

Committee:	Dated:
Safeguarding Sub-Committee – For Information	08/02/2021
Subject: Corporate Parenting Annual Report 2019/20 and Corporate Parenting Strategy Update	Public
Which outcomes in the City Corporation's Corporate Plan does this proposal aim to impact directly?	1,2,3-4
Does this proposal require extra revenue and/or capital spending?	N
If so, how much?	N/A
What is the source of Funding?	N/A
Has this Funding Source been agreed with the Chamberlain's Department?	N/A
Report of: Andrew Carter, Director of Community and Children's Services	For Information
Report author: Scott Myers, Strategy Officer, Community and Children's Services	

Summary

This report informs the Committee of the performance of the City Corporation as a corporate parent, and the outcomes that have been achieved for the children in its care during 2019/20. It also informs the Committee that the Corporate Parenting Strategy has been reviewed and updated.

Recommendation

Members are asked to note the report.

Main Report

Background

1. The City of London Corporation is a corporate parent to the children who are in its care. These looked-after children are children and young people aged from 0 to the eve of their 18th birthday who cannot safely remain with their family, or those for whom the City Corporation acts as a parent in the absence of family. Children in care (CIC) can include unaccompanied asylum-seeking children (UASC), children with multiple disabilities, and those who have suffered abuse and/or neglect. As such, looked-after children and young people are one of the most vulnerable and disadvantaged groups in our community.
2. The City Corporation's Children's Services were inspected by Ofsted in March 2020, with the findings published in June 2020. The service was found to be overall 'Outstanding' by Ofsted, its independent evaluation finding that corporate parenting within the City is 'very strong, and there is a high commitment throughout the service to ensuring a personalised response to individual need'.

As the report was published in June 2020, Ofsted's findings and recommendations fall outside the scope of the annual report.

3. The Corporate Parenting Strategy was last reviewed in February 2020 and is reviewed and updated annually to drive improvements and meet the changing needs of children and young people in the City.
4. The Care Planning, Placement and Case Review (England) Regulations 2010 require local authorities to provide an annual report on the outcomes for looked-after children. This report fulfils that requirement and provides a profile of the City Corporation's activities for looked-after children and care leavers for the year 2019/20.

Current Position

Corporate Parenting Strategy Update

5. The Corporate Parenting Strategy sets out how the City Corporation will deliver its role as a corporate parent and ensure that children and young people have the support, care and encouragement to reach their full potential.
6. The strategy has been updated to reflect the quality of services that the City Corporation provides, such as noting the result of Ofsted's inspection of Children's Services in March 2020 as being overall 'Outstanding'.
7. It has also been updated to reflect some of the changes that have had to take place due to the COVID-19 pandemic. For example, the pandemic has affected the way our Children in Care Council (CiCC) meets and operates, as meetings have now transitioned to an online group, rather than a physical meeting at Guildhall.
8. The update notes that the Pledge will be reviewed again in 2021 to consider the change in the service due to the COVID-19 pandemic. The City Corporation has also translated the Pledge into several of the languages our young people speak.
9. A copy of the updated Strategy can be found in Appendix 1.

Annual Report

10. The Corporate Parenting Annual Report for 2019/20 covers areas, including but not limited to, health and wellbeing, safeguarding, education, employment, accommodation and the activities of the CiCC.
11. The report contains relevant statistics such as the number of children and young people under the age of 18 who were being looked after by the City Corporation as of March 31 2020, as well as how many young people left our care. It also includes relevant statistics related to the Independent Reviewing Officer service, UASC and the health and wellbeing of our looked-after children and care leavers.

12. As a corporate parent, the City Corporation will continue to drive the achievement of ensuring that all children in and leaving its care meet their full potential and have lives in which they thrive. The Annual Report details the targeted actions that the service will undertake during 2020/21, some of which have been affected and influenced by the COVID-19 pandemic.
13. A copy of the Corporate Parenting Annual Report 2019/20 can be found in Appendix 2.

Implications

Strategic

14. The Corporate Parenting Strategy and Annual Report are both statutory requirements as set out by the relevant legislation.
15. By reporting on the progress of the City Corporation as a corporate parent, with a regularly updated strategy, it helps contribute to the City Corporation's Corporate Plan for 2018–23 and help ensure that people are safe and feel safe, people enjoy good health and wellbeing, people have equal opportunities to enrich their lives and their full potential, and communities are cohesive and have the facilities they need.

Equalities

16. The City Corporation's Department of Community and Children's Services strives to improve outcomes for our children and young people who often experience several areas of inequality. The vast majority of looked-after children within the City are UASC, and therefore it is important that any actions of the service reflect the specific needs of this group. This is ensured by carrying out adequate Equality Impact Assessments for all new services and initiatives that are developed.

Conclusion

17. The Corporate Parenting Annual Report provides oversight of the work undertaken by the service during 2019/20, and the priorities for the year ahead, which are reflected in the strategic aims set out in the Corporate Parenting Strategy.

Appendices

- Appendix 1 – Corporate Parenting Strategy (Updated January 2021)
- Appendix 2 – Corporate Parenting Annual Report 2019/20

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