

## **Summary Sheet**

## **Council Report**

### **Title**

The Looked After and Care Leaver's Strategy 2017-20

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

No

### **Strategic Director Approving Submission of the Report**

Ian Thomas, Strategic Director for CYPS

### **Report Author(s)**

Ian Walker, Acting Head of Service, Children in Care

### **Ward(s) Affected**

All

### **Summary**

Looked After Children generally achieve worse outcomes in terms of their education, health and transitions to adulthood. These outcomes are the result of a combination of negative early life experiences and a legacy of poor standards of care provided by Rotherham as a Corporate Parent.

The Looked After Children and Care Leavers Strategy 2017-20 provides a framework for the improvements that are essential if this legacy is to be addressed and better outcomes achieved.

### **Recommendations**

The Corporate Parenting Panel is asked to endorse the attached strategy and agree to it being adopted by Rotherham MBC for implementation. The Corporate Parenting Panel will be asked to review the Strategy and support its key objectives. The Panel will also be asked to monitor the implementation of the Strategy and hold individual officers or partner agencies to account for any delays or barriers being experienced.

### **List of Appendices Included**

The full Strategy is set out as an appendix to this report.

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**Background Papers**

None

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

The Strategy has been previously discussed at Cabinet, the Departmental Leadership Team, the Looked After Children's Council, the Improvement Board and Rotherham's Local Safeguarding Children Board. Each body has had the opportunity to feed in to the final draft of the Strategy and thus there has been extensive consultation throughout the process.

**Council Approval Required**

No

**Exempt from the Press and Public**

No

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## **Title (Main Report)**

### **1. Recommendations**

1.1 The Corporate Parenting Panel is asked to endorse the attached strategy and agree to it being adopted by Rotherham MBC for implementation. The Corporate Parenting Panel will be asked to review the Strategy and support its key objectives. The Panel will also be asked to monitor the implementation of the Strategy and hold individual officers or partner agencies to account for any delays or barriers being experienced.

### **2. Background**

- 2.1 Both the Peer Review and Ofsted Monitoring Visit undertaken in October 2016 noted that Rotherham CYPS had a greater proportion of young people in its care with significant emotional needs. These extreme needs were attributable to a legacy of being left in unsafe and harmful situations for too long within their birth families and to a historical poor care experience once they became looked after. These experiences continue to impact on many looked after young people as evidenced by the high number of placement disruptions, poor educational outcomes and the reliance on out of authority placements.
- 2.2 This Strategy analyses these needs and outlines the plans to be implemented over the course of the next 3 years in order to improve the quality of the service we provide for looked after children and to better support them into successfully transitioning to adulthood

### **3. Key Issues**

- 3.1 The Key Service Priorities for 2017 are set down in the Strategy as being:-
- Stability and consistency in placements and the workforce.
  - Supporting social workers to move from compliance to quality.
  - Facilitating increased and enhanced management oversight.

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

- 4.1 This strategy has been developed following a detailed analysis of the existing quality of service offered to looked after children as compared to their identified needs. As a result it has been designed to improve the outcomes for looked after young people and care leavers and to support their successful transition to adulthood. Accordingly it is recommended that the Corporate Parenting Panel endorse this strategy and agree to review its implementation and challenge any barriers over the course of its lifetime.
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## **5. Consultation**

- 5.1 There has been full and wide-scale consultation in the formulation of this Strategy including with Cabinet, the Looked After Children Council, The Departmental Leadership Team, the Improvement Board and the LSCB. The comments from all of these forums have been incorporated into the final version of the Strategy prior to its publication.

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

- 6.1 It is planned that the Strategy will be implemented as from March 2017. Accountability for implementing this decision will be with the Head of Service for Children in Care.

## **7. Financial and Procurement Implications**

- 7.1 The financial implications of the those initiatives included in 3.6 which form part of the Council's overarching CYPS Sufficiency Strategy was presented to Cabinet on 14<sup>th</sup> November 2016.
- 7.2 The financial implications of the Foster Carer Payments Scheme, Support and Development element of the strategy was included in the report to Cabinet on 12<sup>th</sup> September 2016.

## **8. Legal Implications**

- 8.1 The Looked After Children Strategy proposed by this report will underpin the Council's compliance with the statutory duties it owes towards looked after children, such as the duties under the Children Act 1989 (as amended by the Children and Families Act 2014) to provide accommodation for and to safeguard and promote the welfare of looked after children, and a duty to promote the child's educational achievement.

## **9. Human Resources Implications**

- 9.1 The only Human Resource implications arise out of the proposed implementation of the Regional Adoption Agency. This will necessitate the implementation of the TUPE Regulations.

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

- 10.1 This Strategy is specifically designed to improve the care experience for looked after young people, to improve their outcomes and to support their successful transition to adulthood.

## **11 Equalities and Human Rights Implications**

- 11.1 The Strategy is designed to address the potential inequalities encountered by looked after young people and to support their Human Rights.
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## **12. Implications for Partners and Other Directorates**

- 12.1 There are implications for partner agencies and other directorates in terms of the expectations being made placed upon them as part of their Corporate Parenting responsibilities. However, no commitment has been placed in this Strategy without their prior agreement.

## **13. Risks and Mitigation**

- 13.1 The successful implementation of this Strategy will be dependent upon a number of agencies working together as a true Corporate Parent to promote the best interests of looked after children. The Corporate Parenting Panel will be the key forum for driving the Strategy and thus mitigating the risks arising from any delays or barriers being encountered.

## **14. Accountable Officer(s)**

Ian Walker, Acting Head of Service, Children in Care

Approvals Obtained from:-

Strategic Director of Finance and Corporate Services:- Mick Wildman

Director of Legal Services:- Neil Concannon

Head of Procurement (if appropriate):- N/a

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