

Education, Children and Families Committee

10am, Tuesday, 15 November 2022

Establishment of the City of Edinburgh Council Corporate Parenting Board

Executive/routine
Wards
Council Commitments

1. Recommendations

- 1.1 The Education, Children and Families Committee is asked to:
 - 1.1.1 Agree the need for a dedicated Corporate Parenting Board whose task it is to monitor and further improvements for Edinburgh's Care Experienced Community
 - 1.1.2 Agree that the Convenor of the Education, Children and Families Committee be appointed a member of the City of Edinburgh Council's Corporate Parenting Board
 - 1.1.3 Agree the membership and oversight structure of the proposed Corporate Parenting Board

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Establishment of the City of Edinburgh Council Corporate Parenting Board

2. Executive Summary

- 2.1 This report outlines the need for a Corporate Parenting Board within City of Edinburgh Council. It describes the previous monitoring and scrutiny arrangements in place, the need for this to be changed, and the proposed new structure.

3. Background

- 3.1 Corporate Parenting is a responsibility conferred on Scottish Public Bodies under the Children and Young People (Scotland) Act 2014. The Scottish Government states that all Corporate Parenting Bodies should strive for the best possible outcomes for their looked after children. This should be done through formal and local partnerships, with agencies working together to meet the needs of those in care as well as those who have left care. In 2003 City of Edinburgh Council established a Corporate Parenting Member Officer Group (CPMOG), which ran until March 2022.
- 3.2 In 2018 City of Edinburgh Council established a Champions Board, a group of Care Experienced Young People (referred to as Champions) and key stakeholders from the council and other partner agencies (referred to as Ambassadors).
- 3.3 There were attempts made for meaningful crossover between the two groups, but this proved difficult. The two groups functioned in a very different style and Champions reported finding the formal CPMOG hard to understand and engage with.
- 3.4 In March 2022 it was agreed by members of the CPMOG that the group was not functioning effectively. Members agreed that a new Corporate Parenting Board should be established following the elections in May 2022.

4. Main report

- 4.1 The Corporate Parenting Member Officer Group (CPMOG) was established in 2003, with a remit to -

- 4.1.1 establish a common understanding of the factors which lead to poor outcomes for looked after children
 - 4.1.2 agree a clear set of outcomes for looked after children
 - 4.1.3 set up a robust scrutiny mechanism of the outcomes for looked after children
 - 4.1.4 ensure that looked after children are considered in all policy initiatives
 - 4.1.5 have an overview of all recommendations in reports on looked after children
 - 4.1.6 ensure that looked after children are a high priority for all Council departments and partner agencies
 - 4.1.7 communicate with looked after children
 - 4.1.8 convey celebrations of success
 - 4.1.9 identify initiatives to progress the outcomes of looked after children
 - 4.1.10 support foster carers and kinship carers
- 4.2 Membership of the CPMOG in the last session was agreed as seven Councillors; one religious representative; two NHS representatives; one Police representative; one representative from the Champions Board (as co-chair).
- 4.3 By March 2022 membership had grown beyond this to include 21 Council representatives (seven Councillors and 14 Officers) and seventeen representatives from partner agencies (including public and voluntary services). Invites were also extended to two Care Experienced Young People who were members of Edinburgh Champions Board.
- 4.4 People involved in the CPMOG over the years have been passionate about supporting our Care Experienced community. They have attended regularly and brought about significant change to the way children and young people experience their services and support.
- 4.5 In the time since the CPMOG was established, legislation, research and policy have progressed significantly.
- 4.6 There is still a strong need to highlight inequalities experienced by those involved with the care system; but there is also a need to have a space where issues with moving practice on, or accessing necessary resources, can be brought, and solutions identified.
- 4.7 The large number of invitees and the style of the meeting has led to a top-down model of engagement and consultation. Officers are asked to evidence what has been done from meeting to meeting, with little engagement between CPMOG members, or follow up regarding tasks, between meetings.
- 4.8 The formal style of the meeting is prohibitive of ideas and thoughts being shared with ease, and the membership has become cumbersome and unwieldy.
- 4.9 It is proposed that the CPMOG is renamed as the Corporate Parenting Board and is no longer held as a sub-committee of the Children and Families Committee. This will allow for a more informal approach to chairing and discussion. Updates from the Corporate Parenting Board can be prepared on a six-monthly basis and fed back to the Education, Children and Families Committee.

- 4.10 There should be a limited core membership that is kept under review, including Ambassadors from Edinburgh Champions Board. Ambassador attendance will ensure clear lines of communication between the two Boards, creating a feedback loop between our key Corporate Parenting Bodies in Edinburgh and our Care Experienced Community. Interim membership should be extended to parties when their attendance would be helpful/relevant to specific topics.
- 4.11 The Convener of the Education, Children and Families Committee is a member of the Corporate Parenting Board to ensure oversight.
- 4.12 Chairing of the board should be held between the different agencies, looking to each to take a shared responsibility for the group.
- 4.13 Standing agenda items should include pertinent updates from the previous action plan, an update on the Promise and an update on Corporate Parenting/Champions Board activity since the previous meeting.
- 4.14 The actions raised from the board meetings should be tracked by the Corporate Parenting Lead Officer.
- 4.15 Terms of Reference for the Board should be updated and revised annually and kept in line with those of the Champions Board.

5. Next Steps

- 5.1 Core Membership will need to be agreed.
- 5.2 The Terms of Reference for the Board will need to be set.

6. Financial impact

- 6.1 No financial impacts are noted for this report.

7. Stakeholder/Community Impact

- 7.1 This proposal was agreed by the CPMOG in March 2022.
- 7.2 The Champions from Edinburgh Champions Board are in support of these changes.

8. Background reading/external references

n/a

9. Appendices

n/a