

**REPORT TO FULL COUNCIL**  
**CORPORATE PARENTING REPORT**

**7 DECEMBER 2016**

**1. Number of Children in Care**

At the end of September 2016, 627 children were living in care in Gloucestershire, dipping slightly to 622 in October 2016. Recent trends demonstrate a large number of sibling groups coming into care.

In October 2016, 5 young people were living in secure accommodation due to complex behaviours, placing the young people at risk.

88 young people were placed out of county, most of whom had been placed in neighbouring authorities. A further 26 young people had been placed at an even further distance, most of whom had been placed with family and friends. Some young people had been placed at a distance due to their complex needs and a lack of suitable placements locally.

At the end of October 2016, 99 children who had lived in care for more than 2.5 years), had been in the same placement for at least 2 years.

**2. Ambassadors for Vulnerable Children and Young People**

In September 2016, the Participation Team appointed 6 new Ambassadors for Vulnerable Children and Young People. The successful candidates, (aged between 16 and 22 years), have experience of a wide range of services including, care, disability, young carers and early help.

A total of 15 Ambassadors actively work alongside the Participation Team to improve services for children and young people.

Elected members are encouraged to meet with Ambassadors at Corporate Parenting Events, Children and Families Scrutiny Committee meetings and at other events and meetings.

**3. Children in Care Council**

Some of the key successes for 2016 included; initiating a Twitter Account and Website; establishing a Children in Care Council School Forum, working with the Children's Commissioners Office to develop a 'Regional Children in Care Council Meets' and meeting with the Corporate Parenting Group twice a year to engage with members on issues affecting Children in Care.

#### **4. Photographic ID/Passports/Driving Licences**

An issue raised at the Corporate Parenting Group meeting on 12 October 2016 highlighted the difficulties young people in care experience when trying to open a bank or building society account without photographic identification.

Young people in care may have an opportunity to travel abroad. This could present a further problem if the young person does not hold a passport and has to process a last minute application.

It is proposed all young people living in care should be assisted in obtaining some form of photographic identification, whether it be a passport or a driving licence.

#### **5. Corporate Parenting Group**

It has been suggested that a review of the membership of the Corporate Parenting Group be undertaken in 2017. At the Corporate Parenting Group meeting in October 2016, the group discussed proposals for the membership of the new Corporate Parenting Group under the new administration, (post the County Council elections in May 2017).

The group suggested representative Ambassadors for Vulnerable Children and Young People be incorporated as core members of the group. Under the current arrangement, Ambassadors are only invited to attend selected meetings.

Ambassadors and the Children in Care Council invited members of the Corporate Parenting Group to an event in October to review the 'Children in Care Strategy - Aspirations for Children in our Care and Care Leavers 2013-2016', and to agree key priorities for the forthcoming year.

The draft revised Strategy will be presented to the Corporate Parenting Group in the New Year.

**Cllr Paul McLain**

**December 2016**