

## The LGA and Corporate Parenting

### Purpose of Report

For discussion.

### Summary

The Chair of the Local Government Association (LGA), Councillor Shaun Davies, has announced that one of his priorities for 2023-24 is corporate parenting, in particular support for care leavers. The Children and Young People will oversee work on this priority, as the responsible board for this policy area. This report outlines current ideas for this programme and next steps, and is an opportunity for Board members to put forward their own ideas.

**LGA Plan Theme:** Putting people first

### Recommendation(s)

**That the Board comments on the current plans for this programme of work and suggest any additional ideas, including those based on their own councils' work.**

### Contact details

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# The LGA and Corporate Parenting

## Background

1. The new Chair of the LGA, Councillor Shaun Davies, has announced that one of his priorities for 2023-24 is corporate parenting, and in particular how the LGA can support improved outcomes for care leavers and others with care experience.
2. The Children and Young People Board will lead on this work, with regular updates also going to Informal Group Leaders and the Executive Advisory Board for organisation-wide oversight and join-up.

## Proposal

3. Colleagues across policy, improvement, leadership and communications have been working to develop a programme of work to support the Chair's priority.
4. Partner organisations are being engaged in this work, including Spectra which runs the Care Leaver Covenant, Become (the national charity for children in care and care leavers) and the National Leaving Care Benchmarking Forum (NLCBF) which connects local authority leaving care teams.
5. Ensuring that the voices of those with care experience directly influence this work is vital to ensure the impact and relevance of the programme. Become and the NLCBF have provided advice on engaging those with care experience, as well as evidence from their own work with care experienced people on key priorities. We will develop a plan as part of this programme to ensure care experienced voices influence the work across the entire year.
6. Work is being considered across three key strands: the LGA as an employer; the LGA as a national organisation with convening power; and the LGA's work in support of local government. Listed below are some initial plans and ideas under each strand (note: these are under discussion and have not yet been agreed)
7. **The LGA as an employer:**
  - 7.1. Improved promotion of employment opportunities to those with care experience.
  - 7.2. Introducing a Special Point of Contact at the LGA for those with care experience to contact for guidance when applying for roles.
  - 7.3. Guaranteed interviews and constructive feedback to applicants who identify as care experienced and meet the minimum criteria for roles (subject to legal advice).
  - 7.4. Tracking progress of care experienced applicants through recruitment processes.
  - 7.5. Specific support to care experienced employees.
  - 7.6. Improving understanding of care experience amongst LGA staff.
  - 7.7. Consideration of work experience and apprenticeship schemes, the latter using learning from the Civil Service Care Leaver Apprenticeship Scheme.

## **8. The LGA as a convener:**

- 8.1. Smith Square Debate on support for care leavers.
- 8.2. Work with the Care Leaver Covenant to promote their work and encourage further sign ups.
- 8.3. Communications campaign to raise awareness of how to improve outcomes for those with care experience, centring the voices of those with care experience.
- 8.4. Work with LAMIT (Local Authorities' Mutual Investment Trust) and CCLA (Churches, Charities and Local Authorities Investment Management) to publicise their work to support care leavers.

## **9. The LGA's work to support and improve local government:**

- 9.1. Dedicated outreach and support for care experienced graduates applying to the National Graduate Development Scheme.
- 9.2. Updated resource packs for councillors on corporate parenting and support for care leavers.
- 9.3. Publication of case studies on support for care leavers.
- 9.4. Lobbying the Government to ensure adequate funding for children's social care, to ensure that children in care and care leavers receive the support they need.
- 9.5. Lobbying the Government to ensure support for care leavers who were formerly unaccompanied asylum-seeking children is fully funded.
- 9.6. Guidance for councils who are considering or have already adopted motions to treat care experience as a protected characteristic.
- 9.7. Ask all policy boards to consider what could be done in their policy areas to improve the life chances of those with care experience.
- 9.8. Training for councillors and officers on corporate parenting, including across the "corporate core".
- 9.9. Consideration of issues around care leavers receiving different levels of support if they leave their 'home' local authority area, for example opportunities to ensure improved coordination and consistency.
- 9.10. Identifying opportunities for those with care-experience to speak at LGA events where relevant.

## **Implications for Wales**

10. Children's social care is devolved in Wales however learning from the programme can be shared with the Welsh Local Government Association

## **Financial Implications**

11. This programme will be delivered within existing budgets.

## **Equalities implications**

12. This programme is focussed on reducing inequalities for those with care experience.
13. Around one quarter of care leavers are former unaccompanied asylum-seeking children. Specific consideration will be given to how the specific needs of this group are recognised in the programme of work.

## **Next steps**

14. Feedback from the Board today will be incorporated into this programme of work, which will be reported on at future Board meetings.
15. A plan will be developed to ensure the voices of those with care experience influence this work on an ongoing basis.
16. The LGA's formal campaign in support of those with care experience will launch in National Care Leavers' Week which takes place from 25 October to 1 November 2023.