



Corporate Parenting Visits Guidance

Version 1, June 2018

Elected Member Corporate Parent Visits

One of the most important roles of an elected member is that of a '**corporate parent**'. When elected to represent their ward, members become responsible for every child and young person in the care of the local authority.

The role of a corporate parent is to seek the very best outcomes for these young people **as if they were their own children**. This includes a stable home environment, good education, access to health care and preparation for adulthood.

The Corporate Parenting Committee is a key body in ensuring that arrangements in place to improve outcomes for cared for children and care leavers are effective. Elected member visits to services that support this group of vulnerable children and young people is a key quality assurance role.

Local Procedure for Visits

1. Within Cheshire East it has been agreed that visits will be a combination of observation of key meetings and visits to key teams to discuss issues. The key areas of focus areas are as follows:

- **Cared for Children and Care Leavers Team (visit)**
- **Fostering and Special Guardianship Team (visit)**
- **Placement Service (visit)**
- **Residential Care (visit to care home)**
- **Fostering Panel (observation)**

• Resource Allocation Panel (observation)

2. There will be two visits to each service over the year by two nominated members of the Corporate Parenting Committee. These visits will be arranged a year in advance. *NB Members must attend the corporate parenting training before attending any visits.*
3. The visits will be based on the **Signs of Safety model**, which poses the following three questions:

- What are we worried about?
- What is working well?
- What needs to happen?

4. Members are asked to consider these against the following:

Staffing

- ✓ Are there vacancies in the team? If so, are these covered by agency staff?
- ✓ Do staff have the relevant experience and skills?
- ✓ Are attendance levels good?
- ✓ Is staff morale positive?
- ✓ Do staff have the support systems they need?, eg IT, office accommodation, communication needs.

Performance

- ✓ Is the service children and young person focused?
- ✓ Are there sufficient local placements and accommodation to meet the needs of our children and young people?
- ✓ Are we keeping our children and young people safe?

- ✓ Is there sufficient educational provision to meet the needs of our children and young people?
- ✓ Do our children and young people have good access to healthcare?
- ✓ How well is the service supporting young people into adulthood?
- ✓ Any there any issues impacting on performance, eg, workloads?
- ✓ Is multi-agency engagement good?

Other

- ✓ If you speak to children and young people, do they report they are happy?
 - ✓ If you have attended a Panel meeting, was this effective?
 - ✓ Are there any other issues raised that impact on providing effective services to support children and young people in care and care leavers?
5. At the end of the visit, Members are also asked to use **scaling** to form an assessment of the effectiveness of the service, ie, rate on a scale of 0-10, where 10 is very effective and 0 is the service is ineffective at meeting the needs of our children and young people.
6. Elected members will record the **key issues** from the visit on the electronic proforma and send to the ChildrensImprovement@cheshireeast.gov.uk who will arrange for the **Head of Service: Cared for Children and Care Leavers** to provide a response to issues raised (within 4 weeks of receipt).

7. The themes and issues arising from visits and the service response to these will be presented to the Corporate Parenting Committee on an **annual basis** by the Head of Service (copied to the Chief Executive).

Summary of Procedure

