

CORPORATE PARENTING ADVISORY COMMITTEE

15 JULY 2019

Present: Councillor Merry(Chairperson)
Councillors Bowden, Driscoll, Hinchey, Jenkins, Lent, Lister,
Brown and James

62 : APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Rose Whittle, Committee Advisor.

63 : APPOINTMENT OF CHAIR AND COMMITTEE MEMBERSHIP

The Committee noted that at Council, at its annual meeting on 23 May 2019, appointed Councillor Sarah Merry as Chair and the following Members to the Committee:

Councillors Bowden, Driscoll, Hinchey, Jenkins, Lent and Lister.

64 : TERMS OF REFERENCE

The Council, at its annual meeting on 23 May 2019, agreed the following Terms of Reference:

- (a) To champion the life chances and rights of Children Looked After; Children in need; Care Leavers and children and young people in the criminal justice system across the Council, with Elected Members and partners.
- (b) To actively promote real and sustained improvements by ensuring that there are mechanisms in place to:
 - ascertain and have regard to the child or young person's view, wishes and feelings, so far as reasonable practicable;
 - have regard to the importance of promoting and respecting the child or young person's dignity;
 - have regard to the characteristics, culture and beliefs of the child or young person;
 - have regard to the importance of providing appropriate support to enable the child or young person to participate in decisions that affect them;
 - have regard to the importance of promoting the upbringing of the child by the child's family, in so far as doing so is consistent with promoting the child's well-being;
 - Where the child is under the age of 16, ascertain and have regard to the views, wishes and feelings of those with parental responsibility for the child, in so far as doing so is consistent with the well-being of the child, and reasonably practicable
 - That there is a follow on provision for young people leaving care that meets the need of young adults

- (c) To develop and undertake a programme of consultation, listening and engagement events with Children Looked After, Children in Need and Care Leavers as well as visits to services providing support and advice to those children and young people.
- (d) To recommend ways in which more integrated services can be developed across all Council directorates, schools and other stakeholders to lead towards
- Improved education attainment and achievement for Children Looked After, Children in need and Care Leavers;
 - Emotional and Mental Health and Well-being Support for Children Looked After, Children in Need, and Care Leavers;
 - Improvements in services for children with disabilities
 - To encourage Looked After Children, Children in need and Care Leavers to become active citizens.
- (e) To ensure performance monitoring systems are in place, and regularly review performance data to ensure sustained performance improvements in outcomes;
- (f) To benchmark and learn from best practice of other Local Authorities
- (g) To receive all relevant Children's Services inspection and annual reports, including: Children's Homes Quality of Care Report; Child Practice Review Themes, Fostering Annual Quality of Care Report; Adoption Fostering Annual Quality of Care Report; 4C's Commissioning; Out of Area Annual Report; Education Report; Children's Complaints reports; and Advocacy Annual Report;
- (h) To develop, monitor and review a corporate parenting strategy, and ensure its effective implementation through work plans and corporate parenting training programmes;
- (i) To submit an annual progress report to the Cabinet and make recommendations where responsibility for that function rests with the Cabinet;
- (j) To report to the Children and Young People's Scrutiny Committee as necessary;
- (k) To recommend the appointment of co-opted members to the Committee for approval by Council;
- (l) To submit an Annual Report on the work of the Committee to full Council.
- (m) All Members of the Committee will be required to undertake relevant training to enable them to properly discharge their duties.

65 : NOMINATION AND ELECTION OF DEPUTY CHAIR

AGREED: To note that the Committee elected Councillor Lent as Deputy Chair.

66 : DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

No declarations of interest were received in accordance with the Members' Code of Conduct.

67 : MINUTES

The minutes of the meetings held on 29 January 2019 and 2 April 2019 were agreed as a correct record and signed by the Chairperson.

68 : UNICEF CHILD FRIENDLY CITY STRATEGY - PRESENTATION

The Chairperson welcomed Lee Patterson (Community Education Officer, Achievement & Inclusion, Education and Lifelong Learning) to the meeting.

Members were provided with a presentation outlining the partnership between Unicef and Cardiff in working towards Cardiff becoming a Child Friendly City. The presentation outlined the 5 Goals (the last 3 of which are thematic) and the 17 commitments to action. The delivery plan itself is much more detailed, with a review taking place every 6 months.

The Committee were invited to comment, seek clarification or raise questions on the information received. Those discussions were summarised as follows:

- Members expressed concern at the number of elected members who have still not undertaken the Unicef training and queried whether there is an expectation that all staff will undergo the training. Members were advised that the training provided by Unicef concentrated on police officers, those officers from education and social services as opposed to across the board. However, there is a mandatory eLearning module which staff have to undertake.
- Members discussed the need for a child in care to get their voice heard, the prioritisation of education for the child who is looked after and queried how is more funding and support being identified for these children and not necessarily through a classroom environment. Members were advised that it is a difficult challenge, you can only engage with them when they feel it is appropriate. It is important to have the processes and structure to be able to have meaningful conversations. There is still work to be done on this, the Child Friendly City is an umbrella but Children's Services and Education have the responsibility of doing the work.

Children's Services are commissioning an app called Mind of My Own which will be valuable in terms of giving feedback and asking questions. There has been a commitment to young people that they will be involved in the roll out.

In relation to the Annual Survey, engagement work is being undertaken with family workers, family health and support, and

childcare and flying start colleagues. The Facebook page is also being used to assist engagement and a case study is being undertaken about the work at the Ely & Caerau Children's Centre as an example of good practice.

- Members queried whether any feedback from staff about the training will feature in any new training and were advised that currently Unicef review training every 6 months as part of their quality assurance programme, and training is being evaluated over an 18 month period.

AGREED: To note the presentation.

69 : GOOD PRACTICE IN LEAVING CARE PRESENTATION

The Chairperson welcomed Natasha Hilderley (Interim Operational Manager, Specialist Services) to the meeting.

Members were provided with a detailed presentation and noted that Cardiff has become an example of good practice within the region and are taking the lead in deciding what should be provided.

The Committee were invited to comment, seek clarification or raise questions on the information received. Those discussions were summarised as follows:

- Members referred to the Mind of My Own app and asked whether consideration is being given to those leaving care being allowed access. It was noted that as the app is being purchased by the authority, the view is that access should remain with care leavers certainly until the age of 25.
- Members discussed their concerns that there is no funding provision for Higher Education for those who have been in care and have reached the age of 25. As there is no provision, the In to Work and Bright Starts teams try to help with finding a pathway for those who wish to consider further education at that time. Officers advised that some case studies could be provided to Members at a later meeting.
- Members queried the stability of the Personal Advisor service and noted that it probably one of the most stable within the service and there is a very limited movement of staff.
- Members expressed concern that 57% of care leavers felt unsafe when they first left care and queried whether that is representative of Cardiff but were advised that the authority is trying to build a stronger community. Young people are being provided with information as to where to seek advice about any issues they encounter, knowledge provides a feeling of strength.

- Members queried how we support our young people who are attending at university. The OM advised that the Personal Advisors are very good at providing advice, whether that be finance and budgeting issues, housing, the yellow box scheme which is an equipment exchange. It is largely about creating independence as opposed to dependency. As officers it is also necessary to sign off on financial assistance, for example for a gap in finance for accommodation. As parents we would provide that for our children, and the authority has to offer similar assistance.

AGREED: To note the presentation.

70 : CARE AND SUPPORT PLANS - PRESENTATION

The Chairperson welcomed Natasha Hilderley (Interim Operational Manager, Specialist Services) to the meeting.

Members were provided with a presentation outlining a number of matters:

- The statutory requirements for the plan;
- The review process; and
- The aims

AGREED: To note the presentation.

71 : CORPORATE PARENTING STRATEGY/EDUCATION ITEM

The Chairperson welcomed Deborah Driffield (Interim Assistant Director, Children's Services) to the meeting. Members were provided with a presentation providing information outlining the need for and the development of the new Cardiff Children's Services Strategy 2019 – 2022

The Committee were invited to comment, seek clarification or raise questions on the information received. Those discussions were summarised as follows:

- Members sought clarification in changes in the structure chart and were advised that currently there were a number of interim operational managers in place, which has been necessary during the transition period. However, the quality of the applications has been high. It is necessary to bring on younger less experienced members of staff, and it hoped that the interim operational managers will be able to provide a wealth of experience and assist those less experienced.
- Members discussed potential funding from Welsh Government and queried whether, if money is saved, will there be further investment, for example better residential facilities and housing for our young people. It is important to give them the best possible experience. The reduction expectation, as it relates to the numbers in local authority care, was discussed. Members were advised that there would be no financial penalties, it is about work

being done to develop a plan to reduce numbers. It was noted, in respect of the reduction expectation figure, children who are living at home but are still subject to a care order has a negative impact on that figure.

- Members noted the intention to develop a parent's participation charter with a view to it being co-produced by parents for parents. It is important to develop ways to work with parents and encourage them to become peer educators.
- As there is to be a review and relaunch of the Youth Offending Service (YOS) management board Members asked for consideration to be given to there being elected members on that board.
- Members queried how many children from other authorities were in education in this area and were advised that it was very few. There are more children from Cardiff in education in other authorities.
- Members noted that the development and implementation of the strategy is a huge piece of work, which is no doubt expensive and disruptive and wanted to be reassured that it was transformative and that the service would be better. Members were advised that a lot of consideration has gone into the strategy and it cannot be delivered unless there is a change in the structure. Officers accepted that it was indeed a huge piece of work but did not accept that it was a huge cost. Not all staff are happy with the structure changes, however, there has to be a change to ensure that a difference is made to the lives of our young people and their families.

AGREED: To note the content of the strategy.

72 : FORWARD PLAN/WORK PROGRAMME

AGREED: To note the Forward Plan/Work Programme

73 : BRIEFING REPORTS

Members were provided with the following Briefing Reports:

- Quarter 4 Performance Report
- Quarter 4 Complaints Report

Members discussed the Quarter 4 performance report:

- Members noted the IRO team is nearly at full strength and there has been positive praise of that team and issues are now being escalated in a timely manner.

- Members noted that KS 2 & 4 Children Looked After (CLA) perform better than all children with care and support needs that that performance drops significantly at KS 4. Officers advised that a number of case studies have been done, Year 10 is when a lot of children's lives unravel and there are a lot of stories behind those results. This year there has been an increase in the number of CLA in Year 11, the authority is aware of their targets and are working hard to get the information as soon as possible. A bid has been put in with the Consortium to provide for tutoring and support for Year 10 and 11 pupils.

AGREED: To note the briefing reports

74 : URGENT ITEMS (IF ANY)

No urgent items were tabled at the meeting.

75 : DATES OF FUTURE MEETINGS

The following committee meeting dates were noted:

17 September 2019 at 2.00 pm
18 November 2019 at 2.00 pm
28 January 2020 at 2.00 pm
17 March 2020 at 2.00 pm
19 May 2020 at 2.00 pm
21 July 2020 at 2.00 pm

The meeting terminated at 4.15 pm