



Gloucestershire  
COUNTY COUNCIL

**If this were my child ...**



**A councillor's  
guide to being a  
good corporate  
parent**



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# An overview of Corporate Parenting



## Who is a Corporate Parent?

- **ALL** councillors take on the role of “corporate parent” to children in care of their local authority
- Children in care = those in foster care, in residential care, in kinship care & care leavers
- Duty to take an interest in the wellbeing and development of those children “*as if they were their own*”
- Other partners also have a duty to act as corporate parents



## Corporate Parenting principles (2017)

- To act in the best interests, and promote the physical and well-being of children and young people in care and care leavers;
- To encourage them to express their views, wishes and feelings;
- To take into account their views, wishes and feelings;
- To help them gain access to, and make the best use of services provided by the local authority and its relevant partners;
- To promote high aspirations, and seek to secure the best outcomes for them;
- For children and young people in care and care leavers to be safe, and for stability in their home lives, relationships and education or work;
- To prepare them for adulthood and independent living.



## The Challenge

Councillor's duty = to act '**as if this were my child**'

.....a useful concept but how?

- Be a pushy parent!!!
- Get involved
- Ask questions
- Sign the pledge



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# Who are our Children in Care?



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# Who are our Care Leavers?



## Care Leavers in Gloucestershire

- 314 Care Leavers (30<sup>th</sup> April 2017)
- 52 are young parents (37 young mothers)
- 27 in Staying Put arrangements
- 197 are in education, training or employment
- 117 are not in education, training or employment
- 33 are at university
- 12 are in prison or young offenders institute
- 71 Care Leavers live outside of Gloucestershire



## Care Leavers – LA responsibilities

- Personal adviser for all Care Leavers
- All Care Leavers must have an up to date Pathway Plan
- The local authority is required to keep in touch with Care Leavers until age 21
- Eligible for support until the age of 21, can continue to receive support or return to the service up to the age of 25 for help with Education or Training
- Provide general assistance
- Provide assistance with expenses associated with education, training and employment



## Care Leavers – LA responsibilities

- Provide vacation accommodation (or funds to secure) to Care Leavers in higher education or residential further education
- Leaving care grant – suggested minimum £2,000
- Provide a bursary (£2,000) to care leavers in higher education
- Right to Stay Put in foster placement up to the age 21
- Care Leavers will have access to an advocate if required
- When Care Leavers become 18 they have right to request access to their care records



## Care leavers – Accommodation

- The average age most young people leaving home is 27, for Care Leavers it is 18
- Young people in education are more likely to have had stable care periods or foster placements up to age 18
- 92% of our Care Leavers are in 'suitable' accommodation
  - Staying Put
  - Supported housing
  - Supported living
  - District Councils – Registered Social Landlords
  - Private rented
  - Family and friends



## Children and Social Work Act 2017

- New duties relating to Care Leavers are included in the Act
- All Care Leavers will be entitled to support until the age of 25
- The local authority must publish a local offer for care leavers
- Corporate parenting principles for local authorities
- Statutory guidance will be updated to reflect changes, implementation timetable has not yet been published
- Keep on Caring July 2016 sets out in detail expectations to support Care Leavers – including introduction of concepts around “Staying Close” and development of a “Care Leaver Covenant”



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# **Our aspirations for our Children in Care**



## Our Aspirations for Children in Care

Our aspiration is that our Children in Care grow up to be resilient, happy and healthy individuals who can, and believe they can:

- Maximise their capabilities;
- Enjoy life;
- Form healthy relationships;
- Parent well in their own right and
- Make a positive contribution to their community.



# Aspirations for children in our care and care leavers 2017-2020



ASPIRATIONS FOR CHILDREN AND YOUNG  
PEOPLE IN OUR CARE and CARE LEAVERS  
2017-20

For all children and young people in our care, our aims are to ensure that they:

- Will know what to expect when they come into care; shape their own care and plans; influence service development and have someone as their own contact
- Are helped to establish positive, significant relationships; their plan meet their needs, provide stability and tell their life story
- Are supported, to enjoy the best possible start, be healthy and maximise their capabilities; taking positive control over their life
- Are encouraged, prepared and supported into a successful, independent adult life with strong aspirations of their own.

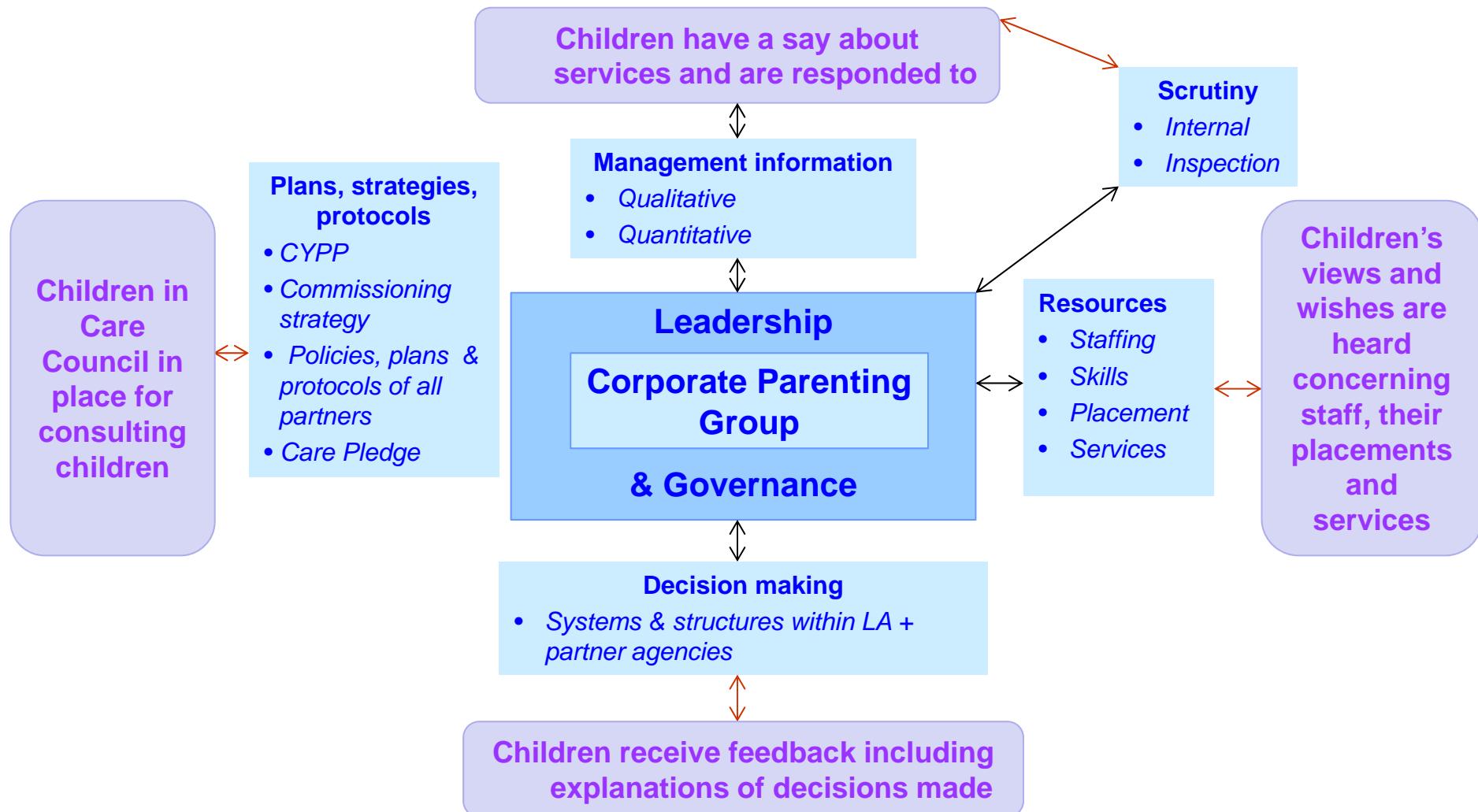


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# Corporate Parenting at the Council



# Model of Effective Corporate Parenting





## Gloucestershire Corporate Parenting Group

Role - to ensure that :

- The council fulfils its responsibilities
- Local partners provide strong leadership and act collectively as champions.

Activities:

- Engage with children + young people and professionals
- Standing item at every full council
- Meetings – at least 4 times a year



## The Virtual School

- Provides support and professional challenge to schools, social workers and foster carers.
- Raises aspirations, celebrates achievements and coordinate additional learning opportunities.
- Fulfils the statutory responsibility to report on the progress of Children in Care and ensure that Personal Education Plans are complete and effective.



## We need children in care to be healthy

They should:

- Have regular health assessments
- Keep routine appointments
- Be able to access mental health support
- Be well prepared for adulthood
- Have healthy lifestyle



## As a Corporate Parent, I pledge to ...

- Support approved foster carers living in my division and meet with them at their request;
- Undertake Regulation 44 Visits to children's homes in the county as agreed;
- Challenge local schools about the additional support they are providing for Children in Care;
- Act as a Champion for Children in Care and Care Leavers;
- Meet with Children in Care and Care Leavers as part of the council's arrangements to listen to children;
- Take part in the Annual Children's Take Over Day



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# What do our Children in Care say?



# How Children and Young People have a say

The Basics	Analysis	Children in Care Council
Regular feedback from children about the support that they receive from their social worker	On-Line Pupil Survey	11-16's and Post 16's Forum meet with senior managers and elected members in the Children in Care Council
Young people are involved in recruiting social workers	Feedback from Advocacy	Engagement Events with children in care and care leavers
Young People are involved in chairing their review meetings	Independent Reviewing Officers Report	Ambassadors contribute with and on behalf of young people to the development of services and co-lead the Children In Care Council



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# **Voices of children in care**



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# Questions?