

ROTHERHAM BOROUGH COUNCIL – REPORT TO MEMBERS

1	Meeting:	Members' Training and Development Panel
2	Date:	30 th September, 2010
3	Title:	Corporate Parent Training
4	Directorate:	Children and Young People's Services

5 **Summary**

This report summarises the proposals to provide training to all Councillors on how to be an effective Corporate Parent; the rationale for doing so; an outline course plan and proposed dates

6 **Recommendations**

That Members approve the proposed training and dates.

7. Proposals and Details

In March 2010 The Looked After Children's Scrutiny Sub Group reviewed Corporate Parenting arrangements. Recommendation 12 of their report states - 'that a training programme is developed, reflecting different levels of corporate parenting responsibilities' and the proposals outlined in this report suggests how this could be achieved.

The National Children's Bureau was commissioned by the Government to develop a programme for training elected members in how to fulfil the role of a Corporate Parent. It is a model that has been well trialled across the country and is widely used by Local Authorities. It is adaptable to local needs and feedback from participants is usually very good.

In the model there are three levels of training but much of level 2 can be combined with level 1 to provide all elected members with a good basic knowledge of the care system and how elected members can play an active role in monitoring and improving outcomes for looked after children and care leavers. It is also the opportunity for members to be given key statistics about looked after children and to compare local performance against the national picture and the performance of statistical neighbours. Please see appendix 1 for training outline

It is proposed that a two hour training session offered 3 times would give all members an opportunity to gain this basic level of training. Dates proposed are

- 12th October 2 – 4 p.m.
- 19th October 5 – 7 p.m.
- 2nd November 2 – 4 p.m.

Training that would be suitable for members of the Corporate Parenting Board and members of Children's Scrutiny Board would be developed in consultation with members of these groups and would be delivered to both elected members and co-opted members of this group.

8. Finance

You may want to add something here

9. Risks and Uncertainties

If elected members are not familiar with their responsibilities as Corporate Parents opportunities are lost in their day to day work as a councillor to promote the welfare of looked after children and to offer appropriate support, scrutiny and challenge to officers. In the recent Ofsted inspection of our Looked after children's services inspectors were pleased and interested in the Scrutiny report and will want to follow up on their return to ensure that the strategic actions suggested have been put into practice. Awareness-raising for elected members is an essential part of this strategy and a failure to

provide it would mean that Rotherham would not be complying with best practice.

10. Policy and Performance Agenda Implications

Improving outcomes for looked after children and care leavers is an essential element of the Children's Strategic plan. Raising awareness of Corporate Parenting amongst elected members is an important element of this strategy

11. Background Papers and Consultation

- Care Matters (DCSF 2008)
- Corporate Parenting Arrangements: Review of the Looked After Children Scrutiny Panel March 2010

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Appendix 1

Outline of Training Programme for Corporate Carers

Looking After Other People's Children

- Who becomes looked after and why?
- What happens to them? What are the outcomes? Local and national statistics
- Are bureaucracy and caring compatible?
- Defining the role of corporate parenting role
- What should you ask
 - – what can you do
 - The pledge
- What's important to children – what are their messages to elected members?
- Challenge: what are you going to do that you did not do before?