parenting Panel will be held on 29 March 2022, commencing at 5 pm in Rotherham Town Hall.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Sharon Kemp." The signature is written in a cursive, slightly slanted style.

Sharon Kemp,  
Chief Executive.

**CORPORATE PARENTING PANEL**  
**Tuesday 23 November 2021**

Present:- Councillor Cusworth (in the Chair); Councillors Bird, Browne, Collingham, Cooksey and Griffin.

Apologies were received from Cllrs Pitchley and Yasseen.

**21. MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING HELD ON 19 OCTOBER 2021.**

**Resolved:-**

1. That the minutes be approved as a true and correct record.

**22. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST.**

There were no declarations of interest.

**23. EXCLUSION OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC.**

The Chair confirmed there was no reason to exclude members of press or public from observing any of the items on the agenda.

**24. PLACEMENT SUFFICIENCY**

Consideration was given to a report setting out the Council's recent response to the need for sufficient placements for Looked After Young people. The goal of this work was to be able to feed back to the young people the commitment of corporate parents to provide high-quality residential placements close to home. This overall development responded directly to Rotherham Children and Young People's Services (CYPS) strategic intention to reduce the number of external residential placements and ensure more Rotherham looked after children (LAC) and young people are placed within borough close to their family and community networks. The new provision, along with foster care, third party placements, semi-independent provision, and other family-based placements, will provide a mixed economy of arrangements which sought to effectively meet Rotherham's statutory duties, outlined in the Sufficiency Strategy 2019 - 2022.

In discussion, Members expressed interest in how the use of IFA (Independent Fostering Agencies) compares with that of statistically similar or neighbouring authorities. It was noted that this benchmarking would be provided in a future meeting.

Clarification was also requested around the use of the phrasing describing placements as "interventions not destinations." This was explained as reflecting the practice of reviewing placements for each individual to

determine if they are still appropriate and still the best way to support the individual young person toward the best outcome for them.

Members requested further detail around challenges or hurdles that are commonly encountered in the process of trying to achieve the best outcomes, for example, were there special guardianship orders that can be mired in court processes and hard to obtain? The response from officers described the robust tracker system that the service regularly scrutinised and updated to achieve their ambitious outcomes. The tracker occasionally revealed trends that the service then responded to, such as if a trend emerged around a certain age group, the service responded by having robust conversations with foster carers around the options for staying put. Where there are complex court procedures involved, the tracker provides an overarching point of view whereby strategic decisions could be made because the service knows the children well.

**Resolved:-**

1. That the report be noted.

**25. CORPORATE PARENTING PERFORMANCE REPORT**

Consideration was given to a report providing a summary of performance for key performance indicators across Looked After Children (LAC) services. It was considered in conjunction with the accompanying performance data report (Appendix 1) which provided trend data, graphical analysis, and benchmarking data against national and statistical neighbour averages where possible.

In discussion, an update on health assessments was also provided and it was noted that COVID had presented delays to some health assessments. It was observed that sibling groups are often the ones to encounter delays due to logistics, holidays, and COVID. It was noted that the specifics of the narrative around each case were known to the service.

Information around Looked After Children who come into contact with the criminal justice system was also requested to be reflected visibly in future performance reports, with a view to reducing the number. Emphasis was placed on the importance of developing a local protocol based on national protocol to reduce criminalisation of children.

**Resolved:-**

1. That the report be noted.
2. That future performance reports include LAC cases open to the Youth Offending Team (YOT).

**26. URGENT BUSINESS**

There were no urgent items.

**27. DATE AND TIME OF THE NEXT MEETING**

The Chair announced the next meeting of the Corporate Parenting Panel would take place on 15 February 2021 at 3.30pm.

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## Rotherham Looked After Children's Council February 2022 Update Corporate Parenting Panel

Frustratingly, December and January LAC Council sessions have been once again interrupted by the Corona Virus Pandemic with the rapid spread of the Omicron strain within our local community. Sadly, this meant that the LAC Council Christmas Party had to be cancelled and we had to return to Virtual Meetings throughout January. Over half of the group opted out of sessions as they dislike engaging virtually. However, we did manage to hold a few sessions in December namely the Christmas Craft session and a visit to New York stadium before we were disturbed by the corona-coaster once again.

The numerous experiences and opportunities offered to children & young people at the LAC Council, Lil' LAC Club and the wider LAC population through Voice & Influence Campaigns, participation activities & community events are specifically designed to empower, increase social capital, raise self-awareness and self-esteem, to foster resilience and support better outcomes for our vulnerable children & young people. Here are some of the things that we have been doing over the past two months to achieve these outcomes within the current restrictions:-

### LAC Council Voices Shaping Services & rebuilding the future

#### Capital of Culture Consultations

In December the LAC Council was visited again by Sarah Christie and the group engaged in their ongoing support by exploring ideas for Rotherham's Capital of Culture 2025 based on their previous visit to the National Videogame Museum and discussions around theatre and performing arts. The young people had great fun creating images of their ideas and putting forward their suggestions for future visits to explore areas of cultural interest to them.

#### Festival Committee

The young people of the LAC Council are currently involved at the very early stages of co-production, shaping and design of a Summer Festival for all Looked After and Leaving Care young people. This festival is a very exciting project for them, as our young people excitingly explore ideas for what the festival should look like, what they want to happen there, including music, games, Bar BQ and opportunities for consultations with their community to inform the Corporate Promises and LAC campaigns for the following year.

## LAC Council Participation Sessions



### Rotherham United Community Trust

The LAC Council were invited by the Graduates within the Rotherham United Community Trust to engage in a Movie Night at New York Stadium. This was a fun night with a Muppet movie, lots of games and food, all organised by the graduates as part of their course requirements. Here are some of our young people enjoying the event.



### Christmas Craft Session



Young people engaged in a fun filled Xmas Craft Session in December Creating Xmas Cards, Gingerbread houses, Holly wreaths, Rudolf & Snowman Soup Gifts for friends and family. This was intended to be the build up to our Xmas party the week after, but unfortunately due to the exceptionally high numbers of Covid in the general population we had to cancel the LAC Council party and reschedule it for February half term when we hope numbers are lower.

Merry Xmas & Happy New Year to all our LAC COUNCIL family & friends.



### LAC Connection Sessions

During January Virtual LAC COUNCIL sessions, we engaged with managing issues shared by our young people including dealing with disappointments brought forward again by the pandemic, using our time effectively by talking together about stress management strategies and techniques, with young people supporting each other and sharing their individual preferred techniques to deal with challenging times of stress within their lives. These sessions given over to talking about young peoples lived experiences are essential to show caring for each other, offer comfort and promote connectedness with each other.



Children and Young people from the LAC Council, Lil LAC Club and those who have engaged in LAC participation online sessions & events would like to say a BIG THANK YOU to all of our friends, volunteers and supporters over the last two months These include:-

Thank You All! 😊

Sarah Christie – Programme Manager, CCoC 2025  
Matt Ellis – Voice & Influence Early Help  
Rotherham United Community Graduates  
LAC Voice, Influence & Participation Volunteers

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**Committee Name and Date of Committee Meeting**

Corporate Parenting Panel – 15 February 2022

**Report Title**

Leisure Cards for LAC and Leaving Care

**Is this a Key Decision and has it been included on the Forward Plan?**

No

**Strategic Director Approving Submission of the Report**

Suzanne Joyner, Strategic Director of Children and Young People's Services

**Report Author(s)**

Sharon Sandell – Head of Children in Care

Rebecca Wall - Interim Assistant Director Social care

[rebecca.wall@rotherham.gov.uk](mailto:rebecca.wall@rotherham.gov.uk)**Ward(s) Affected**

Borough-Wide

**Report Summary**

Children and Young People who sit on our LAC Council have asked for free access to Leisure Facilities in the borough and have asked this be considered for all looked after and care experienced adults up to the age of 25. The LAC Council have also asked they be assured that the passes allow them to attend without an adult. LAC Council had raised this with Corporate Parenting Panel prior to COVID and has been a key priority for them over the past. This report provides an update of the progress of the working groups around Leisure Cards for LAC and Leaving Care.

**Recommendations**

1. The panel is asked to receive this report as an update on current progress.

**List of Appendices Included**

None

**Background Papers**

None

**Consideration by any other Council Committee, Scrutiny or Advisory Panel****Council Approval Required**

No

**Exempt from the Press and Public**  
No

## Leisure Cards for LAC and Leaving Care

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### 1. Background

The Looked After Children's Council (LACC) have requested that the corporate parenting panel considers their request to have access to leisure activities to support their physical and emotional wellbeing. This has been a long standing request and a task and finish group has been working on proposals about how this could be supported.

### 2. Key Issues

2.1 The report reflects the work undertaken by the task and finish group, the current offer to fostering families, young people and care leavers and the proposals being considered. There is also a timeline for further update.

2.2 Local Leisure Centres are provided by an arm's length organisation called Places for People LTD and are contracted to provide leisure services.

2.3 Any extension of offer to children and young people as requested by LAC Council will require costing out against each one of the requests from LAC Council and be determined as to what preferred option can be achieved. The current offer available to foster carers and looked after young people in their care is:

2.3.1 **Rothercard** users get a discount to access the Leisure Centres, and this can see the monthly membership rate reduced from £35 to £29pm. A **Rothercard** is available to residents of Rotherham if they are:

- Young people aged 16 to 19 years in full time education
- Looked after children/young people
- Anyone aged over 60
- Refugees/asylum seekers dependent on asylum seeker support payments
- Adults on a low income (accessing benefits)

2.3.2 If adult foster carers access a membership via Rothercard, as part of the membership up to 4 children 16 years and under within a family can go in free to the facilities if they are accompanied by an adult.

2.3.3 Under 8's must be accompanied by an adult, however children over 8 can use the centre the pool independently without a parent and they can use this free of charge (if their adult carer qualifies via the above).

2.4 Leisure Services with People for Places LTD are working through the options to fully explore how RMBC can support the request from LAC

Council. This is because the detail of the contract suggests RMBC would have to pay upfront costs to People for Places to support free access to leisure.

- 2.5 Within this discussion there are some complicating factors which will need to be considered as to how we support access to children and young people with their families and carers access the centres. This includes:
  - 2.5.1 Making sure we consider all the living arrangements for children and young people who are described as looked after or care experienced.
  - 2.5.2 Thinking about whether these different living arrangements mean we vary the offer based on need, expectation, wishes and feelings.
  - 2.5.3 Ensuring we capture the views and ideas from more young adults over 18 and especially those in the over 21 years cohort.
- 2.6 The Children in Care Service and Regeneration & Environment Service, who support the leisure offer in Rotherham, are committed to developing the offer for young people post 18 but have agreed the detail of understanding how much it may cost in advance means some additional thought is required to understand what the likely demand could be for this age group.

### **3. Options considered and recommended proposal**

- 3.1 The below options are currently being considered by a group of officers:
  - Offer free leisure access to all to young people and RMBC pay subject to invoice after use. RMBC would have to understand the total possible cost if all young people take up the offer.
  - That support is offered if agreed through the Pathway Planning process and if considered something which would benefit – we would seek to pay for those individuals as part of our local offer.
  - Seek discounted rates for group bookings when made through the Leaving Care service.
  - Discounted rates for young people to access any team activities.
  - Discounted rates for children and young people to take part in any teaching.
- 3.2 There is a working group supporting decision making and next steps. Leisure Services with Places for People LTD are working through the pricing structure for RMBC to consider.
- 3.3 This will then be made available for decisions by the end of March 2022.
- 3.4 In the meantime, the LAC Service will be able to confirm offers which are already available and publish them in foster carer newsletters and information sent to our residential homes by the end of February 2022.

- 3.5 In addition, access to gym passes and leisure centres continue to be discussed on an individual basis with young people as their care plans and pathway plans are developed and if this is seen as an area which the young person wants or needs to pursue, this will be included and supported.

#### **4. Consultation on proposal**

- 4.1 This work has been undertaken in response to young peoples' voice and developed with Regeneration and Environment colleagues.

#### **5. Timetable and Accountability for Implementing this Decision**

- 5.1 This will be agreed once the proposals are confirmed and a timeline for this has been given as the end of March 2022.

#### **6. Financial and Procurement Advice and Implications (to be written by the relevant Head of Finance and the Head of Procurement on behalf of s151 Officer)**

- 6.1 This is an update report only at this stage and further consultation with finance will be needed in the future.

#### **7. Legal Advice and Implications (to be written by Legal Officer on behalf of Assistant Director Legal Services)**

- 7.1 There are no legal implications to this report.

#### **8. Human Resources Advice and Implications**

- 8.1 There are no direct human resource implications to this report.

#### **9. Implications for Children and Young People and Vulnerable Adults**

- 9.1 The proposals being explored work to support better health and emotional wellbeing outcomes for looked after children and those leaving care in Rotherham.

#### **10. Equalities and Human Rights Advice and Implications**

- 10.1 There are no direct implications from this report.

#### **11. Implications for CO<sub>2</sub> Emissions and Climate Change**

- 11.1 There are no direct implications within this report.

#### **12. Implications for Partners**

- 12.1 There are no direct implications in this report.

#### **13. Risks and Mitigation**

13.1 The proposals need further development at this stage, but a risk if not progressed is that an opportunity would be missed to improve the health and wellbeing of looked after children and care leavers in Rotherham.

**14. Accountable Officer(s)**

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*This report is published on the Council's [website](#).*