

Corporate Parenting Committee

Agenda

Date: Tuesday, 28th June, 2022
Time: 10.00 am
Venue: Committee Suite 1,2 & 3, Westfields, Middlewich Road,
Sandbach CW11 1HZ

The agenda is divided into 2 parts. Part 1 is taken in the presence of the public and press. Part 2 items will be considered in the absence of the public and press for the reasons indicated on the agenda and at the top of each report.

It should be noted that Part 1 items of Cheshire East Council decision making meetings are audio recorded and the recordings will be uploaded to the Council's website

PART 1 – MATTERS TO BE CONSIDERED WITH THE PUBLIC AND PRESS PRESENT

1. **Apologies for Absence**

2. **Declarations of Interest**

To provide an opportunity for Members and Officers to declare any disclosable pecuniary and non-pecuniary interests in any item on the agenda.

3. **Minutes of Previous meeting** (Pages 3 - 6)

To approve the minutes of the meeting held on 15 March 2022.

4. **Update from Shadow Committee (Verbal Update)**

To receive a verbal update on the Corporate Parenting Shadow Committee.

5. **Cared for Children and Care Leaver Strategy** (Pages 7 - 50)

To receive the Cared for Children and Care Leavers Strategy for 2022-26.

For requests for further information

Contact: Josie Lloyd

Tel: 01270 686 466

E-Mail: josie.lloyd@cheshireeast.gov.uk with any apologies

Membership: Councillors Q Abel, M Asquith, R Bailey, J Barber, J Buckley, C Bulman, P Butterill, K Flavell (Chair), S Handley, S Holland, D Jefferay and J Saunders (Vice-Chair)

CHESHIRE EAST COUNCIL

Minutes of a meeting of the **Corporate Parenting Committee**
held on Tuesday, 15th March, 2022 in the Committee Suite 1,2 & 3, Westfields,
Middlewich Road, Sandbach CW11 1HZ

PRESENT

Councillors M Asquith, J Barber, J Buckley, C Bulman, S Handley, S Holland
and D Jefferay

ALSO PRESENT

Deborah Woodcock, Executive Director of Children's Services
Kerry Birtles, Director of Children's Social Care
Alison Talheth, Interim Head of Fostering
Shan McParland, Designated Nurse Looked After Children (joined virtually via
Microsoft Teams)
Josie Lloyd, Democratic Services Officer

29 APPOINTMENT OF CHAIR

In the absence of the Chair and Vice Chair, the committee appointed Cllr Carol Bulman
to chair the meeting.

30 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Bailey, Councillor Butterill,
Councillor Flavell, Councillor Marren and Councillor Saunders.

31 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

32 MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

The Director of Children's Social Care advised the committee that there may have
been an inaccuracy with the number of care leavers at university stated in the officer's
verbal presentation of the Corporate Parenting Progress Report which was received
at the previous meeting and referenced in the minutes. It was agreed that this would
be checked and, following the meeting, it was confirmed that the figure of 18 was
correct for the age group of 18 – 24 year olds.

RESOLVED:

That the minutes of the previous meeting be agreed as a correct record.

33 UPDATE FROM THE SHADOW COMMITTEE (VERBAL)

The committee received a verbal updated on the work of the Shadow Committee.

The committee noted the success of a recent art exhibition event where a group of care experienced young people were able to present their work.

RESOLVED:

That the update be noted.

34 CORPORATE PARENTING SCORECARD QUARTER 3

The committee received the report which set out the performance for Corporate Parenting for quarter 3 of 2021-22 (1 October – 31 December 2021).

A query was raised regarding the percentage of completed health assessments which was reported as 76% in the report. The committee were advised that more health assessments had been completed but were awaiting quality assurance and were therefore not included in the data presented. It was expected that the figure would be higher in the next report.

A further query was raised regarding the scorecard measuring the experience of cared for children and care leavers. The committee were advised that this is measured through a number of mechanisms including participation in reviews, annual surveys and the shadow committee. The service area were actively looking to strengthen how this feedback could be evidenced further and would review the scorecard indicators as part of this.

RESOLVED:

That the report be noted.

35 MAINSTREAM FOSTERING RECRUITMENT AND FOSTER CARE FORTNIGHT UPDATE REPORT

The committee received the report which provided an update to committee on recruitment activity undertaken by the mainstream fostering service and plans to support Foster Care Fortnight in May 2022.

A suggestion was made for the Fostering Team to contact schools for support with sharing and promoting the communications around fostering and it was agreed that this would be looked into.

RESOLVED:

That the report be noted

36 CORPORATE PARENTING COMMITTEE FORWARD PLAN

The committee received the report which presented a proposed forward plan of reports for the Corporate Parenting Committee for 2022-23 to support the committee in fulfilling its role as given in its terms of reference.

RESOLVED:

That the committee approve the forward plan of reports for the Corporate Parenting Committee for 2022-23.

The meeting commenced at 16:00 and concluded at 17:00

Councillor C Bulman

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Working for a brighter future together

Corporate Parenting Committee

Date of Meeting:	28 June 2022
Report Title:	Cared for Children and Care Leavers Strategy, 2022-26
Report of:	Kerry Birtles, Director of Children's Social Care
Report Reference No:	CF/51/21-22
Ward(s) Affected:	All wards

1. Purpose of Report

- 1.1. This report sets out the proposed new Cared for Children and Care Leavers Strategy 2022-26, previously known as the Corporate Parenting Strategy, for Cheshire East to improve outcomes for our cared for children and care leavers.
- 1.2. The Cared for Children and Care Leavers Strategy meets the strategic aims and objectives in the Council's Corporate Plan 2021-25 as it contributes to 'A council which empowers and cares about people' and the priority to 'be the best Corporate Parents and improve outcomes for vulnerable children and young people'.

2. Executive Summary

- 2.1. Our strategy has been developed with our cared for children and care leavers. They told us that some of the language used in our current Corporate Parenting Strategy is too clinical and not meaningful to them. We therefore worked together to rename our strategy the Cared for Children and Care Leavers Strategy.
- 2.2. During the development of the strategy, we have conducted an online survey to give foster carers an opportunity to share their views and ideas.

- 2.3.** We have held discussions during our workstream groups and the Corporate Parenting Operational Group where managers, frontline staff, councillors, education, voluntary sector, and health colleagues were able to share their views on the priority areas and actions.
- 2.4.** Our current pledges have been refreshed in line with children and young people's wishes and we have added an additional pledge to focus on participation, i.e., listening to and involving our children and young people in decisions and services that affect them:
- We will care for our cared for children and care leavers as any good parent would
 - We will improve education, employment, and training outcomes
 - We will be truly aspirational to give all children and young people a forever home and to keep them safe
 - We will improve health and wellbeing outcomes.
 - We will prepare children and young people for adulthood.
 - We will work TOGETHER with children and young people
- 2.5.** We have also developed our new Children and Young People's Plan 2022-26. The plan sets out the ambitions of the partnership to improve outcomes for all children in Cheshire East, and includes an outcome solely focused on supporting our cared for children and care leavers 'Outcome 1 – Children and young people we care for are happy and given every opportunity to achieve their full potential' Any changes or recommendations made to the strategy will be aligned to our priorities within the Children and Young People's Plan.

3. Recommendations

- 3.1.** The Corporate Parenting Committee is recommended to endorse the Cared for Children and Care Leavers Strategy 2022-26 which will progress to Children and Families Committee for approval on 11 July 2022.
- 3.2.** The Corporate Parenting Committee is recommended to endorse the decision to change the name of our Corporate Parenting Committee, further recommendations regarding the change of name will be brought to a future committee following consultation with children and young people.
- 3.3.** The pledges in the strategy will be taken to full Council on 19 October 2022, where members can pledge their commitments to cared for children and care leavers.

4. Reasons for Recommendations

- 4.1.** Cheshire East Council needs to ensure that it has a current and relevant strategy in place to improve outcomes for our cared for children and care leavers. Other options to be considered are therefore not applicable.

- 4.2. Changing the name of our Corporate Parenting Committee to the Cared for Children and Care Leavers Committee will promote a consistent change in the language used when talking about cared for children and care leavers, to reflect their wishes and align with the launch and delivery of this strategy.

5. Background

- 5.1. The existing Corporate Parenting Strategy runs from 2018 to 2021 and was endorsed by the Corporate Parenting Committee in November 2018, along with the 'youth proofed' pledges to cared for children and care leavers.
- 5.2. The pledges were subsequently accepted and endorsed by the full Council in December 2018 in order to make the commitment to cared for children and care leavers by members and officers and to ensure that there is a clear and joint vision about Corporate Parenting in Cheshire East as being everyone's responsibility.
- 5.3. The council also decided that all key council decisions be considerate of the potential consequences and benefits to cared for children and care leavers, and that this be achieved by asking a mandatory question in each report about the impact of the decision upon cared for children and care leavers.
- 5.4. Good progress has been made in achieving the pledges set out in the 2018-20 Corporate Parenting Strategy. This progress has been reported to the Corporate Parenting Committee each year via the Corporate Parenting Annual Report.
- 5.5. The intention was to develop a new Corporate Parenting Strategy in 2020, ready to launch in 2021. However, due to the increased demands from the COVID-19 pandemic, this was put on hold and the current strategy was endorsed to run throughout 2021.

6. Consultation and Engagement

- 6.1. During the development of the strategy, in March 2022 we conducted an online survey to give foster carers an opportunity to share their views and ideas. Their responses around the relevance of the pledges echoed that of the children and young people we spoke to, with some feeling the use of 'being a good corporate parent' is vague and lacks context. 72% felt that a pledge around participation should be included in our new strategy. Some foster carers commented that they would like improved communication with them to be included as part of the new strategy and we have developed actions to support this in our action plan. The Fostering Service is also reviewing our foster carer charter alongside foster carers to ensure that we can further strengthen communication with them.

7. Implications

7.1. Legal

- 7.1.1. The proposed strategy meets the authority's statutory duties to cared for children and care leavers.

7.2. Finance

- 7.2.1. None.

7.3. Policy

- 7.3.1. As a corporate parent, all council policies should consider the impact on cared for children and care leavers.

7.4. Equality

- 7.4.1. All children and young people have a right to be treated equally and have their disability, gender, ethnic, cultural, religious, and linguistic needs met. As corporate parents for children and young people in care and care leavers, it is essential that the council is able to demonstrate that it considers equality implications in all decisions made in relation to cared for children and care leavers. Cared for children and care leavers can be a vulnerable group because of their experiences so we need to ensure they are supported to achieve the same outcomes as their peers as they can experience disadvantages and are at risk of poorer outcomes.
- 7.4.2. An equality impact assessment has been carried out and will be published along with the endorsed strategy.

7.5. Human Resources

- 7.5.1. The recruitment and retention of social workers and frontline colleagues is an essential component of the delivery of the strategy.

7.6. Risk Management

- 7.6.1. Cared for children and care leavers are a vulnerable group for whom there are a number of risks, including poor outcomes in education and training, health, safeguarding and transition into adulthood. The Cared for Children and Care Leavers Strategy outlines plans to mitigate these risks.

7.7. Rural Communities

- 7.7.1. All communities are affected by the contents of this report, and it is necessary to strategically plan the delivery of services to serve all communities.

7.8. Children and Young People/Cared for Children

- 7.8.1. The Cared for Children and Care Leavers Strategy sets out clearly our intentions to improve outcomes for cared for children and young people, along with our pledges and priorities for 2022-26.

7.9. Public Health

- 7.9.1. Cared for children and care leavers are more at risk of poor health outcomes. Health services need to be targeted to ensure that they meet the needs of this group of children and young people. A number of pledges within the Cared for

Children and Care Leavers Strategy addresses the health and wellbeing of this group of young people.

7.10. Climate Change

- 7.10.1. This strategy is aligned with the council's aim to be green to lead our communities to protect and enhance our environment, tackle the climate emergency and drive sustainable development. This includes our pledge to strive to ensure that every child and young person will have the opportunity to live in a good, safe home locally, either with their family or in another long-term home,

Access to Information	
Contact Officer:	Laura Hindhaugh Laura.Hindhaugh@cheshireeast.gov.uk 07442 963620
Appendices:	Appendix 1 - Cared for Children and Care Leavers Strategy, 2022-26 Appendix 2- Cared for Children and Care Leavers Equality Impact Assessment.
Background Papers:	The Corporate Parenting Strategy 2018-21 can be found at: corporate-parenting-strategy.pdf (cheshireeast.gov.uk)

Services consulted on this report	Name of person consulted	Role of person consulted	Date consulted
Legal	Ceri Kay	Lawyer (Generic), QC Legal Team - Children and Adults	04.05.2022
Finance	Steve Reading	Principal Accountant	04.05.2022

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Cared for Children and Care Leavers Strategy

2022-26

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Foreword

In Cheshire East, we believe caring for our cared for children and care leavers is one of the most important responsibilities held by elected members, partner agencies, and individual staff working with children and young people in the care of the local authority. We are committed to cared for children and care leavers having the love, care, and opportunities we want for all our children.

It is important that we get this right. Early experiences in childhood and growing up shape future happiness and set the foundations for what can be achieved throughout their adult lives. This strategy sets out how we will work together to advocate and champion the needs of cared for children and care leavers in everything we do, having high aspirations for their future, keeping them safe, happy, and healthy and supporting them into adulthood. We will celebrate their successes and support them when things don't go so well. We will be here for our children and always consider 'would this be good enough for my child'.

This strategy has been developed TOGETHER with children and young people. The 'Pledges' that we make to them are based on the things that they have told us matter most to them. The commitment to improving the lives of our cared for

children and care leavers is more than a priority; it is the way in which we behave, think, and feel about our children and young people in every aspect of our work. Through the implementation of this strategy, we intend to improve the experiences and outcomes for all our Cheshire East cared for children and care leavers.



Deborah Woodcock
Executive Director of
Children's Services



Cllr Kathryn Flavell
Chair of the Corporate
Parenting Committee

Introduction

Children in care and care leavers, the Cheshire East picture.

- The number of children in care in Cheshire East fluctuates daily as new children come into care and children leave care. On 31 March 2022 we had 522 cared for children and 364 care leavers (aged 18-25).
- Children come into care for many different reasons, 80% of children in Cheshire East came into care in the last 12 months because of abuse or neglect.
- We are in touch with 99.5% of care leavers aged 18-21.
- 97.5% of care leavers aged 18-21 are in suitable accommodation.
- We have a slightly higher number of males than females in care, with 285 males, 236 females and 1 indeterminate.
- 315 of our cared for children are living within Cheshire East.

**The above figures change daily, data as at 31 March 2022*

Seven principles of Corporate Parenting

Corporate parenting means doing everything we can for every child in the council's care – and every care leaver – to give them the opportunities that children who are not in care get. In 2017 the Children and Social Work Act introduced a set of Corporate Parenting Principles for children in care and care leavers up to the age of 25 years. We are committed to these principles and have developed this strategy to support all our services to address them:

1. To act in the best interests, and promote the physical and mental health and wellbeing of children and young people
2. To encourage children and young people to express their views, wishes and feelings
3. To take account of their views, wishes and feelings
4. To help them gain access to, and make the best use of, services provided by the local authority and its relevant partners
5. To promote high aspirations, and seek to secure the best outcomes, for those children and young people
6. For those children and young people to be safe, and for stability in their home lives, relationships and education or work
7. To prepare children in care and care leavers for adulthood.

Glossary of terms for working with Care Experienced Children and Young People

Advice to workers from My VOICE: “These are recommendations of how care experienced children and young people would like to be spoken to or about—when you start to work with someone new, please ask them how they would like to be spoken to because everyone is different.”

What workers say:	What we would like you to say:
Looked After Children (LAC)	We don't LAC in anything! Call us children, young people, or cared for children. We are people, not a case number or statistic.
Contact	Family time, going to see family, social time. It's important for us to see our family as much as possible.
PEP (Personal Education Plan)	One young person said: “I thought it was about pets not school”. Please explain acronyms! We prefer school review, education meeting or just meeting.
Placement	Home or the place we live.
Birth Parents/Biological Parents	Mum and Dad, Parents, Tummy Mummy.
Reunification	Going home, reunited with my family.
Permanence	My long-term home, my home without disruption.
Respite	Day out, temporary care, time off, time out, sleep over.
Care Plan	Future plan, my plan, “Help me to achieve my goals”.
Foster Carer	The person who cares for me, carer.
Corporate Parenting	Call strategies, meetings and plans ‘cared for children and care leavers’ instead.

This glossary has been written, designed, and approved by My VOICE, Cheshire East's Voice of in care experience.

Pledge One: We will care for our cared for children and care leavers as any good parent would

Feedback from our children and young people:

Children and young people told us that they don't like the phrase 'corporate parent' as it is too clinical. We have updated the name of this pledge to reflect this. Children and young people told us that support from their PA (personal advisor) and social worker can make a big difference to their life, things like helping them to get to college and appointments and knowing when they need this support.

What are our priorities:

Staff and elected members will understand their responsibilities and be ambitious in their roles to support cared for children and care leavers. They will advocate and champion their needs in everything they do. They will strive to ensure that the wider community shares our understanding and offers support wherever possible.

We will know ourselves and the needs of our cared for children and care leavers well, and design and deliver services that meet these needs. We will always work **TOGETHER** with children and young people when developing and reviewing services.

Decisions about children and young people's lives, and the services that support them will be made with them and for them. We will always value their views, where we can't act on a child or young person's view or follow their wishes, we will always explain why.



1. Year 1 (September 2022 – August 2023)

Ref	Action	How do we measure success	Who's responsible
1.1	Develop a new governance structure to deliver the new Cared for Children and Care Leavers strategy and actions.	A new governance structure will be in place by October 2022, with each workstream lead and groups to be accountable for their action plan to support delivery of the strategy, and to share regular updates with the Cared for Children and Care Leavers Operational Group for further scrutiny.	Head of Service for Cared for Children and Care Leavers. Cared for Children and Care Leavers Operational Group.
1.2	Establish a 'directory' of available resource and support contacts in the permanence service.	The directory will be in place and being used to benefit cared for children and care leavers.	Head of Service for Cared for Children and Care Leavers. Cared for Children and Care Leavers Operational Group.
1.3	Provide ongoing training and support to our elected members, stakeholders and employees around being the best parents to our cared for children and care leavers.	Our Cared for Children and Care Leavers Committee (tbc) will have a good understanding of their responsibilities, to offer robust challenge and support.	Head of Service for Cared for Children and Care Leavers. Cared for Children and Care Leavers Operational Group.
1.4	Continue to work with cared for children and care leavers to change the language we use.	New language will be agreed and being used across all of children's services.	Head of Service for Cared for Children and Care Leavers. Cared for Children and Care Leavers Operational Group. Participation Team.

1.5	Review our strategy on an annual basis to ensure progress is monitored and actions and priorities remain relevant.	<p>Children and young people will be able to tell us about the difference actions are making to their daily lives.</p> <p>We will monitor progress of our success measures.</p> <p>% of cared for children's reviews in timescales.</p> <p>% of children and young people involved in their reviews.</p>	<p>Head of Service for Cared for Children and Care Leavers.</p> <p>Cared for Children and Care Leavers Operational Group.</p> <p>Participation Team.</p>
1.6	Continue elected member frontline visits to cared for services, aligned to the cared for children and care leavers outcomes.	Annual rota of frontline visits in place and changing practice.	<p>Head of Service for Cared for Children and Care Leavers.</p> <p>Cared for Children and Care Leavers Operational Group.</p>
1.7	Work together to ensure that the right children become cared for and deliver our strategy on Creating a Sustainable Future for Children's Social Care.	Reduction in the number of cared for children, an increase in the stability of our homes for cared for children. An increase in matched homes for children and young people.	<p>Head of Service for Cared for Children and Care Leavers.</p> <p>Cared for Children and Care Leavers Operational Group.</p>
1.8	Regularly celebrate the achievements of our cared for children through events such as the star awards and national care leaver week. Celebration of individual achievements such as, exam results and settling at a new home.	Our children and young people feel valued through the development of certificates, celebration events and recognition opportunities throughout the year.	<p>Head of Service for Cared for Children and Care Leavers.</p> <p>Cared for Children and Care Leavers Operational Group.</p>
1.9	We will change the name of our Corporate Parenting Committee to reflect children and young people's wishes regarding the language we use.	The pledge will be agreed by the full council.	<p>Head of Service for Cared for Children and Care Leavers.</p> <p>Cared for Children and Care Leavers Operational Group.</p>
1.10	Review and update our scorecard to align with our new Cared for and Care Leavers Strategy.	New scorecard will be in place by September 2022.	Head of Service for Cared for Children and Care Leavers.

Pledge Two: We will improve education, employment, and training outcomes

Feedback from our children and young people:

A Care Leavers survey was conducted during October and November 2021. 76 completed surveys were received in total, 90.07% of young people told us that they know how to access education, employment, or training. Children and young people also told us about the importance of being able to stay in the same school when going into foster care.

What are our priorities:

We will have high aspirations for every child and young person and will help them to achieve their ambitions, including using opportunities in the 'family business' and our contacts so that they can be happy and successful in their education, training, and employment.

Every child and young person will have an education plan that is targeted, to enable them to reach their full potential.

We will strive to that ensure that every child and young person will have access to consistent, high-quality, well-matched opportunities in education, training, and employment.



2. Year 1 (September 2022 – August 2023)

Ref	Action	How do we measure success	Who's responsible
2.1	Develop opportunities for apprenticeships within the council and local businesses. Offer support to care leavers in preparing for and undertaking apprenticeships from our Apprenticeship Coordinator Role.	<p>There are a range of apprenticeship opportunities available for our children and young people and support is available for young people who are not in education, employment, or training (NEET), to help them to become ready to complete an apprenticeship.</p> <p>There is an increase in the number of children and young people on apprenticeship programmes within the council from 7 young people to a target of 12 by August 2023.</p> <p>Number of care leavers in Higher education.</p>	<p>Cared for Children and Care Leavers Operational Group.</p> <p>Deputy Virtual School Headteacher.</p> <p>Post 16 Adviser.</p>
2.2	Share success stories across the authority and local community, promoting the benefits for all.	Success case studies shared through virtual schools headteacher's report annually, and through communications during the year such as the NEET programme.	<p>Cared for Children and Care Leavers Operational Group.</p> <p>Virtual School Headteacher.</p>
2.3	Continue to improve the completion rate and quality of PEPs across all years from early years to post 16.	The completion rate of PEPs has increased. The number of PEPs graded as good or outstanding has increased.	<p>Cared for Children and Care Leavers Operational Group.</p> <p>Virtual School Headteacher.</p>
2.4	Continue to provide support and interventions for schools and children to improve outcomes (narrow the gap and lost learning) and attendance, evaluating the impact of the intervention and use of pupil premium.	<p>Improved literacy and communication of early years and primary aged children.</p> <p>Pupil premium requests and impact will be monitored termly.</p> <p>Ensure effective support and interventions are in place for cared for children to support attainment and progress, ensuring children are accessing full time education.</p>	<p>Cared for Children and Care Leavers Operational Group.</p> <p>Virtual School Headteacher.</p>

2.5	Strengthen the children and young people's voice to support the strategic development across all areas of the virtual school.	<p>Children and young people annual surveys will capture their voice.</p> <p>We will have incorporated new ways of gaining wider children and young people's voice within the strategic development of the virtual school.</p>	<p>Cared for Children and Care Leavers Operational Group.</p> <p>Virtual School Headteacher.</p> <p>Post-16 Adviser.</p>
2.6	Ensure that agencies providing opportunities for our children and young people are supported and equipped to understand and meet their needs.	<p>An effective annual training will be in place and being delivered through the virtual school for agencies / services / schools and settings.</p> <p>Additional whole school training for inset days will be available throughout the academic year.</p>	<p>Cared for Children and Care Leavers Operational Group.</p> <p>Virtual school Headteacher and Deputy Headteacher.</p>
2.7	Ensure a robust action plan is in place to reduce NEET and encourage re-engagement opportunities for our care leavers.	<p>A monthly review of education plans during challenge meetings with the senior PA and virtual school. Feedback to be shared with Cared for Children and Care Leavers Operational Group for further scrutiny.</p> <p>6 monthly dip sampling of children's records to monitor progress and address any identified worries.</p> <p>Extension of opportunities and direct work with young people to re-engage in education, employment, or training.</p> <p>Number of 16–18-year-old care leavers that are NEET.</p> <p>Number of 19–21-year-old care leavers that are NEET.</p>	<p>Cared for Children and Care Leavers Operational Group.</p> <p>Virtual school Headteacher and Deputy Headteacher.</p>

Pledge Three: We will be truly aspirational to give all children and young people a forever home and to keep them safe.

Feedback from our children and young people:

Children and young people told us that they don't like the word permanence as it's too clinical. We have changed this pledge to reflect this.

What are our priorities:

We will strive to ensure that every child and young person will have the opportunity to live in a good, safe home locally, either with their family or in another long-term home. All decisions will be made and reviewed with them, without delay.

We will respect those people who are important to our children and young people and make sure that these safe relationships are sustained.

We will keep children and young people safe.



3. Year 1 (September 2022 – August 2023)

Ref	Action	How do we measure success	Who's responsible
3.1	Further strengthen our communication and engagement with foster carers and involve them in service development.	<p>Increased attendance at our quarterly Foster Carer forum.</p> <p>Foster carer representation on development groups.</p> <p>Our annual foster carer survey will tell us that foster carers feel our communication is good.</p> <p>Foster carers feel supported by their peers.</p>	<p>Cared for Children and Care Leavers Operational Group.</p> <p>Fostering service manager.</p>
3.2	Review all residential placements monthly to ensure that children and young people can have the opportunity to live within a family.	<p>Reduction in the number of children and young people placed in residential provision.</p> <p>Every child to have a trajectory for permanence and timescales.</p> <p>Increased fostering sufficiency and step-down plan to be considered for all children and young people in a residential placement.</p> <p>% with 3 or more placements in a year % leaving through adoption / Special Guardianship Order (SGO).</p>	<p>Cared for Children and Care Leavers Operational Group.</p> <p>Service Manager, Cared for and Care Leavers.</p>
3.3	<p>Continue to ensure that cared for children and young people can live in good, safe homes locally, as early as possible.</p> <p>Development of a discharge team for children that are already living with their family or parents to reduce the need for care orders and ongoing intervention.</p>	<p>Increasing our in-area placement sufficiency through fostering recruitment and effective matching.</p> <p>Redevelopment of permanence policy, including stability and matching to be jointly developed between cared for children's service, fostering and commissioning.</p> <p>Development of caring for children at home services and support.</p> <p>Annual assessment of children's needs to be considered in children and family assessments to increase to a minimum of 80% within timescales.</p>	<p>Cared for Children and Care Leavers Operational Group.</p> <p>Service Manager, Cared for and Care Leavers.</p>

		<p>Strengthen matching and transitions for our children within our current commissioned children's homes.</p> <p>Reduction in number of children and young people in residential care.</p> <p>Discharge team in place by September 22, within 2 years 15 SGO's and 47 care orders will be revoked.</p>	
3.4	Development of the No Wrong Door model and principles within Cheshire East which will provide support to young people who are within or on the edge of the care system.	<p>Decrease the number of children and young people in residential placements as a long-term care plan.</p> <p>Increased young people in family settings or with a plan of reunification to their families.</p> <p>Increased amount of young people in a long-term matched home.</p> <p>Review of every child's long-term match after 12 months in placement.</p>	<p>Cared for Children and Care Leavers Operational Group.</p> <p>Service Manager, Cared for and Care Leavers.</p>
3.5	Increase support to cases where there is a possibility of adoption disruption.	<p>Increased early intervention with adoptive families prior to safeguarding concerns arising.</p> <p>Increased support and strategies to maintain adoptive children in their families.</p> <p>The adoption stability panel will be fully embedded.</p> <p>Adoption panel will meet bi-monthly.</p>	<p>Cared for Children and Care Leavers Operational Group.</p> <p>Service Manager, Cared for and Care Leavers.</p> <p>Head of Service, Early Help and Prevention.</p> <p>Adoption Counts Regional Manager.</p>
3.6	Improve our decision making regarding Special Guardianship Orders (SGOs).	<p>Clearer decision making and effective support and challenge in achieving permanence through special guardianship.</p> <p>Embedded agency decision making process in place to consider SGOs.</p>	<p>Cared for Children and Care Leavers Operational Group.</p> <p>Fostering Service Manager.</p>

	Develop a clear process and policy around entitlements and support for SGO's.	<p>Clearer pathway to understand financial and practical support within SGO support plans.</p> <p>Increase by 25% in the number of children placed with their families progressing to SGO within the next 12 months.</p>	Head of Service Cared for Children and Care Leavers.
3.7	<p>Develop a pathway and forum for senior leaders to support the service to achieve permanence plans and ensure progress is reviewed regularly. Clear actions to be set to hold the service to account.</p> <p>Undertake a peer review of the permanence service to assist in driving developments forward.</p>	<p>Effective oversight and challenge of permanency plans for our cared for children, increase in placement stability.</p> <p>Care planning meetings to occur at a minimum of every 12 weeks to prevent drift and delay.</p> <p>Peer review to take place late 2022 to action plan and have a clear view of service strengths and areas of development.</p> <p>Permanence forum to be redeveloped to take place weekly from June 2022 to review all permanence plans regularly across the service.</p> <p>Number of children who have achieved permanence in foster care.</p>	<p>Cared for Children and Care Leavers Operational Group.</p> <p>Head of Service Cared for Children and Care Leavers.</p>
3.8	We will ensure children and young people have opportunities to stay connected to their families and friends in the least restrictive way possible.	<p>Development of Family time policy and process to be in place by July 2022.</p> <p>Review of all cared for children's current family time arrangements and supervision levels to ensure that those children that can have unsupervised contact do and for those that can't, the most appropriate person in their network can be identified to supervise.</p> <p>All arrangements to be developed by July 2022 with ongoing review and scrutiny at each cared for review every 6 months.</p>	<p>Cared for Children and Care Leavers Operational Group.</p> <p>Head of Service Cared for Children and Care Leavers.</p> <p>Service Manager, Cared for and Care Leavers.</p>

Pledge Four: We will improve health and wellbeing outcomes

Feedback from our children and young people:

The Cared for survey was conducted from 22nd January 2021 until 12th March 2021, 87.34% of young people stated that they have someone that they can talk to if they have any health concerns. 78.70% of care leavers told us they feel well informed of how to make good choices regarding their health, and the local services to help them.

What are our priorities:

We are committed to understanding the health needs of our children and young people as early as possible and to ensure they are given the highest priority in every service.

We will ensure that practitioners understand and meet the diverse health needs of our children and young people, including those with health inequalities faced by race, ethnicity, ability and disability and unaccompanied asylum-seeking children.

We have ambition to ensure that we further improve responses to children and young people in relation to having their health needs met.

We will equip our children and young people to have high aspirations for their own health and wellbeing.

O219 with you / all the way		NHS Wirral Community Health and Care NHS Foundation Trust	
My Health Information			
Name			
DOB			
NHS Number			
Current Doctor (GP)			
Birth Information	Weight:		
	Time of birth:		
	Additional information:		
Immunisations (this is sometimes known as jab or injection)			
Additional information about your Health including conditions diagnosed with and tests carried out			
Date			

4. Year 1 (September 2022 – August 2023)

Ref	Action	How do we measure success	Who's responsible
4.1	Raise awareness across our workforce and promote and monitor access to a range of services and agencies available to support the health needs of our children and young people.	Increased referrals to emotional wellbeing services, increased health assessments and increased engagement with GP and dentist appointments.	Cared for Children and Care Leavers Operational Group. Designated Nurse and Named Nurse, Looked After Children and Care Leavers.
4.2	Track and monitor the health needs of our children and young people, including those who are currently living outside of Cheshire East, ensuring their needs are met.	Collection and use of data around the following outcomes will provide benchmarking and identify areas for improvement: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Immunisation status Timeliness and quality of health assessments GP registration Completed strengths and difficulties questionnaire (SDQs) and their use to inform practice Timeliness of dental checks. % of under 5's with up to date immunisations.	Cared for Children and Care Leavers Operational Group. Designated Nurse and Named Nurse, Looked After Children and Care Leavers.
4.3	We will support children and young people in care to have improving emotional and mental health and wellbeing.	Decreased SDQ scores and effective use of this tool to inform care and education planning and support for our children and young people in line with statutory guidance. Early identification and response to emotional and mental health issues. Increased referrals and engagement with services for those young people that require support.	Cared for Children and Care Leavers Operational Group. Designated Nurse and Named Nurse, Looked After Children and Care Leavers.

4.4	We will ensure cared for children and care leavers have their health assessed in a timely way and that assessments are of a good quality and used to inform the care plan.	<p>Quarterly submission of key performance indicators will evidence timeliness and quality of health assessments.</p> <p>Threshold target of 90% completed in timescale (20 working days) to be achieved for children placed both in and out of Cheshire East area.</p> <p>Use of escalation pathway and tracker will evidence any issues related to timeliness or quality and enable appropriate action.</p> <p>Annual audit of care plan reviews will provide evidence that health assessments are being used as part of the care planning process.</p> <p>Number of care leavers with a health passport.</p> <p>Number of care leavers with a health passport.</p>	<p>Cared for Children and Care Leavers Operational Group.</p> <p>Designated Nurse and Named Nurse, Looked After Children and Care Leavers.</p>
4.5	Promote the New NHS England dental referral programme to ensure cared for children have access to timely dental health services.	<p>Target of 100% of children and young people will have been seen for their statutory annual dental check.</p> <p>Number and outcome of referrals will be tracked and reported quarterly.</p>	<p>Cared for Children and Care Leavers Operational Group.</p> <p>Designated Nurse and Named Nurse, Looked After Children and Care Leavers.</p>
4.6	Improve access and timeliness of full health screening for all unaccompanied asylum-seeking children (UASC).	<p>Increased early intervention and support for UASC.</p> <p>Number of initial health assessments (IHAs) completed in timescales.</p>	<p>Cared for Children and Care Leavers Operational Group.</p> <p>Designated Nurse and Named Nurse, Looked After Children and Care Leavers.</p>
4.7	Development of an effective tool that can be used to measure health outcomes for cared for children.	Increased understanding and tracking of the needs of our cared for children.	Cared for Children and Care Leavers Operational Group.

			Designated Nurse and Named Nurse, Looked After Children and Care Leavers.
4.8	<p>We will support timely and effective transitions from child to adult services.</p> <p>Information and data around the following themes will be used to inform service development:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mental health • Long term/complex health needs • Transitions for those young people who do not have a diagnosis and yet will continue to need support from social care. • Young people aged 14-25 who are known to at least one mental health professional • Young people aged 14-25 who also have a diagnosis of learning difficulties and/or disability, attention deficit disorder (ADHD) or autism. 	<p>Clear pathways of support available for care leavers moving to adult services.</p> <p>Care leavers will report confidence in addressing their health needs and accessing services.</p>	<p>Cared for Children and Care Leavers Operational Group.</p> <p>Designated Nurse and Named Nurse, Looked After Children and Care Leavers.</p>

Pledge Five: We will prepare young people for adulthood

Feedback from our children and young people:

Young people told us it's important that they are supported to be able to make important decisions ahead of time, around finance and housing to help them feel comfortable, safe and secure when they leave care. 85.20% of care leavers told us that they feel in control of the decisions that affect their life.

What are our priorities:

We will support young people early with the skills needed to prepare for their future through access to a range of good quality services.

We will be a consistent guide for our young people. We will celebrate their successes and support them when things don't go well.

We will respect our care leavers as young adults and adapt our relationships to their needs.



5. Year 1 (September 2022 – August 2023)

Ref	Action	How do we measure success	Who's responsible
5.1	Communicate with children and young people what our relationship and contact with them will look like, so they understand what to expect and know how to raise any worries they have around this.	Improved knowledge of rights and entitlements and effective pathway planning.	Cared for Children and Care Leavers Operational Group. Head of Service Cared for Children and Care leavers.
5.2	Understand how children and young people want us to communicate with them and look at ways to develop our digital offer in line with their views.	Increased and sustained relationships with our cared for children and care leavers.	Cared for Children and Care Leavers Operational Group. Head of Service Cared for Children and Care leavers.
5.3	Publish and publicise the local authority's care leaver offer in accessible ways, in line with statutory guidance. Ensure that care leavers know what they are legally entitled to and are helped to access support after they leave care. Review the care leaver offer in partnership with care leavers when there is an annual review.	Clear knowledge and understanding of rights and entitlements. Care leaver offer to be published by autumn 2022.	Cared for Children and Care Leavers Operational Group. Head of Service Cared for Children and Care leavers.
5.4	Ensure that all children in care and care leavers know how to make a complaint and have access to advocacy services.	Clear bi-monthly tracking through our independent visitor and advocacy service. Increased complaints as well as increased satisfactory resolution.	Cared for Children and Care Leavers Operational Group.
5.5	Involve children in care and care leavers in developing their plans for after care. Plans should take account of young people's wishes and concerns, when possible, including those related to feeling safe, where young people want to live, and what they want to do with their future.	Increased number of pathway plans completed and reviewed in timescale. % of care leavers in suitable accommodation.	Cared for Children and Care Leavers Operational Group. Head of Service Cared for Children and Care leavers.

5.6	Work with Mark Riddell, Ambassador for care leavers, as he visits and offers further support to Cheshire East on our journey to excellence with our care experienced adults.	Ensure connection and wider learning and challenge regarding our local offer.	Cared for Children and Care Leavers Operational Group. Head of Service Cared for Children and Care leavers.
5.7	Allocate cared for children a PA as close to age 16 as possible, in line with statutory guidance.	Early intervention and effective pathway planning. Increased understanding of plans for independence.	Head of Service Cared for Children and Care leavers.
5.8	Celebrate the achievements of our care leavers, during national care leavers week.	Recognition and praise for care leaver achievements throughout the year. Increased wider council and community understanding.	Cared for Children and Care Leavers Operational Group. Head of Service Cared for Children and Care leavers.
5.9	Ensure that care leavers who become parents are well supported and have prioritisation of access to services.	Increase in care leavers being able to care for their children. Earlier referrals to early help services and family nurse partnership.	Cared for Children and Care Leavers Operational Group. Head of Service Cared for Children and Care leavers.
5.10	Ensure care leavers are supported to make decisions that affect their lives e.g., housing, jobs, etc.	Effective pathway planning. number of 16-18 year olds completing Bronze/ silver / gold independence packs. number of 19-21 year olds completing Bronze/ silver / gold independence packs.	Cared for Children and Care Leavers Operational Group. Head of Service Cared for Children and Care leavers.
5.11	Embed family networking and safety planning to reduce 16/17 year old homelessness and support young people to return to live at home sooner.	Reduction in number of 16/17 year olds becoming cared for. Increase in the numbers of 16/17 year olds returning to live with a family member.	Cared for Children and Care Leavers Operational Group. Head of Service Cared for Children and Care leavers.

Pledge Six: We will work **TOGETHER** with children and young people

Feedback from our children and young people:

Children and young people have told us that the most important thing we can do is listen to them. We have developed an additional pledge to focus solely on participation (working together with children and young people) to ensure that children and young people are always at the heart of everything we do.

What are our priorities:

We will work **TOGETHER** with children and young people in all that we do.

We will work to make sure that participation is at the heart of everything that our staff, partners, and elected members do.

Cared for children and care leavers will be empowered to make decisions that affect their lives.

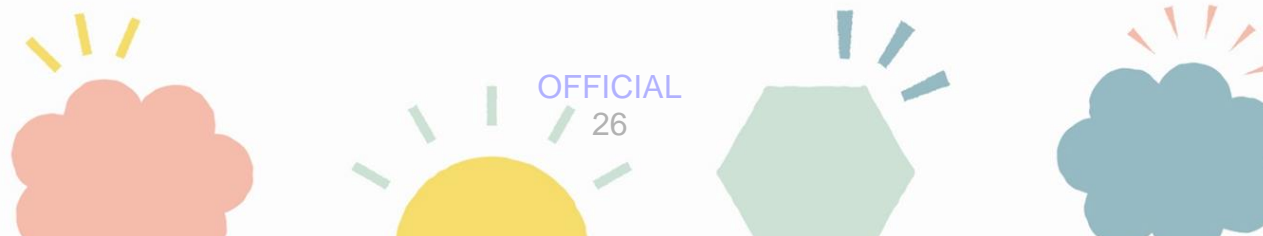
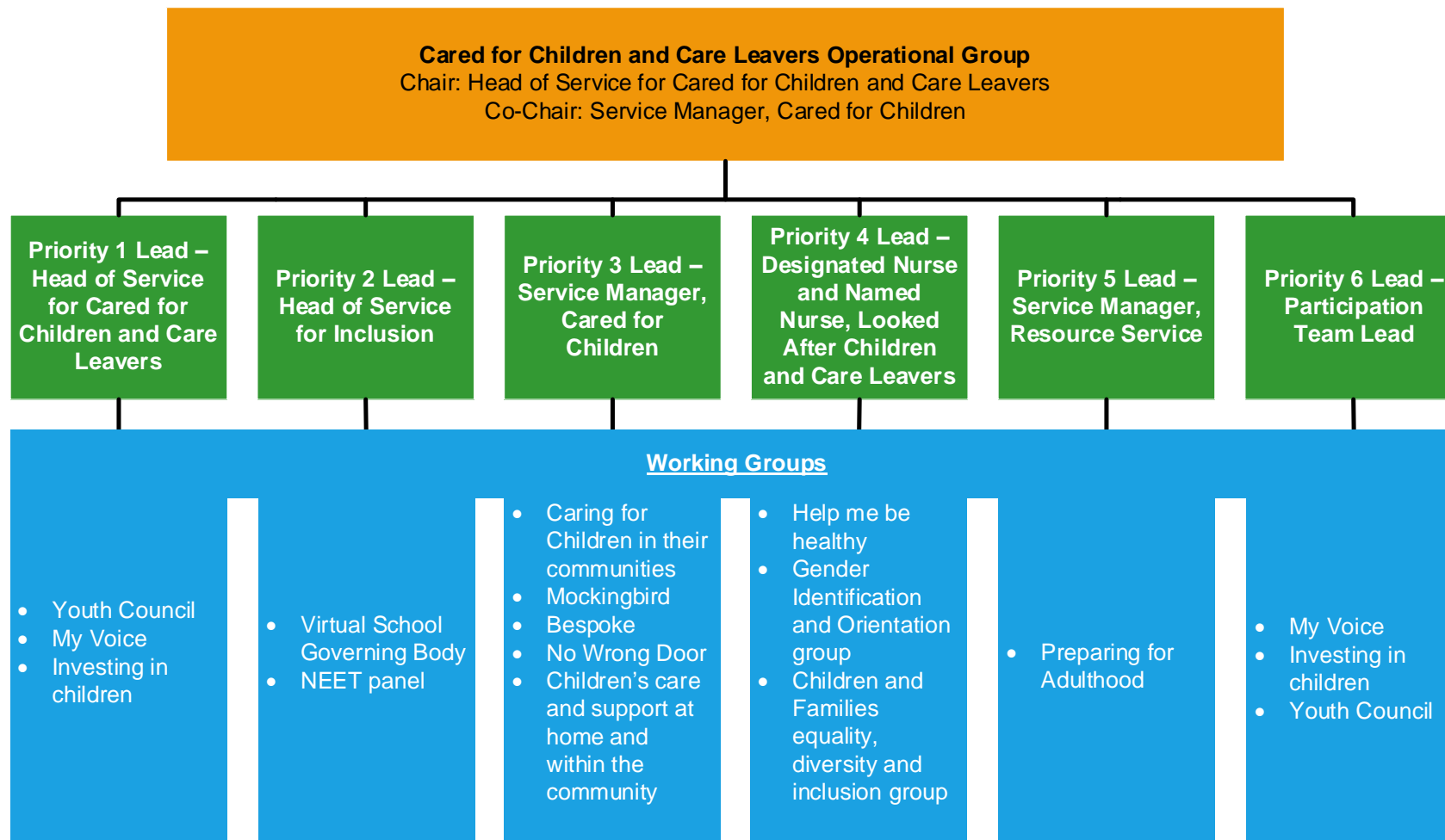


6. Year 1 (September 2022 – August 2023)

Ref	Action	How do we measure success	Who's responsible
6.1	Embed the TOGETHER approach with our children and young people, making sure that all staff, partners, and elected members are working to listen to and act on what children and young people tell us.	<p>Annual cared for and care leaver survey will tell us that children and young people feel they are listened to.</p> <p>The voice of cared for children and care leavers is clear in our key strategies, plans and services across the council.</p>	<p>Cared for Children and Care Leavers Operational Group.</p> <p>All staff, partners, and elected members.</p> <p>Participation Team.</p>
6.2	<p>Increase the range of opportunities and number of children and young people engaging in activities in ways that are helpful to them.</p> <p>Children and young people who don't wish to attend groups are able to share their views via 1-1 sessions with frontline colleagues and digital communication.</p>	Increase the number of children who can share their views in a variety of ways.	<p>Cared for Children and Care Leavers Operational Group.</p> <p>Participation Team.</p>
6.3	Ensure opportunities for senior managers and elected members to hear direct from young people about their experiences and ideas.	Shadow Cared for Children and Care Leavers Committee (tbc), evidence of change as a result of the voice of children and young people at Cared for Children and Care Leavers Committee (tbc).	<p>Cared for Children and Care Leavers Operational Group.</p> <p>All staff, partners, and elected members.</p> <p>Participation Team.</p>
6.4	Following the annual survey of cared for children and care leavers, all services to evidence actions based on recommendations by children and young people.	<p>Each annual survey feedback will demonstrate how children and young people feel about the changes made.</p> <p>An increase in the numbers of children and young people completing the survey.</p>	<p>Cared for Children and Care Leavers Committee (tbc) and Cared for Children and Care Leavers Operational Group.</p> <p>Participation Team.</p>

		Children and young people will tell us that there have been positive changes as a result of the annual survey feedback.	
6.5	Ensure that the child's voice is evident in recruitment of all key posts in children's services.	All interview panels for key posts have involvement from cared for children and care leavers.	All services and teams, participation team to support where required.
6.6	Ensure that the child's voice is evident in the decision making when commissioning services.	Children and young people will be attending panels, presentations, judging and scoring.	Cared for Children and Care Leavers Operational Group. Participation Team. Commissioning Team.

Governance



If you have any views on this strategy or how we can improve our services, please contact us at corporateparenting@cheshireeast.gov.uk

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EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT

Cheshire East Cared for Children and Care Leavers Strategy
Strategy 2022 – 2026

VERSION CONTROL

Date	Version	Author	Description of Changes
18/03/22	1.1		Initial EIA
14/04/22	1.2		Update of data


EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT

CHESHIRE EAST COUNCIL - EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT

Stage 1 Description: Fact finding (about your policy / service /

Department	Children's Social Care		Lead officer responsible for assessment		Kerry Birtles Director of Children's Social Care	
Service	Children and Young People		Other members of team undertaking assessment		Laura Hindhaugh Business Development Manager	
Date			Version		1.2	
Type of document (mark as appropriate)	Strategy ✓	Plan	Function	Policy	Procedure	Service
Is this a new/ existing/ revision of an existing document (please mark as appropriate)	New ✓		Existing		Revision	
Title and subject of the impact assessment (include a brief description of the aims, outcomes, operational issues as appropriate and how it fits in with the wider aims of the organisation) Please attach a copy of the strategy/ plan/ function/ policy/ procedure/ service	<p>Cheshire East Cared for Children and Care Leavers Strategy 2022 – 2026</p> <p>In Cheshire East, we believe caring for our cared for children and care leavers is one of the most important responsibilities held by elected members, partner agencies, and individual staff working with children and young people in the care of the local authority. We want these children and young people to have the same opportunities and care as any good parent would want for their own child. The strategy sets out a number of pledges to improve outcomes for cared for children and care leavers, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We will care for our cared for children and care leavers as any good parent would • We will improve education, employment and training outcomes • We will work to give all children and young people a forever home and to keep them safe • We will improve health and wellbeing outcomes. 					

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We will prepare children and young people for adulthood. • We will work TOGETHER with children and young people <p>This strategy has been developed TOGETHER with children and young people. The 'Pledges' that we make to them are based on the things that they have told us matter most to them.</p> <p>The Cared for and Care Leavers strategy meets the strategic aims and objectives in the Council's Corporate Plan 2021-25 as it contributes to 'A council which empowers and cares about people' and the priority to 'be the best Corporate Parents and improve outcomes for vulnerable children and young people'.</p> <div data-bbox="696 608 752 667">  </div> <p>Cared for Children and Care Leavers Stra</p>	
Who are the main stakeholders and have they been engaged with? (e.g. general public, employees, Councillors, partners, specific audiences, residents)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Children and young people ▪ Foster carers ▪ Councillors 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Operational Staff ▪ Partners such as Health, Housing, Education.
What consultation method(s) did you use?	<p>Our Cared for and Care Leavers strategy has been developed with our cared for children and young people and care leavers, we have carried out a variety of group and one to one sessions to gain their views and an understanding of what matters most to them. Children and young people told us that the pledges in the current strategy still feel relevant, however they didn't like some of the language we use to talk about their lives, we have made changes to the new strategy to reflect this and have also changed the name of the strategy from Corporate Parenting Strategy to Cared for and Care Leavers strategy .We have also referred to the results of our care leavers survey carried out in November 2021 when developing this strategy.</p> <p>We conducted an online survey in March to give foster carers an opportunity to share their views and ideas during the development of the strategy. Their responses around the relevance of the pledges echoed that of the children and young people we spoke to, with some feeling the use of 'being a good corporate parent' is vague and lacks context. 72% felt that a pledge around participation should be included in our new strategy. Some foster carers commented that they would like improved communication with them to be included as part of the new strategy and</p>	

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	<p>we have developed actions to support this in our action plan.</p> <p>We have held focus sessions during workstream groups and Corporate Parenting Operational Group where managers, operational staff, councillors and health colleagues were able to share their views on the priority areas and actions needed in the strategy.</p>
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Stage 2 Initial Screening

<p>Who is affected and what evidence have you considered to arrive at this analysis? (This may or may not include the stakeholders listed above)</p>	<p>There are approximately 523 children and young people currently in the care of Cheshire East Council and 364 care leavers, we know that this cohort of children are among some of the most vulnerable in our community and we aim to improve outcomes for these children and young people.</p> <p>Currently there are 286 males and 236 females with one indeterminate cared for children.</p> <p>The age range of cared for children is as follows:</p> <p>0-4 years 97 children</p> <p>5-10 years 116 children</p> <p>11-15 years 186 children</p> <p>16+ years 124 children.</p> <p>The ethnicity of cared for children is as follows:</p> <p>White British 432</p> <p>White Other 22</p> <p>Chinese 2</p>
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	<p>Pakistani 1</p> <p>White and Black Caribbean 9</p> <p>African 3</p> <p>Information not obtained 2</p> <p>Gypsy/ Roma 4</p> <p>Any other Asian Background 5</p> <p>White Asian 3</p> <p>Other Ethnic Group 19</p> <p>Other Mixed Background 13</p> <p>White and Black African 4</p> <p>Any other Black Background 3</p> <p>Traveller of Irish Heritage 1</p> <p>Indian 0</p> <p>Caribbean 0</p>
Who is intended to benefit and how?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Children and young people in care of the local authority ▪ Young people who are care leavers ▪ Unaccompanied children (immigrants who are under the age of 18 years and are not under the care of a parent or legal guardian)

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	<p>This strategy will help us to ensure we follow the 2017 the Children and Social Work Act Corporate Parenting Principles for children in care and care leavers up to the age of 25 years as follows:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. To act in the best interests, and promote the physical and mental health and wellbeing of children and young people 2. To encourage children and young people to express their views, wishes and feelings 3. To take account of their views, wishes and feelings 4. To help them gain access to, and make the best use of, services provided by the local authority and its relevant partners 5. To promote high aspirations, and seek to secure the best outcomes, for those children and young people 6. For those children and young people to be safe, and for stability in their home lives, relationships and education or work 7. To prepare children in care and care leavers for adulthood
Could there be a different impact or outcome for some groups?	The strategy supports the cared for children and care leavers in Cheshire East, who are some of the most vulnerable children in our community, it will not result in any adverse impact on any other part of the community.
Does it include making decisions based on individual characteristics, needs or circumstances?	Only to the extent of provision of support and services to Cheshire East children and young people who have life experiences of being cared for children or care leavers.
Are relations between different groups or communities likely to be affected? (eg will it favour one particular group or deny opportunities for others?)	No - The strategy supports the cared for children and care leavers in Cheshire East, who are some of the most vulnerable children in our community, it will not result in any adverse impact on any other part of the community.
Is there any specific targeted action to promote equality? Is there a history of unequal outcomes (do you have enough	All children and young people have a right to be treated equally and have their disability, gender, ethnic, cultural, religious, and linguistic needs met. As corporate parents for children and young people in care and care leavers, it is essential that the Council is able to demonstrate that it considers equality implications in all decisions made in relation

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evidence to prove otherwise)?	to cared for children and care leavers. The new strategy will consider any actions to improve equality issues for cared for children and young people and care leavers (a vulnerable group because of their experiences) and ensure that they are supported to achieve the same outcomes as their peers.
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Is there an actual or potential negative impact on these specific characteristics? (Please **highlight**)

The implementation of this strategy addresses the potential negative impact on all specific characteristics to reduce the level of risk.

Age	Y	N	Marriage & civil partnership	Y	N	Religion & belief	Y	N
Disability	Y	N	Pregnancy & maternity	Y	N	Sex	Y	N
Gender reassignment	Y	N	Race	Y	N	Sexual orientation	Y	N

What evidence do you have to support your findings? (quantitative and qualitative) Please provide additional information that you wish to include as appendices to this document, i.e., graphs, tables, charts							Level of risk (High, Medium or Low)	
Age			The age range of cared for children in Cheshire East shows that we have more 11 plus aged children in care. We will need to continually recruit experienced carers who can look after more challenging children and young people, including teenagers.				Low	
Disability			Factors that lead to a disabled child becoming looked after are complex, factors can include family stress, abuse or neglect, and parental illness. We are working to recruit more carers who can care for disabled children, including short breaks foster carers.				Low	

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Gender reassignment	Gender identity and sexual orientation issues may be masked by behavioural and Emotional Wellbeing and Mental Health (EWMH) difficulties making early intervention and support more difficult to deliver effectively. We provide support and training to foster carers to support children and young people and through the delivery of this strategy will ensure that Cared for Children and Care Leavers have their health assessed in a timely way, leading to appropriate support where needed.	Low	
Marriage & civil partnership	Cheshire East will highlight to potential foster carers that they do not need to be married in order to foster, and that single people can foster too, as well as those in civil partnerships, and living with their partner. We continue to raise awareness through our market and recruitment activity on social media and through events such as Foster Care Fortnight.	Low	
Pregnancy & maternity	Research shows that girls in care are around three times more likely than the average to become teenage mothers and figures also suggest at least one in 10 care-leavers who become parents have their children taken into care. We have made it an action within this strategy to support care leavers that become parents through prisonisation of access to services and earlier referrals to support services.	Low	
Race	An increasing number of asylum-seeking children are becoming cared for in Cheshire East as part of the National Transfer Scheme (NTS). Many of these children may have experienced trauma, which means that they often need more specialist care. We continue to work with our Marketing and Communications Team on launching a fresh campaign for Foster Care Fortnight to launch our new 'BE THERE' campaign and to consolidate our targeted recruitment to attract more foster carers who can offer home to sibling groups, teenagers, and unaccompanied asylum-seeking children. Through the delivery of this strategy we will ensure that practitioners understand and meet the diverse health needs of our children and young people, including those with health inequalities faced by race, ethnicity, ability and disability and unaccompanied asylum-seeking children.	Low	
Religion & belief	We are aware of the importance to some children and young people of the religious observance of their family's traditional religion. Our fostering recruitment aims to seek a diverse range of carers who can support children and young people from a variety of	Low	

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	religions and beliefs.		
Sex	In Cheshire East we have a slightly higher number of boys than girls in care which reflects the national demographic profile. We regularly monitor this figure and through our marketing and recruitment campaign continue to ensure that we recruit foster carers who are experienced to support male and female children and young people.	Low	
Sexual orientation	Research by Action for Children in 2013 revealed that 32% of LGBT people in the UK believe that being LGBT means you cannot foster, a misconception which must be challenged. Cheshire East is talking this by attending events such as Virtual Pride event whereby a fostering couple from the LGBTQA+ community talked about fostering for the council.	Low	
Proceed to full impact assessment? (Please tick)	Yes	No ✓	Date: 14 April 2022
Lead officer sign off	Laura Hindhaugh	Date: 09 May 2022	
Head of Service sign off	Kerry Birtles	Date: 09 May 2022	

If yes, please proceed to Stage 3. If no, please publish the initial screening as part of the suite of documents relating to this issue

Please publish this completed EIA form on the relevant section of the Cheshire East website

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