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| 7 March 2013 | | ITEM: 10 |
| Corporate Parenting Committee | | |
| Co-opting of additional members of the Committee | | |
| Report of: Roland Minto – Service Manager, Placements and Support | | |
| Wards and communities affected: All | Key Decision: To agree process for formalising Co-opting of members of the Committee | |
| Accountable Head of Service: Roland Minto – Service Manager, Placements and Support | | |
| Accountable Director: Jo Olsson Director Peoples Services | | |
| This report is public | | |
| Purpose of Report: To ensure additional appropriate external representation at Corporate Parenting Committee is regularised through the necessary mechanisms | | |

1. RECOMMENDATIONS:

1.1 That the Committee agree that the following representatives of organisations discussed below are formally co-opted onto the Committee:

- **Chair and Vice Chair of the Foster Carers Association**
- **Chair and/or Vice Chair of the Children in Care Council**
- **A nominated representative of Open Door**

2. INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND:

2.1 Thurrock Corporate Parenting Committee was formally constituted in the Municipal year 2012-2013. It has requested and received a number of reports from Officers on issues within its area of responsibility. However during the course of the year it became apparent that there are other key stakeholders with important contributions to make to the Corporate Parenting Agenda.

2.2. To date some of these stakeholders have attended by invitation, and have made a constructive contribution. However technically their attendance has been with the status of guests. It has recently been suggested that future attendance should be formalised by making them properly co-opted members of the Committee.

3. ISSUES, OPTIONS AND ANALYSIS OF OPTIONS:

- 3.1 It is acknowledged that whilst Members and Officers have the primary responsibility to pursue successful outcomes for the corporate parenting of looked after children, other stakeholders have a vital role to play, and it would enhance the work of the Committee to ensure their permanent representation.
- 3.2 The specific groups which are being proposed are:
- The Foster Carers Association
 - The Children in Care Council
 - Open Door
- 3.3 The Foster Carer Association represent a large number of our “hands on” providers, and as such have valuable insight into how we are performing as an authority, and the needs of children and young people for whom they are caring.
- 3.4 The Children in Council represent the voice of our service users, and therefore a direct opportunity to have their views expressed to Members is essential.
- 3.5 Open Door is the Voluntary Organisation which provides our advocacy service to looked after children and their ability to speak up for children provides another valuable counter balance to ensure that the needs of children remain central to the discussions of the Committee.
- 3.6 At this stage there is no provision made for remuneration of the proposed co-opted members although this may be reviewed in the future.
- 3.7 It is not proposed at this stage that co-opted members would be granted voting rights.
- 3.8 Should the Committee be minded to agree the recommendation, a formal report will be made to full Council for the next Municipal year.

4. REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATION:

- 4.1 Agreeing the recommendation would both widen the range of viewpoints consistently available to the Committee and reaffirm the authority’s commitment to work in partnership with those organisations.

5. IMPLICATIONS

5.1 Financial

Implications verified by: **Michael Jones**
Telephone and email: **01375 652772**
mxjones@thurrock.gov.uk

There are no immediate financial implications

5.2 **Legal**

Implications verified by: **Lindsey Marks**
Telephone and email: **01375 652054**
lindsey.marks@BDTLegal.org.uk

There are no obvious immediate legal implications, provided the recommendation is appropriately implemented in line with the Council's Constitution.

5.3 **Diversity and Equality**

Implications verified by: **Samson DeAlyn**
Telephone and email: **01375652472**
sdealyn@thurrock.gov.uk

The positive diversity implication of the recommendation is to widen the potential for dialogue with the nominated stakeholder groups, in particular young people receiving council services.

APPENDICES TO THIS REPORT:

- None

Report Author Contact Details:

Name: Roland Minto
Telephone: x2533
E-mail: rminto@thurrock.gov.uk