

WEST DUNBARTONSHIRE COUNCIL

Report by the Interim Executive Director of Social Work and Health

Council: 26 May 2010

Subject: West Dunbartonshire Corporate Parenting Strategy

1. Purpose

- 1.1 To provide Members with feedback on the consultation process regarding the Corporate Parenting Strategy, and to seek approval to implement this final draft of the Corporate Parenting Strategy for West Dunbartonshire.

2. Background

- 2.1 The draft Corporate Parenting Strategy was considered by the Education and Lifelong Learning Committee in January 2010. At that meeting it was agreed that the draft should also be circulated for discussion to other Council Committees in order to seek views from a wide range of Elected Members and corporate services.

3. Main Issues

- 3.1 As a result of the decision at the Education and Lifelong Learning Committee the draft Corporate Parenting Strategy was presented to service committees as follows:

- Social Work and Health Committee - 20 January 2010
- Community Participation Committee - 17 February 2010
- Housing, Environment & Economic Development Committee - 31 March 2010
- Corporate & Efficient Government - 24 March 2010

- 3.2 Consultation with each of the above committees led to no feedback on the Strategy or any specific questions regarding the Strategy.

- 3.3 Having completed this round of consultation, the final draft of the Corporate Parenting Strategy was submitted to the Education and Lifelong Learning Committee on 12 May 2010, seeking agreement to bring the final draft to the full Council for approval.

- 3.4 The Education and Lifelong Learning Committee approved the final draft of the Corporate Parenting Strategy and agreed that the Corporate Parenting Executive Group, chaired by the Chief Executive, will agree an implementation monitoring plan to support the implementation of the Strategy across the Council.
- 3.5 West Dunbartonshire Council has a good reputation in terms of supporting children who are Looked After and Looked After and Accommodated. External evaluations through HMIE and the Care Commission have established that although no corporate strategy has been in place, services do work well to meet the needs of this vulnerable group of young people.
- 3.6 Should the Council agree the implementation of the West Dunbartonshire Corporate Parenting Strategy, work will be ongoing to raise awareness and support services to embed the strategy in policy development and service delivery as appropriate. An awareness raising session has already taken place with the Community Planning Strategic Board and a similar session is planned in June for the Senior Manager Network.
- 3.7 Consultation with young people who are Looked After by the Council is ongoing and through this consultation, mechanisms will be developed to regularly seek the views of Looked After Children in relation to the Council's development of the Corporate Parenting role. We will also explore ways in which young people can make their views known more directly to Elected Members, and to allow Elected Members to take a more active role in the Corporate Parenting approach.

4. People Implications

- 4.1 Development of the Strategy was supported by the temporary post of Corporate Parenting Development Officer. The role of supporting and monitoring implementation will now be taken on by key staff within Educational Services and Social Work and Health, whose remit includes support to Looked After Children.
- 4.2 Training and support will be available to Officers across the Council and Elected Members as appropriate in order to develop the Corporate Parenting approach within West Dunbartonshire.

5. Financial Implications

- 5.1 The Corporate Parenting Strategy will be implemented within Council resources. There are no financial implications stemming from this report.

6. Risk Analysis

- 6.1 The Council is required to develop and implement a Corporate Parenting Strategy to meet its statutory obligations in relation to children and young people who are Looked After. Failure to carry out this duty effectively would be a risk to the reputation of the Council and potentially to the health and well-being of Looked After Children within West Dunbartonshire. The Corporate Parenting Strategy supports the ongoing positive work within West Dunbartonshire and will provide a framework to take this work forward in a more explicit way.

7. Equalities Impact

- 7.1 The Strategy is aimed at improving outcomes and supporting a vulnerable group of young people who are Looked After. There are no other equalities issues in relation to this report.

8. Conclusions and Recommendations

- 8.1 The West Dunbartonshire Corporate Parenting Strategy has been developed to articulate the Council's responsibilities as a corporate parent, with specific regard to Looked After Children and young people. This strategy has the approval of the Members of the Education and Lifelong Learning Committee who have agreed that the final draft should be submitted to the full Council for approval.
- 8.2 It is recommended that the Council agree the West Dunbartonshire Corporate Parenting Strategy.

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Appendices: Final Draft West Dunbartonshire Corporate Parenting Strategy

Background Papers: No background papers

Wards Affected: All Wards Affected