

NORTH LINCOLNSHIRE COUNCIL

**CHILDREN AND EDUCATION
SCRUTINY PANEL**

**MULTI-AGENCY
CHILDREN IN CARE AND CARE LEAVERS PLAN 2022-24**

1. OBJECT AND KEY POINTS IN THIS REPORT

- 1.1 To inform the Children and Education Scrutiny Panel of the reviewed and revised Multi-Agency Children in Care and Care Leavers Plan 2022-2024.

2. BACKGROUND INFORMATION

- 2.1 The One Family Approach is embedded within our practice and our ambition is for children to be in their families, in their schools and in their communities. As their corporate family, children in care and care leavers in North Lincolnshire are our children, and it is deeply rooted in the culture of the Council and its partner organisations to care about them in this way. We are collectively ambitious for children in care and care leavers and we expect their outcomes to be every bit as good as their peers, and better, both whilst they are children in our care and as they progress to adulthood.
- 2.2 The Multi-Agency Children in Care and Care Leavers Plan 2022-2024 sets out our key priorities, promise and commitment to children in care and care leavers. It builds on our success and sets out an ambitious agenda for further improvement.
- 2.3 For those very few children who need to be in the care of the Council we will continue to invest in family-based care to achieve stability and permanence. This means working to keep children within their family networks, help them to return home, or within high quality family placements where this is not possible.
- 2.4 The Multi-Agency Children in Care and Care Leavers Plan 2022-2024 also complements and works in conjunction with the 'Children in Care and Care Leavers Sufficiency Strategy 2022-2024'.

3. **OPTIONS FOR CONSIDERATION**

3.1 The Multi-Agency Children in Care and Care Leavers Plan 2022-2024 details the progress made in improving outcomes for our children in care and care leavers in line with the Council priorities of Safe, Well, Prosperous, Connected. Examples of our successes include:

- Continued lower numbers of children entering our care demonstrating the success of our approach to helping families remain together
- A very small and reducing minority of children live outside the Council area
- The majority of North Lincolnshire's care leavers are in education, employment and training
- All our care leavers who live in the community have suitable accommodation and support overseen by their Personal Advisor
- Very few children in care in North Lincolnshire commit offences and this indicator continues to be lower than the England average
- Attendance at school continues to be good, with few unauthorised missed days of school and very little persistent absence
- Most children in care in North Lincolnshire experience stability in their workers, schools and care

3.2 The Multi-Agency Children in Care and Care Leavers Plan 2022-2024 is underpinned by a longstanding and effective approach to Corporate Parenting overseen by the Corporate Parenting Board. Shared commitment across partner organisations means that we work together as a Corporate Family to ensure that children in care and care leavers are a priority and have priority access to services.

4. **ANALYSIS OF OPTIONS**

4.1 The Multi-Agency Children in Care and Care Leavers Plan 2022-2024 includes the 'Delivery Plan 2022-24'. The Multi-Agency Children in Care and Care Leavers Plan 2022-2024 identifies the priority success measures and areas for further development. These include:

- Building on the role of Corporate Parents across the partnership
- Helping children to remain within, or have opportunities to return to, their families, schools and community whilst prioritising stability and permanence for children in care and care leavers
- Continuing to build on and develop engagement with and the voice of children in care and care leavers
- Developing further opportunities to promote employability including through friendly employer schemes and volunteering opportunities
- Supporting children to achieve in their education, recognising the impact of Covid-19 and providing additional support as needed
- Providing an open door across the partnership for advice and support to care leavers throughout their lives

5. FINANCIAL AND OTHER RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS (e.g. LEGAL, HR, PROPERTY, IT, COMMUNICATIONS etc.)

5.1 Financial - the Multi-Agency Children in Care and Care Leavers Plan 2022-2024 is in line with the existing agreed budgets and reflects the commitment of the council and its partners to prioritise services to children in care and care leavers. Whilst there are no additional resource implications contained within the plan, partners have re-affirmed commitment to prioritising children in care and care leavers in the delivery of services through the continuing Corporate Parenting Promise.

6. OTHER RELEVANT IMPLICATIONS (e.g. CRIME AND DISORDER, EQUALITIES, COUNCIL PLAN, ENVIRONMENTAL, RISK etc.)

6.1 In ensuring children in care and care leavers continue to be priority groups, the Multi-Agency Children in Care and Care Leavers Plan 2022-2024 contributes to achieving positive outcomes for children and young people that will have a positive impact in:

- Prosperous - supporting children's confidence, success and engagement with education, employment and training
- Safe and Well - enabling families to stay together in their communities promotes resilience and a sense of belonging which supports safety and wellbeing
- Connected - children are supported to take an active part in their communities through the support of their carers and workers building community resilience and social capital

7. OUTCOMES OF INTEGRATED IMPACT ASSESSMENT (IF APPLICABLE)

7.1 An Integrated Impact Assessment Stage 1 Initial Screening Template was completed in relation to this strategy and did not identify any negative potential impacts.

8. OUTCOMES OF CONSULTATION AND CONFLICTS OF INTERESTS DECLARED

8.1 The voice of the children in our care and young people who have left care is integral to all aspects of the work we do and the delivery of Multi-Agency Children in Care and Care Leavers Plan 2022-2024. Children in care and care leavers have been engaged with, involved and consulted throughout and their views, ideas and feedback have informed the review of progress and development of this plan.

8.2 The Children in Care Council have also reviewed and provided feedback on the Corporate Parenting Promise contained within the Multi-Agency Children in Care and Care Leavers Plan 2022-2024.

9. **RECOMMENDATIONS**

- 9.1 That the Children and Education Scrutiny Panel welcomes the positive review of the plan and the revised Multi-Agency Children in Care and Care Leavers Plan 2020-2022.

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Background Papers used in the preparation of this report:

- Multi-Agency Children in Care and Care Leavers Plan 2022-2024