



<u>Committee and Date</u>
Council
19 December 2013

<u>Item</u>
7
<u>Public</u>

CHARTER TO CHILDREN IN CARE & CARE LEAVERS

Responsible Officer

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1. Summary

This report sets out the expectations of our looked after children from their corporate parents in the form of a children's charter, and asks all members to commit to support their aspirations.

2. Recommendations

That all elected Members acknowledge the importance of the Charter and pledge to uphold the priorities identified.

REPORT

3. Risk Assessment and Opportunities Appraisal

There are no risks associated with this report.

4. Financial Implications

There are no additional financial implications; this is covered within the existing budget.

5. Background

Children in the care of a local authority are one of the most vulnerable groups in society. At any one time around 65,000 children are looked after in England, although over 90,000 pass through the care system each year. There has been an overall increase in the numbers of children entering care since 2007. In Shropshire there are currently 270 children who are looked after.

When they are elected, all councillors take on the role of ‘corporate parent’ to children looked after by their local authority. They have a duty to take an interest in the wellbeing and development of these children, as if they were their own. Although the Lead Member for Children’s Services has particular responsibilities, the role of corporate parent is carried by all councillors, regardless of their role on Council.

The Care Council Crew is a group of looked after children that work with the Corporate Parenting Panel to help to improve the lives of children in care.

The Care Council Crew has considered what it expects from the Council and developed a Charter (attached at appendix A) which aims to raise expectation, aspiration and understanding of what the Council should do to be good corporate parents.

List of Background Papers (This MUST be completed for all reports, but does not include items containing exempt or confidential information)
Cabinet Member (Portfolio Holder) Cllr Ann Hartley
Local Member All Members
Appendices Appendix A – Charter for Children in Care & Care Leavers