

## **Joint Parenting Panel**

### **Slough Borough Council & Slough Children's Services Trust**

#### **Terms of Reference 2017/18**

#### **1. Purpose of the Joint Parenting Panel**

- 1.1 The Joint Parenting Panel (JPP) is a private meeting of Slough Borough Council (SBC), and is the primary vehicle for the council's councillors and Non – Executive Directors of Slough Children's Services Trust (SCST) to demonstrate their commitment to deliver better outcomes for children and young people in care and care leavers.
- 1.2 The Panel is a key mechanism by which both councillors and Non Executive Directors of SCST can ensure that services meet the needs of children and young people in care and care leavers.
- 1.3 In particular this includes:
- High quality care, nurturing supportive and meaningful relationships that encourage their growth of self-esteem, confidence and resilience; enabling young people to cope with change and difficult times
  - The highest standard of education which is consistent with the needs and abilities of the child
  - Opportunities and encouragement for self-development and keeping fit and healthy
  - Encouragement to take up hobbies, acquiring life skills and being a good citizen
  - Opportunities for education, employment and training, including open days and work placements, apprenticeships
  - Assistance with the transition from care to looking after themselves, including the provision of suitable accommodation.

#### **2. Responsibilities of the Joint Parenting Panel**

- 2.1 The Panel should:
- Provide clear strategic and political direction in relation to corporate parenting
  - Ensure that councillors and non-executive directors undertake their annual programme of visits to children's homes
  - Ensure that the needs of children and young people in care and their carers are prioritised and these are reflected in the pledge to slough's children in care
  - Receive regular reports on the level, range and quality of services provided to children and young people in care and care leavers, and identify areas for improvement

- Receive regular reports of key performance and quality indicators (as set out in the corporate parenting scorecard) relating to children and young people in care, and identify areas for improvement
- Engage with, and support the work of the reach out (children in care council) groups
- Listen to the views of children, young people and their carers and involve them in the assessment and development of services
- Champion the provision of dedicated, specialist council-based work placements and apprenticeships for young people in care
- Promote achievement and acknowledge the aspirations of children and young people in care by supporting celebration events and activity days
- Meet with Ofsted inspectors (where appropriate) for their input into inspections
- Encourage members to participate in the slough fostering panel
- Agree an annual work plan for the panel, based on the corporate parenting strategy priorities/pledge to looked after children
- Review membership of the panel and the impact that the panel has had on the experiences and progress of children in care and care leavers
- Report formally to the education and children's services scrutiny panel and cabinet/council where appropriate.

### **3. Membership & operation of the Panel**

3.1 Membership will be reviewed annually as follows:

- (a) For the council by the relevant political groups, at the commencement of each municipal year.
- (b) SCST Board nominations to the Panel will be received annually at the commencement of each municipal year.

3.2 In order to avoid any potential conflicts of interests, the Chair of the Education and Children's Services Scrutiny Panel and the council's representatives on the SCST Board shall be prohibited from sitting on the Panel as a member.

#### Chairing the Panel

3.3 The Panel shall be co-chaired by the council's Cabinet member for children, education and families and a nominated Non-Executive Director of the SCST.

3.4 The Chair of the Panel shall alternate at each subsequent meeting, with an equal number of meetings chaired by the council's Cabinet member for children, education and families and the Non-Executive Director of the SCST.

3.5 Vice chairs shall be confirmed at the commencement of the municipal year, and must include one council member of the Panel, and one Non-Executive Director of the SCST.

#### Voting Members

3.6 The Panel will be made up of voting and non voting members.

3.7 The members of the Panel that can cast a vote on any matter shall be as follows:

- The council's Cabinet member for children, education and families, SBC (Co-Chair)
- Non Executive Director of SCST (Co-Chair)
- Six councillors, including the council's Vice Chair (\*All seven elected member appointments to the Panel will be made on a politically proportionate basis)
- One SCST non-executive director (SCST Vice Chair)

3.8 The quorum of the Panel shall be a minimum of three voting members of the Panel.

3.9 If a vote is called, and there are equal numbers of votes for and against, the relevant Chair will have a second or casting vote.

3.10 In the absence of the Chair, the relevant Vice-Chair shall preside over the meeting and will retain the Chair's casting vote.

#### Non voting members

3.11 Non voting members are required to attend all meetings, or to nominate a substitute in the event of their absence.

3.12 The non voting members of the Panel shall be as follows:

- The council's Director of Children, Learning and Skills
- Chief Executive, SCST
- Foster carer
- Reach Out! Group representative
- Housing representative
- Thames Valley Police representative
- LAC Nurse (BHFT) or designated Slough Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG) representative
- Virtual School Head  
The council's Service lead for Communities and Leisure

#### Meetings

3.13 The Panel will meet a minimum of four times a year.

3.14 Each meeting of the Panel will be based on one of the key themes within the Corporate Parenting Strategy (based on the Pledge), as agreed at the first meeting of each municipal year (see appendices 1 and 2).

#### Accountability/Governance

3.15 The Panel will provide a quarterly report to the Education and Children's Services Scrutiny Panel setting out work to deliver the Corporate Parenting Strategy. This report will be presented by the council's Chair of the Panel.

- 3.16 The Panel will provide an annual report on its work to deliver the Corporate Parenting Strategy to Cabinet and the council. The report will be presented by the councils Chair of the Panel.
- 3.17 The SCST Chair will present the annual report to the SCST Board.

#### Administration

- 3.18 The agenda for each meeting shall be agreed by the Council's Director of Children, learning and Skills as part of the Panels ongoing Forward Work Plan for the municipal year.
- 3.19 Administrative support will be provided by the council's Democratic Services Division, who will arrange the meetings of the Panel; maintain its Forward Work Plan and publish its agendas. The agreed agenda will be despatched by Democratic Services, at least five working days in advance of the meeting.
- 3.20 An officer from the council's Democratic Services Division will be responsible for the minutes of the meeting and their subsequent circulation.
- 3.21 Attendance at meetings and access to the minutes will be restricted to members of the Panel and those listed under voting and non voting members, as set out above.
- 3.22 Requests from non-members to view the minutes will be considered based on the request fulfilling a valid 'need-to-know' requirement.
- 3.23 These terms of reference will be reviewed annually by the council's Director of Children, Learning and Skills and the Chief Executive of the SCST.
- 3.24 Any revisions must be endorsed by the Panel and the Member Panel on the Constitution Committee before being approved by full council.

#### Appendix 1: Slough Corporate Parenting Strategy 2016 – 2018

##### Priorities

Slough's Corporate Parenting Strategy 2016 – 2018 includes six priorities, which are based on Our Pledge: our promises to our looked after children (see Appendix 2)

Our looked after children and young people will be:

- 1) Supported by strong and effective corporate parenting
- 2) Enabled to reach their educational attainment
- 3) Encouraged to keep safe
- 4) Encouraged to develop positive relationships
- 5) Respected and engaged in planning for their future, and supported as they move into adulthood
- 6) Supported to have good health and wellbeing

#### Appendix 2: Our Pledge: our promises to our looked after children in Slough

- 1) We will make sure that social workers take the time to get to know and understand you. We will make sure that social workers are friendlier and listen to you more.
- 2) We will help you to have the same social worker for a long time.
- 3) We will make sure that foster carers treat you the same as their own children, so there is no favouritism and give you the care and love that you need.
- 4) We will make sure you have access to and are provided with the right advice and support to ensure you are physically and emotionally healthy.
- 5) We will help you have a healthy diet (one of your 5 a day) and make sure you have opportunities to take part in activities that will keep you healthy.
- 6) We will help you to stay where you are living in that is what you want.
- 7) We will help you to get the best educational outcomes and have a computer to help support you with your education.
- 8) We will make sure you have the opportunity to take part in activities and hobbies.
- 9) We will help you to keep in touch with your friends and receive the right information about staying over at your friend's house.
- 10) We will help you to be involved in the decisions that are made about you and any decisions and plans that are made about your future.
- 11) We will help you to be involved in choosing your placement and to know more about where you are moving to, including being able to visit any new carers before you move.
- 12) We will ensure you receive the best advice and support about applying for college and university, applying for a job and for your future career.
- 13) We will help and support you to learn about budgeting, how to cook, clean and other independent living skills.
- 14) We will support you to find a place to live, that is safe and secure and is suitable for your needs. We will ensure we plan ahead to make sure that, together, we find the right place for you, when you move on from care.
- 15) We want to support you to have contact with your family and friends. If this is not possible we will tell you why.
- 16) We will offer you the support of an advocate or independent visitor if you feel that you are not being supported. Sometimes you may find it difficult to say what you want and you may want some support to put your views forward.
- 17) We will listen if you have a complaint or would like to praise someone.
- 18) We will make sure you can speak to someone who you trust about anything you are worried about, even at evenings and weekends.
- 19) If we make a promise to you we will keep it.