

EAST AYRSHIRE COMMUNITY HEALTH PARTNERSHIP

FORUM- 27 OCTOBER 2010

CORPORATE PARENTING PROGRESS REPORT

1. PURPOSE

- 1.1 To advise of progress made within East Ayrshire in implementing our multi-agency actions relating to corporate parenting, all of which aim to improve the life opportunities for looked after children and young people.

2. BACKGROUND

- 2.1 In September 2008, the Scottish Government launched *“These are our Bairns” – guidance for community planning partners on how to be a good corporate parent.*
- 2.2 As the lead agency for corporate parenting, East Ayrshire Council’s Cabinet approved the corporate parenting plan on 2 September 2009. The plan was also presented to the East Ayrshire Community Planning Board on 30 April 2009, highlighting key actions for community planning partners. Progress reports have since been provided to both Cabinet and the Community Planning Board.
- 2.3 The corporate parenting action plan summarises a range of work taking place across services. Actions have been taken by lead officers with regular reporting of progress. This work has been further enhanced through specific seminars and development sessions (detailed later).
- 2.4 In addition, there has been a specific work stream in respect of the implementation of CEL 16 (relating to improving the health of looked after children) by NHS Ayrshire and Arran (detailed later).

3. DEFINITION

- 3.1 Corporate parenting is the responsibility that local authorities and their partners have for children and young people who are looked after (usually within legislative framework of the Children (Scotland) Act 1995). Children / young people become looked after as a result of a decision of a hearing or a court. This can mean being looked after at home (or with relatives) through a supervision order being in place or it may mean living in the care of the local authority (in foster care, residential care, residential school or secure accommodation).
- 3.2 The formal definition of corporate parenting is :

“The formal and local partnerships needed between all local authority departments and services, and associated agencies, who are responsible for working together to meet the needs of looked after children and young people and care leavers”.

Looked After Children and Young People : We can and Must Do Better (Scottish Executive, 2007).

3.3 A good corporate parent should:

- Accept responsibility for the local authority's looked after children and young people (including care leavers)
- Make their needs a priority
- Seek for them the same outcomes any good parent would want for their own children.

These are our Bairns (Scottish Government, 2008)

3.4 There are 5 key elements to being a good corporate parent:

- the specific statutory duty under the Children (Scotland) Act 1995 to safeguard and promote the welfare of the children in your care.
- strong governance – having the right information, planning strategically, driving improvement, challenging services, focusing on outcomes.
- strong leadership within the council, within the Community Planning Partnership and in the community.
- listening to children and young people.
- being able to say yes to the question *“is this good enough for my child?”*

4. LEADERSHIP

- 4.1 While the primary responsibility for corporate parenting rests with the council, all community planning partners have a duty to co-operate to promote and safeguard the wellbeing of looked after children and young people, including care leavers. Some agencies have very specific responsibilities, for example, the NHS has a key role in promoting the positive health and well being of looked after children and young people.
- 4.2 All Elected Members have a responsibility for the care and support provided to looked after children and young people. A briefing note issued by the Improvement Service has also recently been circulated to elected members highlighting their responsibilities as a corporate parent.
- 4.3 The National Training Programme for Elected Members was launched by the Minister for Children and Young People on 25 May 2010. The programme seeks to develop awareness of elected members in respect of their roles and responsibilities as corporate parents. Since 2008, a considerable amount of work has already taken place in East Ayrshire in raising awareness about our corporate parenting responsibilities, which has involved elected members, senior staff and community planning partners. For this reason, the national programme started in East Ayrshire, recognising that there is much to build upon. A further seminar on corporate parenting is planned in October 2010 for elected members as part of the 2010/2011 development programme for members, with a particular focus on hearing the key messages from children and young people in East Ayrshire.

5 THE NATIONAL ANTI-STIGMA CAMPAIGN

- 5.1 The National Anti Stigma Campaign was launched in January 2010, by the Minister for Children and Young People and aims to tackle the stigma and prejudice associated with being a child in care. The campaign has a key message “Be Fair to a Child in Care” – this message is being widely disseminated via press, publicity and events.
- 5.2 The “Give me a Chance” campaign is the product of two years work with young people living in care. It started in 2008 when Who Cares? Scotland marked its 30th anniversary with a year of activities on the theme of Celebrating Success and Challenging Stigma.
- 5.3 The anniversary publication, *Caring about Success – Young People’s Stories*, captured what success means to children and young people in care, both their own and other people’s, and what they aspire to in the future. It showed that stigma and other people’s low expectations have an adverse impact on children and young people in care. One of the key recommendations was that the:

“Scottish Government and its strategic partners should come together to launch a national campaign aimed at dispelling the myths associated with being in care and promote positive images of children and young people looked after away from home, including the message that they are children and young people first and foremost, with the same rights to respect and freedom from discrimination, and the chance to achieve their potential just like any other children and young people: this should be designed by and led by children and young people, supported by key partners”. *Recommendation 1 of Caring about Success (Who Cares? Scotland 2008)*.

- 5.4 A presentation was made by young people on the campaign to East Ayrshire Council’s full council meeting and to the Community Planning Board on 24 June 2010. As a result, all elected members and community planning partners made a commitment to supporting the campaign by agreeing to commit to a promise about being fair to children in care (see attached). The presentation was designed and delivered by young care leavers, some of whom live in the East Ayrshire area.

6. DEVELOPMENTS IN EAST AYRSHIRE

Corporate Parenting Action Plan

- 6.1 As outlined, the East Ayrshire Corporate Parenting Action Plan was developed in 2008/2009 and implementation of the plan has been monitored by an Elected Member / Council Officer Working Group on corporate parenting. Partner agencies have been invited to specific meetings in relation to key issues, for example, the Medical Adviser to the Adoption and Permanency Panel attended to discuss the role and function of the panel in the adoption process. Regular progress reports have been presented to Cabinet and to the Community Planning Board, and will continue to be made on a six monthly basis.
- 6.2 The action plan addresses the key areas which have been identified as central to improving the life opportunities of the children and young people in our care:
- Individual Care Planning
 - Operational Planning and Service Delivery
 - Learning and Development
 - Creating Opportunities.

The most recent progress report was completed by lead officers in June 2010 (attached).

Events and Seminars

- 6.3 A range of events have taken place to ensure that the voices and experiences of children and young people inform our work. For example, young people in residential child care participated in development days and helped to inform how they are looked after on a day to day basis. They have also developed a clear specification in respect of the qualities of residential staff. In addition, a multi-agency planning event took place on 23 April 2010 in Kilmarnock and engaged all partner agencies in the consideration of the key issues and challenges affecting young care leavers. The central purpose of the day was to inform the development of a specific strategy for care leavers. This work is being collated for reporting to the next Member / Officer Working Group, and will also be reported to the OLG, Community Planning Board and Cabinet.
- 6.4 On 25 June 2010, a planning seminar took place involving service / agency lead officers to inform the to develop our future action plan, taking account of the key messages from children and young people. Work is underway to conclude this as part of our children's services planning arrangements.

Health Improvement

- 6.5 A particular area for development will be in promoting health improvement approach within residential child care. For a number of years, Health Promoting Schools, Hospitals and Workplace models have been used as approaches to improve health in these settings. NHS Health Scotland's Healthy Sectors team have begun using the learning from these models to develop a healthy settings approach for Care Establishments, initially focusing on Looked After Children. The aim of a Health Improving Care Establishment is to improve the health of a target population. This will be achieved by:
- creating a safe and supportive healthy living, learning and working environment
 - integrating health and wellbeing within the core activity of the setting/organisation
 - developing better links with the wider community and its resource

A national seminar is being held in November with a view to sharing practice across Scotland, giving detail on how the approach supports the corporate parenting, leaving care agendas and outcomes-focused planning and, ultimately, sharing how this approach may be applied within local authority-run residential care establishments for looked-after children.

NHS and Local Authority staff have already met with NHS Health Scotland and have indicated an interest in the approach. Following the seminar, it is hoped that one or two establishments each in East, North and South Ayrshire will be supported by NHS Health Scotland as early implementers of the Health Improving Care Establishments framework.

- 6.6 In April 2009, the Scottish Government issued CEL 16 (2009) with respect to Action15 of the Looked After Children And Young People; We Can And Must Do Better Report. This action stated "each NHS Board will assess the physical, mental and emotional health needs of all Looked After children and young people for whom they have responsibility and put in place appropriate measures which take account of these assessments. They will ensure that all health service providers will work to make their services more accessible to Looked After and Looked after and Accommodated children and young people and to those in transition from care to independence". In addition CEL 16 proposed seven

recommendations designed to ensure the delivery of Looked After Children & Young People: We Can And Must Do Better; Action 15.

NHS Ayrshire & Arran established a multidisciplinary/agency steering group to drive forward the implementation of recommendations contained within CEL 16 (2009). The Steering Group developed a robust action plan designed to ensure achievement of the key requirements of CEL 16 (Appendix 1). Progress towards full implementation has been very successful, with six of the recommendations being implemented within required timescale and the one remaining recommendation is on target to be implemented by the required date of 2015.

7. RECOMMENDATIONS

7.1 It is recommended that the CHP Forum:

- (i) Note the range of work taking place on a partnership basis in respect of our corporate parenting responsibilities.

Susan Taylor

Head of Service (Children, Families and Criminal Justice)

22 September 2010

(Updated by CHP Facilitator October 2010)

EAST AYRSHIRE

CORPORATE PARENTING ACTION PLAN

PROGRESS UPDATE AS AT – JUNE 2010



THEME 1: INDIVIDUAL CARE PLANNING

	Objective	Tasks	Timescale	Responsible	Progress as at June 2010
1.	We will ensure that all of our children and young people who are accommodated have an individual care plan to reflect their individual needs and circumstances	<p>Audits will be undertaken to ensure that each care plan provides, where appropriate:-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Targets for educational attainment • Actions to maximise attendance at school and minimise exclusions • Actions to maximise engagement in leisure and recreation activity • Actions to support transport to school • Regular health assessment • Encourage "life books" for children • Well planned and managed transitions • Preparation for through care including housing options for independent living and job opportunities • Arrangements for mentoring and/or befriending • Support for children to retain personal belongings (toys, pictures etc) • Regular review of care plans to maintain relevance 	Quarterly, beginning June 2009	HofS (CF&CJ)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Audits of care plans have taken place on a quarterly basis within residential child care settings in East Ayrshire. • The findings have highlighted a range of good practice, particularly in respect of the opportunities being made available to young people. For example: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All children had access to leisure opportunities. • All had health assessments • There was good evidence of support in maintaining friendships. • The audit tool is being further developed for wider application.
2.	We will further improve our management and performance information systems to ensure that needs, trends and barriers are identified and actioned.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review existing systems • Identify areas for improvement in management information reports • Identify areas for reporting on performance 	December 2009	HofS (CF&CJ)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lead officers in education and social work identified. • Processes and protocols agreed for accessing SWIFT and for regular data checking.
3.	We will implement the revised procedure for the LAAC Review	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review operational experience of implementation. 	December 2009	Service Manager	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work underway to ensure compatibility between the LAAC review

	System and review within one year.			(Corporate Parenting)	<p>system and the implementation of the integrated assessment framework.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A review of the role / responsibilities of the independent chair's role is underway.
4.	We will review expenditure on corporate parenting services and make sure that council's budgetary processes include appropriate resource provision for meeting the needs and aspirations of looked after and looked after and accommodated young people.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Expenditure on residential foster care placements will be reviewed, with a view to recommendations being made to the Social Work Sustainability Board about future resource requirements. 	Quarterly – reports during 2009/2010	HOS (CF&CJ)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A review of the existing allowances paid to foster carers has been undertaken. This matter will be reported to the Council's cabinet as part of the work taking place on the sustainability of social work budgets. • A review of the management and staffing arrangements in residential child care has also taken place and will be similarly reported. This work specifically addresses the recommendations in the National Residential Child Care Initiative (NRCCI) which was launched in December 2009.

THEME 2: OPERATIONAL PLANNING / SERVICE DELIVERY

	Objective	Tasks	Timescale	Responsible	Progress as at June 2010
1.	We will reduce the administrative duties carried out by Early Years workers, Social Workers and Teachers to enable more direct involvement with children and young people in care.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review the administrative tasks associated with looked after children, linking as necessary with other organisational changes that may be proposed. 	Revised timescale September / October 2009	HoS: Resources	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The review of the Department of Educational and Social Services administration and support structure was reviewed and reported to cabinet on 16 December 2009. The recommendations include additional

					capacity to support social work staff , including the minuting of reviews
2.	We will review our Learning Partnerships in the context of organisational change and associated priorities to ensure appropriate priority is given to looked after children.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review current working arrangements, mindful of current budget constraints. 	June 2009 for in-year savings	HoS: Community Support	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review completed and approved by cabinet in September 2009. Priority focus for Learning Communities is “We Can and Must Do Better”.
3.	We will review aspects of the school curriculum to provide opportunities for the development of practical (life) skills.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To be progressed as part of the Council’s preparations for Curriculum for Excellence (CfE) implementation 	In accordance with CfE Implementation Plans	HoS: Schools	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The SOA target of offering 20% of the S3/4 school roll a place on college based vocational programme has now been met and passed. Last session, 23% of the S3/4 roll were offered a place at college, this level will be maintained next session. Further training has been delivered to staff across the authority to assist with the implementation of a CFE scheduled for August 2010. Training has been delivered to encourage the development of Skills for Life, Learning and Work, further engagement with the Experiences and Outcomes, Literacy and Numeracy development and early consideration of the Assessment processes in a CFE.
4.	We will identify named officers within each Council department to be responsible for delivering corporate parenting actions particular to their Service.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Through Departmental Management Teams, we will identify named “Corporate Parenting” officers. 	Completed	Executive Directors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Lead officers have been identified for key areas. A seminar is planned for lead officers to connect and review collective progress. This will be on a multi-agency event.

5.	We will clarify responsibilities in order to facilitate the inclusion of Looked After children and young people in school activities.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review and revise current practice in relation to parental authorisation for school activities. 	Ongoing	HoS: Schools	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Standard Circular 48 is currently being revised and will contain advice on the inclusion of children who are looked after on school excursions. It will clarify the responsibilities of the local authority as a parent and will allow schools to include children who are looked after in excursions safely and legally.
6.	We will monitor the quality and effectiveness of service provision for our Looked After children.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Action via use of established self evaluation tools and performance reporting procedures. 	Annually	EDESS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A member / officer working group continues to meet and is reviewing the range of service provision. The member / officer working group arranged a partnership event focusing on young care leavers in April 2010.
7.	We will continue to increase the numbers of local foster carers, short break carers and adopters.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Further develop targeted recruitment campaign. Review existing support arrangements for fostering and adoption. Maximise existing flexible working arrangements to support employees who want to become foster/respice carers. Review our remuneration and other benefit packages for foster/respice carers We will work with Partners to raise awareness of fostering and adoption recruitment campaign. 	June 2009	HofS (CF&CJ) CPP Board	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The recruitment campaign has continued and has attracted considerable interest. The outcomes to date are: (May 2009 to March 2011) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 201 enquiries 30 new placements (fostering, adoption & short breaks) 17 potential placements – being assessed. Following a review of the Council's House Allocation Policy, proposals have been submitted to members for consideration which, if agreed, would permit the allocation of larger properties to address the accommodation needs of foster carers

and support placements.

THEME 3: LEARNING AND DEVELOPMENT

	Objective	Tasks	Timescale	Responsible	Progress as at June 2010
1.	We will increase knowledge and understanding of Corporate Parenting responsibilities with Elected Members and Community Planning Partners	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A seminar will be arranged for Elected Members and Community Planning Partners. 	Completed	EDESS/DCE-EDCS EDESS/DCE-EDCS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Completed in 2009 A further event took place in April 2010 in respect of young people leaving care.
2.	Community Planning Partners will pro-actively and positively raise awareness of the issues for children and young people who are looked after.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Partners will do this through established employee/user communication networks. 	Ongoing	CPP Board	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Regular reporting to the Community Planning Board Community Planning Partner involvement in corporate parenting events.
3.	We will develop ways to encourage the sharing of best practice on corporate parenting between Council Services and partner agencies.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Establish a partnership group to progress key actions in respect of corporate parenting. 	Completed	HofS (CF&CJ)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A multi agency event took place in April 2010 with a focus on young care leavers. A corporate parenting seminar is also being planned to ensure connections between lead officers.
4.	We will further develop ways to encourage and support discussion between children and young people who are Looked After.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensure that the existing children and young peoples forum (residential care) is influencing service delivery. Explore the need for a care leavers reunion / forum 	Completed	HofS (CF&CJ) HofS (CF&CJ)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The existing forum continues to operate and is supported by social work staff. The forum members have been asked for their ideas on how to progress the anti stigma campaign in East Ayrshire.
5.	We will continue to provide and further develop training / learning opportunities for relevant	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review and assess current training provision to ensure we are meeting service standards. 	Ongoing	EDESS/HoP	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The "We Can and Must Do Better" training has been rolled out and is continuing in 2010. A total of 217 staff

	employees.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Explore opportunities for funding to support our training requirements. • Work with partner agencies to explore cross-cutting training opportunities for employees. 		CPP Board	<p>have attended the full day (across agencies). A further 285 staff have attended Unit 1.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The “multi” agency training programme on the integrated assessment framework is also being rolled out in 2010.
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THEME 4: CREATING OPPORTUNITIES

	Objective	Tasks	Timescale	Responsible	Progress as at June 2010
1.	We will make available a choice of training, job opportunities and work experience for all young people leaving care based on their individual needs and aspirations.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review current employment and training initiatives for young people and identify areas where this will be possible, including modern and craft apprenticeship schemes. • Further develop opportunities for work experience and supportive employment schemes for all of our young people. • Work with partners to make best use of training, employment and vocational opportunities in their organisations for Looked After children. 	<p>Ongoing</p> <p>First stage completed – May 2009</p> <p>Ongoing</p>	<p>Executive Directors</p> <p>DCE-EDCS/HoHR</p> <p>CPP Board</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 6 young people have participated on EAC Lifeskills programme & 1 young person on the Get Ready for Work training programme. • Staff from the Skills Development & Employability Service (SDE) have undertaken visits to 3 residential houses in EA to raise awareness of our service. • 3 Transitional Support workers being recruited with 1 having responsibility for care leavers. • Work is taking place to review the supported employment scheme and to consider the potential for more tailored approaches.
2.	We will develop a structured mentoring and befriending scheme	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Further extend our approach to mentoring and befriending schemes 	December 2009	EDESS/HoS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Currently being implemented with a focus on support in educational attainment

		<p>Note: (We will learn from other similar activity such as learning disability and the Council's Partnership in Practice Agreement).</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop a mentoring scheme with partners and maximise opportunities available in partner organisations. 		<p>EDESS/HoS</p> <p>CPP Board</p>	
3.	We will endeavour to provide suitable supported housing opportunities to all young people leaving care.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Work with young people to identify suitable housing opportunities based on their individual needs Review our housing allocations and benefits policies to identify ways of ensuring that all young people leaving care have suitable accommodation with support opportunities. 	Review ongoing	<p>EDNS/HoHS</p> <p>EDNS/HoHS</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A proposal for a supported carers scheme has been presented to the Member / Officer Working Group on Corporate Parenting Options for housing models is also being considered and will be a focus at the multi-agency planning day in June 2010. The proposed Common Housing Allocation Policy, if agreed by Council for adoption will award previously looked after and accommodated children a priority to be housed through 'direct matching' from a Strategic Needs Group. Communication between Housing, Social Work and the individual young person will be vital to identify suitable housing opportunities.
4.	We will continue to provide transport to support continuity of education, taking account of the wishes of the child.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review our policies for school transport. 	December 2009	HoR&TS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review of transport is currently underway, including school transport (summer 2010)
5.	We will continue to develop	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review our arrangements for access to 	August 2009	HoS: Schools	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A wider range of flexible work

	opportunities for vocational learning for Looked After children	vocational learning opportunities and continue to develop these in accordance with the needs and aspirations of our Looked After children.			<p>experiences will be made available to allow young people to access placements in a range of ways. This could include several hours per week over longer blocks of time.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• All schools are working towards the inclusion of College based vocational courses in their option choice forms. This will give a wider choice to a greater range of pupils.
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