



Department for Children, Adults and Health

SOUTH GLOUCESTERSHIRE

CORPORATE PARENTING STRATEGY

2018-2020

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FORWARD

South Gloucestershire Council is committed to being an excellent Corporate Parent. We know that to achieve this there are considerable challenges to overcome and recognise and that whilst significant strides have been made this past year, there is still a great deal to achieve.

We know that to ensure that children in care and care leavers have the opportunity to achieve the best possible outcomes and experiences in life, the quality of care and services they receive on their journey through care must be outstanding. Good parenting is vital for all children and young people, this includes children in care with disabilities. Many children and young people in and Leaving Care have already faced considerable challenges and are amongst the most vulnerable groups and have both a need and right for their corporate parents to be robust and aspirational, which is why Corporate Parenting is one of the central responsibilities of South Gloucestershire Council.

To demonstrate our commitment to Children in Care, South Gloucestershire Council made a pledge to Children in Care which we have called '**Our Promises**'. The ongoing challenge for the Council is to deliver these 'promises' and prioritise what children and young people have identified as most important to them and those things we know will provide them with the best possible opportunities for their future.

This strategy sets out how South Gloucestershire Council will fulfil its Corporate Parenting responsibilities, continue to listen to children and young people about what is important to them and their views regarding how well the Council is delivering its 'promises' and improving the lives of children in and leaving care.

This strategy is one of a number of linked strategies that address the council's key priorities and should be considered and read in conjunction with the **Children and Young People's Partnership Strategy, Health and Well Being Strategy, South Gloucestershire Safeguarding Board Business Plan**, and the **Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND) Strategy, Integrated Children's Services Improvement plan, Corporate Parenting Improvement and Service Development plan and The Care Leavers Strategy** (Refer to Appendix 2 for flow chart of related strategies)

1 MESSAGES FROM SOUTH GLOUCESTERSHIRE CHILDREN IN CARE

a. What works well:

- The Experienced Panel in Care (ages 15+) and Teen Care Council (age 10-14) have over 30 members between them representing young people in care and care leavers within the authority.
- Participation is a standing agenda item within CPSG meetings and allow young people to have a voice via a variety of mediums (face to face, video, via participation officer).

- Children in care have a strong strategic voice within South Gloucestershire Council and are able to evoke changes for all children in care.
- 96% of young people know who their social worker is (Promises Survey 2018).
- 92% of young people have an adult they can trust and talk to no matter what (Promises survey 2018).
- 89% of young people like their bedroom and the majority feel safe within their home (Promises 2018).

b. What could be improved:

- Young people especially those 12-18 years old need more help and support to understand the reasons why they are in care either through revisiting life story or updating the narratives given at a younger age.
- Young people between the ages of 12-18 need more opportunities to develop life skills (Promises 2018).
- How young people are heard in LAC reviews needs to be reviewed, new tools to capture the voice of the child are required as well as a better understanding of the role of their IRO and review process. (feedback to DfE advisor September 2018)
- The 2017 and 2018 Promises survey highlight contact as important to young people, more needs to be done to ensure the amount of time spent with siblings is just right, especially for those who are living independently and may face additional barriers such as transport.
- Young people who are both looked after and care leavers report worrying about their feelings and emotions as well as their mental health, more support is needed in this area to build resilience within the population.

c. What we (EPIC and TCC) would like to see achieved:

- Young people would like more opportunities to be involved in staff training and development.
- New website for looked after young people and care leavers as well as the use of apps.
- Yearly satisfaction survey for looked after children and care leavers as pivotal in the reviewing of the Promises as well as a contributing factor of departmental action planning, staff training and development.
- Ask us to team meetings and big things that are going on so we can be a part of the decisions made that affect us.
- To continue to be able to represent young people in care and care leavers locally, regionally and nationally through APPG meetings and NLCBF.
- Young people to feel like their voice is just as strong within their reviews and care planning as it is within strategic decisions about services.
- EPIC would like to be involved in the development of the local offer for care leavers.
- TCC would like to work alongside the IRO service to help more young people feel empowered and participate in their LAC reviews.
- EPIC and TCC would like the council to continue to provide a Christmas dinner for Care Leavers who are on their own at Christmas. EPIC would like to support in the planning of this.

d. What has been achieved in the past 12 months:

- EPIC and TCC regularly send a delegate to All Party Parliamentary Meetings in Westminster (April 2018/ October 2018).
- EPIC lobbied the council to reduce council tax for care leavers leading to care leavers not having to pay council tax and the group being awarded the British Youth Council Youth on Board award for this work (February 2018).

- Continuation of children and young people involved in staff recruitment including Managers, Director of Children's Services and Social Workers.
- Two Care Leavers are trained to deliver Total Respect training twice a year to staff, young people in care have also been involved with delivering the preparing for independence training course as well as the managing contact training (January 2018 / July 2018).
- EPIC and TCC have recorded record attendance at meetings with over 20 young people attending in July, September and October 2018.
- EPIC and TCC have met with key decision makers such as Jon Hunt Lead member for children and young people as well as other members of the CPSG (April 2018).
- This year has seen the addition of two new sessions for young people in care which are; the girls group which aims to increase female participation as well as Stress Free which are termly workshops designed to increase the resilience of looked after young people (August/ October 2018).
- Young people in care have been able to complete flexible work experience within the participation team so far this year 4 young people have had a placement.
- We are continuing to grow our social media presence with 368 Twitter follower and 24 Instagram followers. Work has commenced in October 2018 to update The Us in Care website.
- Two care leaver delegates will be attending the National Care Leaver celebration event in October 2018.
- Clear communication pathways are embedded between the CPSG and EPIC / TCC.
- EPIC and the participation officer have created a guide for Care Leavers explaining about their entitlements leaving care.
- Celebration of Achievement Awards Evening for all Children in Care had over 50 young people attend and the Care Leaver awards had over 40 young people attend. The entertainment for these events was provided by children in care and included 4 singers, 1 dance group made up of Teen Care Council members as well as a poetry reading.
- The council held its 1st Christmas dinner for care leavers who were alone on Christmas day, EPIC chose presents to go in individual stockings for this group of young people.

2 INTRODUCTION

Corporate Parenting is the term used to describe everybody's responsibility within the Council to provide the best possible care and protection for children and young people who are 'Looked After'.

As corporate parents it is our responsibility to make sure that children in care and care leavers are safe, have positive experiences in care and improve their ongoing life chances. It is about how everyone, the Local Authority and its partners, e.g. health service, specialist, services housing, councillors and council officers, teachers, GPs etc. all recognise their responsibility as corporate parents and help us be the best possible corporate parents we can be to the children and young people in our care.

As good corporate parents our challenge and aspirations should be "would this be good enough for my child". We must provide the kind of care and support that any good parents would provide their own children. As well as keeping children and

young people safe we must also focus on improving quality of life and promoting good future outcomes in adult life.

3 OUR VISION

- TO BE THE VERY BEST CORPORATE PARENTS WE CAN BE FOR CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE IN OUR CARE
- FOR OUR CENTRAL STANDARD TO REMAIN “WOULD THIS BE GOOD ENOUGH FOR MY CHILD”

We will know that we are doing this when we have delivered our ‘Promises’ to children in care and they tell us that their experiences in care are positive.

To achieve this we will need to see that children and young people’s outcomes are positive, that they are staying safe, being healthy, enjoying and achieving, making a positive contribution and as young people achieving economic wellbeing.

4 OUR CORE PRINCIPLES

1. The responsibility of meeting the needs of looked after children or children at risk of coming into care is everybody’s responsibility within Children’s Services and our partner agencies.
2. Children and young people should be cared for by their parents whenever it is safe and in their interests to do so.
3. Preventative services, specialists and targeted support and intervention should be provided to children in need and at risk of coming into care to provide them with the best chance of remaining safely with their families.
4. Where children cannot be cared for by their parents, placing children within their family networks will be prioritised and supported where this is in their interest.
5. For children who require alternative care outside of their family, the majority of children will have their needs met in a foster family. Wherever possible children will be placed with South Gloucestershire’s in-house foster carers unless this provision is unable to meet their needs. In these exceptional circumstances an Independent Foster Placement will be sought.
6. Residential placements should only be made where the child’s needs are such that they are unable to live in a family setting. Care plans need to remain aspirational and as such a long-term care plan of residential care should be exceptional.

7. Children who require short-term alternative care will be placed close to their families, schools and communities as possible.
8. Children in short-term alternative care need to remain at their current school and avoid further disruption wherever possible.
9. Out of area placements for children should only be considered in exceptional circumstances.
10. All looked after children of statutory school age must receive appropriate educational provision. Identifying and prioritising appropriate educational provision is as important in terms of future outcomes as finding an appropriate foster family for looked after children.
11. For children and young people who are unable to return to their parents' care their need and right for permanency will be our central priority as we know this is key to underpinning all future outcomes.
12. Decisions regarding a child's future will be made within a timescale for the child and progressed with a sense of urgency in order to provide each child with the opportunity of permanency and promote their future outcomes.
13. For children and young people who require long-term care, we will seek to provide quality and affordable provision with the relevant wrap around services to meet their identified needs enhance placement stability and promote outcomes.
14. In order for a child and young person to fulfil their potential and achieve either permanency or placement stability, we must address the emotional health needs alongside the physical health needs of children and young people in our care.
15. Children and young people need to remain in contact with people who are important to them. Arrangements for contact will need to be based on the child's needs, be flexible and consistent with both the care plan and purpose of contact. Frequency of contact should not jeopardise the stability of the child's placement or chances of securing permanency.
16. Young people leaving care are prepared appropriately for adulthood and have a good choice of accommodation and the relevant range of support to manage this transition.
17. Children and young people have both a need and right to participate in decisions that are made about them and their lives. We will and must talk to children and young people about possible options for their future and, wherever possible and appropriate to do so, make decisions with them and discuss with them both the reasons for and implications of these decisions.
18. Children and young people require strong champions who have high aspirations for them. The Council's partners and stakeholders will hold and promote high aspirations about what children and young people can achieve and support them in identifying and achieving aspirational goals for their future.

5 OUR STRATEGY

Our Vision, Core Principles and Action Plan sets out the key elements of South Gloucestershire's Corporate Parenting Strategy.

We will know we have been successful when children in our care, irrespective of their age, gender, ethnicity, disability or youth, have both a positive journey through care and their experiences reflect our core principles. We will have achieved this by knowing:

- Our children and young people feel safe, secure and protected;
- Are both physically and emotionally healthy;
- Services recognise and are responsive to ethnicity, culture, religion and sexual identity;
- Services recognise and are responsive to children and young people with additional needs;
- That they have high aspirations to achieve the best that they can be;
- Children and young people have a voice that is listened to and central to all our decision making;
- What we are good at and what we need to change and improve, by listening to children and young people, their families and our partners to inform future practice and services;
- That as corporate parents we are providing what would be good enough for our own children,
- When we are effectively championing the needs and ambitions of young people in our care across the Council.

Our key aim in being good corporate parents is to ensure that the child's and young person's journey through care to independence and adulthood is a positive experience and is as smooth as it could and should be.

We will aim to make decisions with children and young people in a timely manner, and always explain to them why a particular decision has been made, and why it is considered to be the best decision for them both now and for their future.

6 ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

All members of the Local Authority have a shared responsibility for Corporate Parenting but some individuals have particular responsibilities. These include

(1) **The Lead Member**

The Lead member has the lead political role in ensuring that the Council and their partner agencies fulfil their corporate parenting responsibilities to children and young people in our care.

This includes ensuring that the services in place meet their identified needs, and ensuring ultimately that the Corporate Parenting Strategy is achieved.

Both the Lead Member and the Director for Children's Services will work closely with the Corporate Parenting Steering Group to ensure members of the Corporate Parenting Steering Group are maintaining an oversight of the quality of corporate parenting being delivered and ensuring that the Corporate Parenting Strategy is being appropriately implemented and progressed.

(2) **Senior Officers and Elected Members**

These individuals similarly have a particular responsibility to ensure that the Corporate Parenting Strategy is delivered. These individuals are required to know:

- The Children in Care Population
- Their identified needs including how many are disabled and an analysis of their specific needs
- Current service provision and the identification of gaps in service delivery
- The views of children and young people in care and care leavers regarding the quality of services and their views on how well 'Our Promises' are being delivered
- To evaluate the effectiveness and impact of the Corporate Parenting Strategy.

(3) **The Corporate Parenting Steering Group**

The Corporate Parenting Steering Group oversees and drives forward corporate parenting activity across the Council. The Steering Group is committed to championing the interests of looked after children and care leavers in South Gloucestershire.

The aim of the Corporate Parenting Steering Group is to improve the lives of children and young people who are in the care of South Gloucestershire Council. Similarly the group aims to ensure that the whole Council and partner agencies have a joint commitment to corporate parenting in order to achieve continuing improvements in outcomes for looked after children and young people.

The role of the Corporate Parenting Steering Group is

- To oversee the Corporate Parenting Action Plan to ensure outcomes fulfil the Council's pledge to looked after children;
- To oversee the development and achieve arrangements for securing effective consultation and engagement of children and young people and carers in the planning and delivery of services;
- To receive regular reports on the provision of services for looked after children and care leavers as required in legislation and enabled fulfilment of the purpose of monitoring and offering advice
- To offer advice and monitor
 - Plans, strategies or policies for looked after children, young people and care leavers to ensure performance a) realises the objectives of the Children and Young People's Plan and the Children in Care Implementation Plan, and b) fulfils statutory requirements.
 - The commissioning and use of placements outside the Council area for the accommodation and/or education of looked after children.
 - The outcome targets for educational attainment, health and other associated activities in relation to looked after children's achievement are achieved;
 - To ensure children in care are able to participate in plans for their care and developments for service planning and delivery, with progress being reported on an annual basis.
- To oversee the implementation of the NICE Public Health Guidance to promote the quality of life of looked after children and young people
- To oversee and monitor the Work Plan for the Fromcare2work project
- To celebrate the achievement of the Council, partner agencies and their staff in the provision of quality services

The Steering Group currently comprises of Councillors and Officers from Health, Education and Social Care, the Director, Assistant Director and Lead Member of Children's Services. Future plans include a member from EPIC (Experienced Panel in Care) and TCC (Teen Care Council), and a representative from South Gloucestershire's Foster Carers Association attending the Corporate Parenting Steering Group. Steps are being taken to ensure that a representative from disabled children's services can become a member of the Steering Group.

The Corporate Parenting Steering Group has a number of thematic sub groups that focus on three key priority areas. These include:

- Care and Accommodation Sub Group
- Health and Well Being Sub Group
- Education, Employment and Training Sub Group

Each of these sub groups have work plans to address areas of priority need and accommodate the Corporate Parenting Steering Group regarding progress achieved.

Membership of the Corporate Parenting Steering Group

South Gloucestershire Council	Lead Member for Children and Young People 3 Elected Members
Department for Children, Adults and Health	
Chris Sivers	DCS
Sonya Miller	Interim Head of Integrated Services
Julie Cathcart	Head of Education Learning and Skills
Nicola Hannaford	Corporate Parenting Service Manager
Siobhan Williams	Interim Corporate Parenting Service Manager
Blanche Duffy	Participation Officer
Nigel Shipley	Partnership Officer

Membership of the Care and Accommodation Subgroup

Jon Hunt	Lead Member
Adam Monk	Elected Member
Nicola Hannaford	Corporate Parenting Service Manager
Siobhan Williams	Interim Corporate Parenting
Emma Stephens	Children in Care Team Manager

Tina Wilson	Quality Assurance and Reviewing Manager
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Chris Good	Team Manager Transition to Independence Service
Kim Mylchreest	Home Choice Team Manager
Ross Chick	Commissioning and Procurement Officer
Nigel Shipley	Project Officer

Membership of the Education Subgroup

Jon Hunt	Lead Member
Adam Monk	Elected Member
Sonya Miller	Head of Integrated Children's Services
Julie Cathcart	Head of Education, Learning and Skills
Kim Garland	Head Teacher
Esther Saunders	Head Teacher
Steve Claypoole	Virtual Head for Looked after Children
Christopher Good	Team Manager Transition to Independence Service
Steve Claypoole	Lead Teacher for Children in Care
Claire McHugh	EET Co-ordinator
Nicola Hannaford	Corporate Parenting Service Manager

Membership of the Health Subgroup

Janet Biggins	Elected Member
Amanda Cundy	Designated Doctor
Liz Dando	Designated Nurse for Looked After Children.
Lisa Harvey	Designated Nurse Safeguarding Children
Lottie Lawson	Partnership officer for Young People's Health and Wellbeing
Kim Smith	Children's Programme Manager
Tina Wilson	Quality assurance and Reviewing Manager
TBC	Community Child Health Partnership Manager
Nicola Hannaford	Corporate Parenting Service Manager

Cycle of Reports to be presented to the Corporate Parenting Steering Group

- (1) Corporate Parenting Annual Report.
- (2) Annual review and revision of the Corporate Parenting Strategy Service Development Plan.
- (3) Annual report from the EPIC and TCC on performance against 'Our Promises' made in the Council's pledge to looked after children and care leavers.
- (4) Monthly performance reports on all key outcomes and indicators for Looked After Children and Young People Leaving Care.
- (5) Annual Independent Reviewing Officers report.
- (6) Adoption Service Annual report/Adoption West Annual report.
- (7) Fostering Service Annual report.

- (8) SEND Strategy, Annual Implementation Plan.
- (9) Education, Employment and Training Annual report (incorporating a report from the virtual headteacher)
- (10) Annual report of Health of Children in Care (Looked After Children's nurse and designated paediatrician).
- (11) Children Missing from Care and Children in Care at risk of sexual exploitation.
- (12) Annual Safeguarding Report (LSCB – Strategic Lead of Safeguarding (Annual report)).
- (13) Social Care Annual Performance Report.
- (14) Private Fostering Annual Report
- (15) Annual Report for Looked after children and teenage Pregnancy rates.
- (16) Annual report and outcomes for LAC and Offending.

7 OUR PROMISES

South Gloucestershire Council has made 'Our Promises' to children in care and is committed to listening to what they have to say and involving them in decisions that affect their lives and in decision making across the Council regarding the services provided to them.

Our Promises relate to key themes

(1) Important People:

We will ask you which people are important to you and ensure you keep in contact with them if it is safe to do so

(2) Being Involved and Listening:

We will make sure that you are involved in the plans we make with you about your future. We will ask for your opinion and take account of what you say.

(3) Having Somewhere to Live:

We will make sure that you have somewhere to live and can make it your home.

(4) Helping you know about what you need

We will provide you with information about your care, new opportunities and your rights.

(5) Help to Create a Good Future for me

We will support you to discover your talents and abilities and find ways for you to make the most of these.

Children in Care and Young People in South Gloucestershire were involved in writing and designing these Promises. Similarly they are annually involved in evaluating how effectively these Promises are being delivered by South Gloucestershire, and provide feedback annually to the Corporate Parenting Steering Group.

The review of our 'Promises' to children in care and care leavers will continue to be evaluated on an annual basis. This will incorporate the views of children and young people via the Children in Care Council and the Us in Care website, alongside monitoring of the outcomes achieved for children and young people in our care.

8 OUR CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE

South Gloucestershire has experienced an increase this performance year from 181 children in March 2017 to 195 children in March 2018. This represents an increase in children and young people within South Gloucestershire, requiring care outside of the family networks. Similarly South Gloucestershire Council rate of LAC (Looked After Children) per 10,000 has increased slightly from 31.5 per 10,000 in March 2017 to 33.7 in March 2018. However, this is significantly lower against a comparative of 48.0 per 10,000 for statistical neighbours and against a national figure of 60.0 per 10,000 at March 2016). Whilst the children in care population in South Gloucestershire has increased when compared to statistical neighbours overall the care population within South Gloucestershire remains low.

Corresponding with an increase in the care population there has been an increase in all age profiles of children in care within the past reporting year with the exception of children under 1 year of age. Other than this age group, the age profiles have all increased fairly evenly.

There has been some small variation in the pattern of legal status for children in care. Section 20 accommodations have decreased from 77 (42%) in March 2017 to 69 (35%) in March 2018. This corresponds with an increase in children and young people subject to care orders from 66 (36% in March 2017 to 84 (43%) in March 2018.

The ethnicity of looked after children broadly reflects the population in South Gloucestershire and is as follows: white 85%, mixed ethnicity 4%, Asian or Asian British 4%, black or black British 6%, other ethnic origin 2%. The variations are not statistically significant given the low numbers involved.

The majority of children and young people in care are placed in foster care (72%), of this 72%, 40% are placed in South Gloucestershire's in-house fostering provision, 16% in kinship foster care and 15% with an Independent fostering agency.

15% of children are placed in Residential Care, 2% are placed for adoption, and 5% are placed with parents and 6% in Independent living arrangements.

South Gloucestershire has continued to review its use of IFA placements and the profile of children and young people requiring care placements. As a result there are clearly identified target groups required for forthcoming recruitment campaigns to ensure that marketing and recruitment priorities accurately reflect projected needs. These targeted groups include, foster placements for adolescents with complex needs, sibling groups of 2 and 3, mother and baby foster placements, placements for children on remand or detained, and placements for children with disabilities.

South Gloucestershire does not have any in-house residential provision, so children requiring residential provision are placed in independent provision, a significant number of which are out of county/area. For children with complex health, education and social care needs, tripartite funding and processes are in place to secure placements which appropriately meet their needs.

Numbers of children placed out of area has increased. At March 2018, 70 (36%) children were placed outside of the local authority boundary, or placed for adoption. This is against a comparative figure for March 2017, where 50 children and young people (27%) were placed outside of the local authority. The measure used above is children who are placed outside of the local authority boundary. If the DFE measure (children placed outside of the LA boundary and more than twenty miles away from their family home) is applied there has been a decrease from March 2017 where 26 (14%) children placed beyond 20 miles from their originating home address against a comparative figure of 24 (12% at March 2018). Whilst there has been an increase in children placed out of area within South Gloucestershire performance is comparable to that of statistical neighbours and England. As at March 2016 (latest available) statistical neighbours' data stood at 14% and the England average stood at 14%.

The increase in children placed out of area will reflect in part the increase in the use of Independent fostering provision, of which a number of placements are within neighbouring authorities. Another small cohort of children and young people will be placed with connected carers. The other significant cohort for children placed out of area and beyond the 20 mile radius are placed in residential provision, South Gloucestershire's use of residential provision as of March 17 also stood at 14%.

There has been minimal variance in the percentage of children in care with a missing episode. In March 2017 this stood at 12% (31 children) and March 2018 this stood at 11.8% (32 children). This is slightly higher than statistical neighbours which stands at 10.8 % and the national average which stands at 10%. There has however been an increase in the number of missing episodes from 111 in 2016-2017 to 128 in 2017-2018. This increase reflects a number of children in care who have had multiple missing episodes.

All children who go missing are offered an independent return interview. Independent Return Interviews for children missing from home and care are undertaken by early help and preventative Services. Learning from missing episodes is collated to safeguard individual children and inform service development and improvement. A Multi-Agency CSE and Missing Children's subgroup of the LSCB meets quarterly to drive forward service improvement in this area.

Children and Young people who are missing from care within South Gloucestershire or identified as being at risk of child sexual exploitation are subject to risk management meetings, CSE strategy meetings, or complex strategy discussions where multi-agency action plans are devised to strengthen safeguarding arrangements for the child or young person. Where appropriate services are commissioned from BASE (Barnardo's Against Sexual Exploitation) or legal measures implemented to safeguard the child/young person.

The numbers of young people entitled to support under leaving care legislation has increased from 180 in March 2017 to 190 in March 2018.

Corporate Parenting responsibilities to young people leaving care have remained a strong focus nationally. The government introduced new legislation within the Children & Social Work Act 2017 in respect of care leavers that came into force in February 2018. This included, Seven Corporate Parenting Principles, Extended duty of Personal Advisors to care leavers age 21-25 and a Duty to publish a Local Offer to care leavers by September 2018

Following the introduction of The Children and Social work Act (2017) To extend entitlement to all care leavers of support from a personal advisor from age 21-25, South Gloucestershire is exercising its responsibility to make the offer of a PA at least once a year to care leavers and for them to carry out a needs assessment and to prepare a pathway plan for the care leaver, if the offer is taken up.

The Government introduced the requirement for local authorities to publish a 'Care Leaver Offer', which outlines the services for care leavers available within the local authority area. This has to include the new Corporate Parenting principles. South Gloucestershire has our Council 'Promise' to our care leavers.

The local offer should include details of the services and support that may assist care leavers in, or moving to, adulthood and independent living that the local authority provides in relation to: health and well-being, relationships, education and training, employment, accommodation and participation in society.

Alongside the Council's Promise to care leavers, South Gloucestershire currently provides a range of services and support co-ordinated through the Transitions to Independence Service within Children's Integrated Services. Please refer to Care leavers Strategy

Our Experienced Panel in Care (EPIC) has developed a Care Leavers' Guide that includes all the basic elements of the Local Offer, and also includes additional

benefits that South Gloucestershire council has agreed including the Council Tax Discount and a guaranteed interview for council-based apprenticeships.

The care Leavers' web page has been updated to publish the Local Offer in August 2018. This is phase 1 of the Offer and Phase 2 is being implemented over the next 12 months.

To ensure South Gloucestershire has the capacity to further develop the local offer and pathways for care leavers, project officer time has been secured for the next 12 months. This project will involve developing a full project plan, clear pathways for preparation to Independence, development of the corporate offer within the council and the development of partnerships.

South Gloucestershire's Care Leavers strategy 2018-2020 identifies key actions for the implementation of the Local Offer and further service development and improvement priorities for young people leaving care in South Gloucestershire.

Preventative Services are in place to prevent accommodation for these children and young people on the edge of care and vulnerable young people. These services are targeted services and are aimed at families who may be at risk of breakdown or for where children and young people have been identified as being at risk of poorer outcomes. These services include Children's Centres, Family Intervention Support Service and Youth and Intervention Support Service. Specialist services are also in place to oversee services for children with disabilities, share the care and care within children's home to support disabled children remaining within their families and achieving good outcomes.

9 PRIORITIES FOR SOUTH GLOUCESTERSHIRE

- (1) To ensure that children, young people and their voice are central to all we do
- (2) Improve placement sufficiency and extend the range and balance of in-house foster carers to reduce reliance on the Independent Sector.
- (3) To improve timely matching of children and young people with foster carers.
- (4) The implementation and development of a therapeutic foster care provision within South Gloucestershire.
- (5) Ensure children in care receive life story work in a timely way.
- (6) To continue improve placement stability and permanence for children and young people in foster care

- (7) Embed a strong permanency culture and permanence planning meetings to ensure that permanency decisions are made and progressed in a timely manner.
- (8) To ensure improved compliance regarding duties and expectations for children and young people placed out of area and those missing from care
- (9) Improved performance of the timeliness of health and dental assessments and range of national indicators for Looked After Children.
- (10) To support and improve educational outcomes for children in care in south Gloucestershire
- (11) To improve and reduce the variance in the quality of assessments, care plans and pathway plans for children and young people in care.
- (12) Develop SGO strategy and strengthen timely support and enhanced bespoke training for connected carers and special guardians.
- (13) To ensure that children in care are safe and that risks are managed effectively.
- (14) To Develop and implement phase 2 of the care leavers offer and the care Leavers Strategy (please refer to the Care Leavers Strategy Action Plan.

10 OBJECTIVES

- (1) Support children and young people to remain with their parents or families whenever this is safe to do so.
- (2) To provide and commission a range of high quality and affordable placements to meet children's identified needs that are of high quality and are affordable.
- (3) To provide and commission a range of high quality and affordable placements to meet children's identified needs that are of high quality and are affordable.
- (4) Ensure that all children in care are physically and emotionally healthy and that their health needs are met.
- (5) Ensure that young people's journey through care is clearly planned and prioritises their need for permanency, stability and promotes positive future outcomes.

- (6) To provide children in care with stable placements that provide them with security and stability.
- (7) Ensure that children in care (or privately fostered) are safe and protected from harm.
- (8) Ensure that looked after children contribute to decision making and service improvement

**SOUTH GLOUCESTERSHIRE CORPORATE PARENTING STEERING GROUP
CARE AND ACCOMMODATION SUB-GROUP**

Terms of Reference (Updated October 18)

Aims of the Group

- To support the Corporate Parenting Steering Group to improve the sufficiency and quality of care placements and accommodation for Looked After Children and Care leavers
- To support South Gloucestershire Council and the Corporate Parenting Steering Group Service to ensure improved performance regarding the timeliness of the care planning process and the quality of care plans for Looked after Children.

Tasks

1. To oversee and monitor the provision , range and quality of care placements and accommodation for Looked After Children and Care Leavers within South Gloucestershire to ensure that the sufficiency duty is met and that the provision of care placement and accommodation meets the identified placement needs of children within the care of South Gloucestershire and young people leaving care. .
2. To receive reports from the Fostering Team Manager, Adoption West, Looked after Children's (LAC) Team Manager and Corporate Parenting Service Manager, regarding the provision of in house fostering provision incorporating balance of placements available to meet identified need and the quality of these provisions.

To receive reports from the LAC Team Manager/Corporate Parenting Service Manager and Housing Manager regarding the range of appropriate and available accommodation to young people leaving care and in the process of transition to independence

3. To support commissioners to ensure that commissioned services for external foster care, residential care and supported/semi Independent housing provision are value for money and evidence positive outcomes for Looked After Children and Care Leavers. This includes commissioned placement provision for children in care or young people leaving care with disabilities.
4. To monitor performance against key targets for timeliness and quality of:
 - Placement Stability
 - Care planning
 - Permanent Care provision obtained outside the care system via Adoption Special Guardianship Orders and Residence orders
 - % of care leavers placed in suitable accommodation
 - Improved performance on key performance Indicators for Looked after Children and Young People Leaving Care
 - Distance travelled regarding outcomes for children in care in South Gloucestershire regarding staying safe, being healthy, enjoying and achieving, making a positive contribution and achieving economic well-being.
5. To monitor the effectiveness of commissioning arrangements to secure appropriate provision of care placements and accommodation for Looked after Children placed

outside the Council area for accommodation and/or education.

6. To ensure Looked After Children are able to participate in decisions about their lives and influence their care plans alongside ensuring that they able to make meaningful contributions and developments for service planning and delivery.
7. To ensure that the needs of Looked After Children are appropriately reflected in the Corporate Parenting Strategy.

Legal Status and Decision-Making

1. The sub-group shall not have the power to take decisions that bind member organisations.

Membership

Membership of the Care and Accommodation Subgroup

	Elected Member
Nicola Hannaford	Corporate Parenting Service Manager
Emma Stephens	LAC Team Manager
Tina Wilson	Quality Assurance and Reviewing Manager
Chris Good	Transition to Independence Service Team Manager
Kim Mylchreest	Home Choice Team Manager
Ross Chick	Commissioning and Procurement Officer
Nigel Shipley	Project Officer

2. The Steering Group shall have the power to co-opt other members as appropriate, including representatives from other agencies or providers of services to Looked After Children or Care Leavers.
3. Each member of the Steering Group shall nominate a deputy who will attend in their absence, if appropriate and subject to the agreement of the Chair.

Life of the Sub-Group

The sub-group shall be subject to review after two years.

Convening and Conducting Meetings

1. The Steering Group shall meet at least 6 times a year.
2. The Chair of the Group will be the Service manager for Corporate Parenting. The Vice-Chair will be the LAC Team Manager.
3. The Group has no quorum.
4. Meetings will be serviced by the Corporate Parenting Service Manager.
5. Minutes of the meeting will be circulated to group members and to the Chair of the Corporate Parenting Steering Group for receipt by the CPSG.

Relationships and Linkages

1. The sub-group will report to the Corporate Parenting Steering Group
2. At each meeting of the CPSG, the Corporate Parenting Service Manager or, in her absence, the LAC Team Manager/other officer will give a report on the sub-group's activities during the previous quarter.

Probity and Accountability

In the interests of transparency and to ensure probity, all partner representatives at partnership meetings are expected to commit to the seven principles of public life set out in the first report of the Committee on Standards in Public Life as follows:

1. Selflessness
2. Honesty
3. Integrity
4. Accountability
5. Openness
6. Leadership
7. Objectivity

and to abide by the Members' Code of Conduct of South Gloucestershire Council and declare any personal or prejudicial conflicts of interest in the course of the meeting and if appropriate withdraw from the meeting. Any partner representative with a prejudicial conflict of interest will be expected to withdraw from the meeting and take no part in the discussion.

**SOUTH GLOUCESTERSHIRE CORPORATE PARENTING STEERING GROUP
HEALTH SUB-GROUP**

Terms of Reference (updated October 18)

Aims of the Group

- To support the Corporate Parenting Steering Group to improve the physical and emotional health of Looked After Children
- To support South Gloucestershire Clinical Commissioning Group to carry out its statutory duty to co-operate with South Gloucestershire Council in the exercise of its Corporate Parenting functions.

Tasks

8. To oversee and monitor inter-agency arrangements to secure better health outcomes for Looked After Children.
9. To receive reports from the Designated Doctor and Nurse analysing the health needs of Looked After Children, their use of health services and identifying any gaps.
10. To support commissioners to develop services to improve the health of Looked After Children.
11. To monitor performance against key targets for timeliness and quality of:
 - Initial health assessment
 - Care planning
 - Review health assessment
 - Strengths and Difficulties Questionnaires
12. To monitor the effectiveness of joint commissioning arrangements to secure appropriate health services for Looked after Children placed outside the Council area for accommodation and/or education.
13. To ensure Looked After Children are able to participate in plans for their healthcare and developments for service planning and delivery.
14. To support the Corporate Parenting Steering Group in the implementation of the NICE Public Health Guidance to promote the quality of life of looked after children and young people.
15. To ensure that the needs of Looked After Children are appropriately reflected in the Joint Health and Wellbeing Strategy, and the Partnership Strategy for Children and Young People.

Legal Status and Decision-Making

4. The sub-group shall not have the power to take decisions that bind member organisations.

Membership

South Gloucestershire Council	Elected Member
Department for Children, Adults and Health	Service Manager Corporate Parenting Independent Review Officer
North Bristol NHS Trust	Designated Doctor for Looked After Children (Chair) Designated Nurse for Looked After Children (Vice-Chair) Area Health Manager
South Gloucestershire Clinical Commissioning Group	Designated Nurse, Safeguarding Children Head of Commissioning – Children, Young People and Maternity Commissioning Support Manager
<i>EPIC/TCC</i>	<i>Representation to be confirmed</i>

5. The Steering Group shall have the power to co-opt other members as appropriate, including representatives from other providers of health services to children.
6. Each member of the Steering Group shall nominate a deputy who will attend in their absence, if appropriate and subject to the agreement of the Chair.

Life of the Sub-Group

The sub-group shall be subject to review after two years.

Convening and Conducting Meetings

6. The Steering Group shall meet at least 6 times a year
7. The Chair of the Group will be the Designated Doctor for Looked After Children. The Vice-Chair will be the Designated Nurse for Looked After Children.
8. The Group has no quorum
9. Meetings will be serviced by the CCG
10. Minutes of the meeting will be circulated to group members, and to the Chair of the Corporate Parenting Steering Group for receipt by the CPSG

Relationships and Linkages

3. The sub-group will report to the Corporate Parenting Steering Group
4. At each meeting of the CPSG, the Designated Doctor (LAC) or, in her absence, the Designated Nurse (LAC) will give a report on the sub-group's activities during the previous quarter.
5. The work of the sub-group will also be reported to the Clinical Commissioning Group Board and/or Clinical Operational Executive as part of monitoring the children's programme.

Probity and Accountability

In the interests of transparency and to ensure probity, all partner representatives at partnership meetings are expected to commit to the seven principles of public life set out in the first report of the Committee on Standards in Public Life as follows:

8. Selflessness
9. Honesty
10. Integrity
11. Accountability
12. Openness
13. Leadership
14. Objectivity

and to abide by the Members' Code of Conduct of South Gloucestershire Council and declare any personal or prejudicial conflicts of interest in the course of the meeting and if appropriate withdraw from the meeting. Any partner representative with a prejudicial conflict of interest will be expected to withdraw from the meeting and take no part in the discussion.

**CPSG Education, Employment and Training Sub Group
incorporating The Virtual School Governing Body
Terms of Reference
(Updated October 18)**

Purpose

South Gloucestershire Council has the responsibility to promote the educational achievement of the children who are in the care of the local authority. South Gloucestershire Council is committed to working with all partners to ensure that all the children and young people in its care are supported to succeed and achieve the highest outcomes.

The Corporate Parenting Steering Group Education, Employment and Training Sub Group has been established to promote the educational achievement of the children who are in the care of the local authority and to ensure that children who are in the care of the local authority post-16 and care leavers have the maximum support to progress to education, employment, training post 16 and to attain good outcomes including progression to higher education.

The Corporate Parenting Steering Group Sub Group for Education, Employment and Training incorporates the Governing Body for The South Gloucestershire Virtual School. The South Gloucestershire Virtual School has been established in order to support the successful discharging of the educational responsibility for children in the care of the local authority. The Governing Body of the Virtual School was established by the Corporate Parenting Steering Group to undertake the work of a governing body for the Virtual School providing strategic leadership, acting as a critical friend and ensuring accountability.

The South Gloucestershire Virtual School

The South Gloucestershire Virtual School aims to ensure that children and young people in the care of South Gloucestershire Council receive the highest possible standards of education and training.

The Virtual School aims to raise attainment and improve outcomes for children in care by working with every school or setting which is attended by a child in the care of the local authority.

The Virtual School has three key responsibilities:

1. To ensure that all children who are in the care of South Gloucestershire Council have a robust and effective personal education plan which is regularly monitored and reviewed and ensures appropriate access to 1:1 support, including personal tuition to secure the highest outcomes.
2. To track and monitor the attainment and progress of children who are in the care of South Gloucestershire Council.
3. To champion the educational needs of children in care within the authority and those placed out of the authority.

The Virtual School does not seek to replace the actual school that the child attends but aims to work in partnership with the school to support and challenge the provision for each child to ensure the highest outcomes.

Membership

- Chair of the Corporate Parenting Steering Group (Chair)
- Director of Children, Adults and Health
- Head of Integrated Children's Services
- Head of Education, Skills and Learning
- Virtual School Head Teacher
- Lead Teacher for Children in Care
- Service Manager for Commissioning, Corporate Parenting and Specialist Provision
- Primary Headteacher
- Secondary Headteacher
- Member from Corporate Parenting Steering Group

Post-16 additional representatives:

- EET Co-ordinator
- EET Engagement officer
- Transition To Independence Service Team Manager

Meetings

There are six meetings a year – to take place each term prior to the Corporate Parenting Steering Group scheduled meeting.

Alternate meetings will have a Post 16 focus.

The Chair will work with the Head of the Virtual School and others as appropriate to draw up the agendas.

Additional meetings can be called as appropriate or a sub-group could be established for a finite period of time if required.

Accountability

The Corporate Parenting Steering Group Education, Employment and Training Sub Group is accountable to the South Gloucestershire Council Corporate Parenting Steering Group.

Minutes of meetings, Virtual School and College Annual Report, Improvement Plan and update reports on the progress of the Virtual School and College Improvement Plan and Work Plan for the CPSG Sub Group for Education, Employment and Training will be provided to the Corporate Parenting Steering Group.

Review of Sub Group Membership

This may be conducted as and when required. Either South Gloucestershire Corporate Parenting Steering Group or the Virtual School Governing Body may propose amendments which need to be agreed by both bodies before implementation.

Effective Date

The Terms of Reference will take effect from September 2012 and will be reviewed annually.

FLOW CHART OF RELATED STRATEGIES

