



Executive Member for Children's Services

Labour Councillor Judith Blake

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Your ref

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Date 20th June 2011

Councillor David Blackburn
Area Committee Chair

Dear David

AREA CHAIR APPOINTMENT TO CORPORATE CARERS GROUP

As Elected Members and therefore corporate parents we all have responsibilities to support and promote the welfare of those children and young people from across Leeds who are in the care of the local authority – our 'looked after' children. There are currently over 1400 looked after children in Leeds. As Executive Member for Children's Services one of my responsibilities is chairing the Corporate Carers Group that brings a number of Councillors together to lead in monitoring key issues and performance information relating to our looked after children.

Earlier this year we reviewed the membership and approach of the group. We did so to ensure it is best placed to meet the city's big ambitions for improvement in relation to looked after children. Within this context I am very keen that we hit the ground running this coming year in having clear membership of our Corporate Carers group, clear responsibilities and stronger accountabilities. In each of these areas I am looking for your support.


You will be aware that we have amended the children's services section of the Area Function Schedule to make clear the expectation that each Area Committee will nominate a representative for the Corporate Carer group. I am aware that over the past year not every Committee has been represented regularly. There has also been some confusion between the Corporate Carer role and the role of the Children's Champion, which Area Committees have also been asked to appoint to in recent years. I am clear that our immediate priority should be to establish a strong Corporate Carer group with a representative from each Committee. I am happy to chat further with you to help you understand more about the role, how it differs from that of the Children's Champion and why we need to give it some specific attention.

We will provide your nominated representative for the group with a role description, specific performance information about looked after children in your area and a range of training and support. Corporate Carers meet approximately once a month and over the course of the year will often visit children's homes, or other services for looked after children in their area.

I am very happy to discuss this further with you, or should you prefer to speak to a leading officer on this work, Sue May is the Head of Looked After Children's Services.

I look forward to hearing who has been appointed to the Corporate Carer role from your Committee and to working with them and you in the year ahead to help make a meaningful difference to the lives of looked after children here in Leeds.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Judith Blake". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial 'J' and 'B'.

Councillor Judith Blake
Deputy Leader of Council and Executive Member for Children's Services