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AGENDA

Committee	CORPORATE PARENTING ADVISORY COMMITTEE
Date and Time of Meeting	MONDAY, 11 MARCH 2024, 2.00 PM
Venue	CR 4, COUNTY HALL - MULTI LOCATION MEETING
Membership	Councillor Merry (Chair) Councillors Ash-Edwards, Kaaba, Lay, Lewis, Lister, Littlechild, Naughton and Taylor

		<i>Time approx.</i>
1	Apologies for Absence To receive apologies for absence.	2.00 pm
2	Declarations of Interest To be made at the start of the agenda item in question, in accordance with the Members' Code of Conduct.	2.02 pm
3	Minutes (Pages 3 - 14) To approve as a correct record the minutes of the previous meeting held on 22 January 2024.	2.04 pm
4	Bright Sparks Award Update (Pages 15 - 20)	2.06 pm
5	Corporate Parenting Advisory Committee Annual Report 2023-2024 (Pages 21 - 50)	2.36 pm
6	Forward Work Programme - May 2024 - April 2025 & the Welsh Government Corporate Parenting Charter (Pages 51 - 66)	3.06 pm
7	Member Visit Programme (Pages 67 - 70)	2.02 pm
8	Urgent Items (if any)	
9	Date of next meeting To be confirmed – early June 2024	

This document is available in Welsh / Mae'r ddogfen hon ar gael yn Gymraeg

D Marles

Interim Monitoring Officer

Date: Tuesday, 5 March 2024

Contact: Michele Chesterman, 02920 873606, Michele.chesterman@cardiff.gov.uk

CORPORATE PARENTING ADVISORY COMMITTEE

22 JANUARY 2024

Present: Councillor Merry (Chairperson)
Councillors Ash-Edwards, Lay, Lewis, Lister, Littlechild and Taylor

Officers Present: Deborah Driffield (Director, Childrens Services), Lucy Thomas (Senior Corporate Parenting Advisory Committee Participation Officer, Matthew Osborne (Operational Manager, Childrens Services), Leanne Weston (OM Legal Manager), Nick Blake (Operational Manager, Childrens Services), Craig Bartlett (Youth Services Manager)

Advisors Present: Candice Lloyd NYAS Service Manager, Scott Giles (NYAS Project Co-ordinator)

1 : APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Naughton

2 : DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

No declarations of interest were received.

3 : MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting on the 6 November 2023 were approved as a correct record of the meeting and signed by the Chairperson.

4 : NYAS UPDATE

The Chairperson invited Candice Lloyd, Service Manager, NYAS Cymru and Scott Giles, Project Co-ordinator, from NYAS to provide a presentation to the Committee on the work undertaken by NYAS Cardiff Advocacy Service for the period April – September 2023.

Members received information in relation to the Background to the Service, the Active Offer, Issue Based Advocacy, Overview of Referrals Received, Awareness Raising and Key Achievements and Challenges.

Members asked questions and sought clarification on the following:

- In relation to NYAS supporting children from the age of 5+, Members asked what measures were taken to help a child of such a young age understand how they could access the service. The officer explained the Active Offer of Advocacy process. When a 5-year-old young person entered the child protection process, for example, their social worker would go out and meet with them to explain they were entitled to advocacy support. They would

explain how a young person could be their voice and help them voice their feelings and take them through the advocacy process. NYAS would let the 5-year-old young person know they would be contacted by an advocate and it was up to the young person whether they said yes or no to the offer of support. NYAS would then go out in a child friendly manner, explain the role, why they were there and how they could support them and be their voice in meetings with grown-ups and help with decisions that could impact their lives.

- Members sought clarification in relation to the numbers of active offer referrals, meetings and acceptances of active offers. The officer responded that out of the 230 active offer referrals received 144 meetings took place and as a result of the 144 meetings 88 children and young people accepted the active offer. The remainder declined the offer of advocacy as they did not feel they needed advocacy support as they were happy, there were no issues or NYAS was unable to contact them, (no responses received after numerous attempts to contact them).
- Members asked if there was anything that could be done in future to increase the acceptance rate of advocacy for the young person. The officer responded that that this was difficult as ultimately it was up to the young person themselves to decide if they wished to accept the offer of advocacy or not. However, the child or young person did know that as long as they were involved with Childrens Services they could make contact. NYAS provided them with contact details and let the social worker, school know and on occasions reminded them of advocacy support.
- The Operational Manager, Children's Services added that Childrens Services linked in with NYAS part of the performance monitoring process. In terms of the active offer process the social worker spoke to the child or young person and the parents. Training had been provided for practitioners. It was highlighted that many parents particularly in child protection situations were wary of introducing new people into their lives. The Service was keen to promote to parents and young people the value that advocacy could offer. It was important to note that the Active Offer was just the start of the process and that there was a need to re-visit the conversation at various points and there was a desire to make sure that conversation was as strong and clear as possible. To that effect NYAS had been helping in terms of training social work staff to make sure the message was as clear as possible.
- Members referred to the report mentioning incomplete referral information and late referrals causing some degree of difficulty and asked the nature of those difficulties and what measures were being taken to address them. The officer replied that the systems were challenging at times with the situation that sometimes the information held needed to be updated very quickly and rapidly. It was the case that sometimes NYAS was catching up with that information. In order to remedy the situation NYAS was working very closely with the business support team who submitted the referrals to ensure there was no missing information. Monthly steering meetings took place with Matt Osborne as the Operational Manager which was productive and very useful being very solution focussed. NYAS was able to talk in depth about the challenges they were facing, any barriers and very rapid responses were

being received. Although it was not a perfect system, as family lives were complex with contact details changing and often the requirement to source a placement very quickly for young people, by staying closely linked to the referral NYAS was able to explain to them what was needed and how a timely referral could be achieved to ensure there was representation at the meeting.

- Members asked if the situation was improving with information improving and fewer late problems arising. The officer responded that although updating systems and data would always be problematic as it was not a perfect system, this was recognised by the team and there was a very strong working relationship to be able to raise the issues. There was also direct access to the people who could make decisions in the local authority and it was being addressed by the Senior Leadership Team.
- The Operational Manager, Children's Services, added that from the Children's Service perspective there was a very strong working relationship with NYAS. He referred to the provision of training provided to the front door teams – a comprehensive package of training to identify the need for early referrals with complete information. A follow-up system was also in place in the case of a young person whose referral did not take place on time. If opportunities were missed they would still get the support in the 2nd or 3rd meetings. The ideal scenario was that there would be no missed opportunities but where there were they were followed up to make sure the child or young person received the support and information needed.

RESOLVED:

1. To note the information shared within the update as outlined at **Appendix A**.
2. Members' comments to be forwarded to officers in the form of minutes.

5 : CHILD FRIENDLY CITY UPDATE

Item deferred until next meeting in March 2024.

6 : VOICES FROM CARE CYMRU UPDATE

The Chairperson invited Helen Mary Jones, Head of Policy & Communications, Care Cymru, to provide an update on the Voices from Care Cymru. Members were informed that the report had been prepared to provide the Committee with an update in relation to Voices From Care Cymru and the work they were doing to support care experienced young people in Cardiff and was accompanied by the Radical Reform Summit Declaration, signed by the Welsh Government and Young Ambassadors.

Members were informed that Voices From Care Cymru was an independent Welsh voluntary organisation that had been supporting care experienced children and young people for thirty-five years. It supported individual care experienced children and young people through its wellbeing services, helping them develop resilience, and independent living skills, enabling them to support each other through peer support, formal and informal. The organisation organised enjoyable activities, enabling care experienced children and young people to relax and have fun with

others who share their experiences. And, crucially, they enabled young people to work together to influence the decisions that affect their lives.

Members asked questions and sought clarification on the following:

- Where Voices from Care Cymru offered tutoring services for children needing extra help with their GCSES, Members enquired if there was a higher level of awareness around neuro diversity that could cause barriers to their education. In addition, whether any measures were being taken around diagnosis and if any tools, equipment, software, were provided. The officer responded that Voice from Care Cymru would not necessarily provide equipment but if they became aware of a young person with neuro diversity contact would be made with the school and through the foster carers to notify the local authority to raise awareness for the need for diagnosis and extra support. Voices from Care Cymru was very conscious of neuro diverse issues and also issues around trauma with support tailored to the individual child's needs.
- Members asked to what extent young people were involved in the reform to residential care and removing the profit and how far along Cardiff was in in delivering against that and what the risks and challenges were. The officer responded that this was a major Welsh Government commitment and presented challenges for local authorities and the third sector. Members were informed that it arose out of one of the requests in the organisation's manifesto that young people prepared before the 2021 Senedd election. Young people expressed the view that people who were caring for them should be caring for them but should not be making a lot of money out of it. Voices from Care Cymru had been very supportive of the agenda and very involved. Further, as far as progress, it was understood that the Welsh Government had gone out to obtain additional evidence to make sure its legislative proposals had the best evidence base.
- Members added that the commitment was also there from the local authority. It was recognised as a massive challenge for the local authority and Members were grateful for the support from the third sector. It was recognised that the focus was on the child and wellbeing.

RESOLVED:

- To note the Voices From Care Cymru Update.
- Members' comments to be forwarded to officers in the form of minutes.

7 : RESIDENTIAL HOMES UPDATE

The Chairperson introduced Nick Blake, Operational Manager, Childrens Services, to provide a presentation which had been prepared to provide the Committee with an update in relation to the Children's Services Accommodation Strategy and the new residential homes that had been created in Cardiff.

Members were informed that the Accommodation Strategy went to Cabinet on the 19 January 2023. The strategy provided an overview of the current position, analysed demand and detailed the proposals for the following work streams with consideration

for The Right Place and NEST/NYTH framework: Children's Residential Provision; Children with Disabilities; Mental Health and Emotional Wellbeing; Unaccompanied Asylum-Seeking Children (UASC) and Parent and Baby.

Members were then provided with updates on Children's Residential Provision and Progress; provision for Children with Disabilities; the Right Place Model; Removing Profit from the Care of Looked after Children and Aims for the next Phase of the Accommodation Strategy.

Members asked questions and sought clarification on the following:

- Members sought clarification on the registering of homes and the CIW, the process and the timeframe of how long it took when a property had been secured by the local authority. The officer responded that in terms of timeframe the purchase of the property took almost 12 months with up to 9 months to purchase and 3 months to register.
- Members asked and what input service users had in relation to the design of the accommodation. Officers responded that when consultation had taken place with young people on what was important to them one of the key aspects was a decent place to live which was one of the commitments of the Committee. When officers knew which young person was moving into a property the young person themselves could chose the furniture, (even helping make it), the colour scheme and bedding etc. Members noted that a large scale participation strategy would be presented to CPAC in the near future. All children looked after had been written to and this had been followed up with face to face contact to garner their views.
- Members asked if there were any specific criteria for properties that they should be aware of when looking in their wards, for example, minimum number of beds. Officers responded that properties were being sought city wide and the main thing was that the property was on the right plot, not too prominent, with enough space for parking etc. The types of properties being sought were CHAD solo units – 2/3 beds, and larger 5 property. All the new homes were 3 beds for 3 children initially with the potential for a 4th bed and a 5th bedroom for staff sleeping so 4 or 5 beds were being sought for those ones.
- Members expressed their excitement about the new residential placements and buildings. However, it was noted that there were some children who would be challenged by a new move and would be happy in their current placements and that their feelings needed to be considered. Officers assured Members that they would not be moving any children if it was against their wishes and their views would always be taken into account.

RESOLVED:

- To note the report.
- Members' comments to be forwarded to officers in the form of minutes.
- That officers present an update on progress on the Residential Strategy in 6 month's time.

8 : YOUTH SERVICE UPDATE

The Chairperson introduced Craig Bartlett Youth Service Manager, to provide Members with a presentation on the Youth Service Update.

Members were informed that Cardiff Youth Service was part of Cardiff Council's Education department and the Service worked with young people aged 11-25yrs to enhance personal, social and educational development through a variety of opportunities. This included activities in communities, participatory experiences, as well as information, support and guidance enabling young people to reach their unique and full potential. The service worked with young people in a variety of settings offering both universal and, for those identified as vulnerable, targeted support.

Members heard about the Cardiff and Vale University Health Board supported employability pathways. The Youth Service was currently working on a trial with Cardiff Commitment, in Eastern High School, for five care experienced young people to have the opportunity to attend work experience in University Hospital Wales supported to hopefully achieve internships and apprenticeships. There was also an initiative with Cardiff Met 'Reaching Wider' which was raising the aspirations for young to aspire to go to University to embrace education.

Members asked questions and sought clarification on the following:

- Members asked what steps could be taken to improve the consistency of youth services across Cardiff. The officer responded that consistency was the biggest challenge faced by the Youth Service and attempts were being made to manage and mitigate this risk. The officer added that the youth service was building sustainable relationships in order to build trust and consistency was key to this.
- Members enquired if the youth service had the resources needed to deliver all its activities and do justice to what it was trying to achieve. Officers responded that this was not the case but they were working with the resources they had. The officer added that being youth workers were resourceful and adept at prioritising the engagement of young people through a variety of funding strands including core and external funding. It was recognised that if a sustainable youth service could be delivered it could then be adapted to the needs of young people. There was a minimum sufficiency to meet the needs of the young people currently and if more funding was available the service would be able to deliver more.
- Members asked about the PA service, the time taken to allocate a worker to a young person and the relationship. The Officer responded that he was new to the post and had only just started to liaise with all departments about the support that could be offered to young people. He was very conscious of the need to not duplicate the support that could be offered. Key to the success were the lines of communication and being transparent. He added that if the Youth Service could support with any timelines they would be more than happy to do so.

- Members asked if the Youth Service contributed the cost of some of the kit for the Duke of Edinburgh's Award Scheme. The officer responded that there were a number of items in storage that were updated and kept for such a purpose and if a young person asked for help the Youth Service would wholeheartedly support them and provide what was needed.

RESOLVED:

- To note the report.
- Members' comments to be forwarded to officers in the form of minutes.

9 : GUARANTEED INTERVIEW SCHEME FOR CARE LEAVERS

The Chairperson invited Lucy Thomas, CPAC Officer, to provide an update to Members on the Guaranteed Interview Scheme for Care Leavers.

Members were informed that as part of the Corporate Parenting Operational Plan, there was a proposal to implement a guaranteed interview scheme for young people who had left care, when they applied for job vacancies within Cardiff Council. The scheme would only be applicable or jobs whereby Cardiff Council had authority to whom it employed, for example, it would not include school-based jobs or partnership posts. The care leavers would be guaranteed an interview as long as they identified as a care leaver on their application, and in addition, that they met the essential criteria on the person specification. Members were informed that this would support care leavers to secure employment within the Authority. It was anticipated that this would be implemented by the end of the first quarter of 2024/25 or sooner if system changes could be made to accommodate this.

Members were updated on the issues involved in introducing the scheme which included some changes being required, prior to the implementation of the scheme. All recruitment systems would need to be updated and the variety of application forms, both electronic and hard copy would need to be updated to confirm whether an individual was a care leaver or not. Work would take place with Human Resources to clarify the appropriate wording to be used in the documentation as well as to provide them with a clear definition of the term 'care leaver'. The Recruitment and Selection Policy would need to be updated with the amendment, and the change would need to be communicated widely across the Council to ensure all recruiting managers were aware of the position and what it meant for the shortlisting process.

Further Members were advised that the scheme would be applicable to Cardiff care leavers only and there would be no minimum period for having been in care. Consultation would need to take place with the Trade Unions and other considerations included how long after leaving care would it apply and would it cover those that had previously gained employment and were looking to move elsewhere or just those that were currently not working.

RESOLVED: to note the report.

10 : MENTORING SCHEME UPDATE

The Chairperson invited Matt Osborne, Operational Manager, Children's Services, to provide Members with an Update on the Mentoring Scheme. Members were informed that as part of the Corporate Parenting Strategy, Cardiff Children's Services were in the process of implementing an authority wide Mentoring Scheme to support Children Looked After.

Members noted that the Mentoring Scheme was designed to support and empower children and young people by offering practical experiences and opportunities. Members were provided with an outline of the objectives, structure, benefits and challenges of the Mentoring Scheme, aiming to enhance the well-being and development of children and young people in the care of the Authority.

The Mentoring Scheme would be a structured programme focused on providing guidance, support, and assistance to children and young people in various aspects of their lives. The scheme would pair young people with adult mentors to offer them supervision, positive role modelling, and opportunities for personal and academic growth. This would be facilitated by way of practical work experience and volunteering opportunities within the authority. The aim of the scheme is to increase social, academic and life skill development in children and young people by giving them positive, consistent role models to learn from. It is hoped that this will create a sense of community and belonging for those young people taking part in the scheme.

In terms of the issues to consider Members were informed that the first issue was the creation and availability of the opportunities offered to Cardiff's Children Looked After. Children's Services were actively promoting the scheme and the recruitment of volunteer mentors by delivering informative presentations across each Directorate. Ensuring compatibility between mentors and mentees was key to the success of the pilot. In addition, consideration needed to be given to the promotion of regular and sustained engagement. Members heard that there were plans to deliver further information sessions and presentations to assist in the recruitment of mentors.

It was noted that every Directorate had been contacted to ask for their suggestions as to how they could support the mentoring scheme, so that there was a consistent and varied programme on offer. Meetings would then be held in January 2024 to explore these prospects and include them in the Corporate Parenting Operational Plan.

Members asked questions and sought clarification on the following:

- Members asked what the process was in identifying mentors and if there was any training on coaching and mentoring given in addition to the mentor's experience in the subject. The question was also asked if diversity was taken into account with pairing or any other cultural aspects taken into consideration. The officer responded that as part of all the planned communications sent to staff, individuals were being asked to self-identify and volunteer. As part of that they will be asked what they can offer to support children and young people. The needs and interest of the Children Looked After were paramount and

there would be careful pairing and matching to get the right personality, traits and interests.

- In terms of supporting the mentors going forwards, Members were informed there was a training programme which had been developed and was ready. When the member of staff volunteered they would undertake the DBS and reference checks from their line manager and then receive training in wider safeguarding and how to work with children and young people. There would be supervision going forwards. In terms of diversity there was a hope that there would be diverse applications and then these could be taken into consideration. The children and young peoples' interests and backgrounds would be a factor in who they were paired with.

RESOLVED: to note the report.

11 : MEMBER VISITS UPDATE

Members received an update on the Members Visits that had taken place since the last committee meeting. The visits took place at services and organisations that supported care experienced young people in Cardiff.

Visits comprised:

- St Teilos Comprehensive School – Cllr Naughton attended the school and met with the Headteacher, Mr Ian Loynd as well as having the opportunity to speak to pupils and youth service mentors working within the school. Mr Loynd gave an in depth overview of the ethos of the school and their adoption of trauma informed processes for all of their pupils.
- Bright Sparks Awards 2023 – Cllr Sarah Merry and Cllr Ash Lister attended the Bright Sparks Awards, which was in its 18th year. The event took place in the committee rooms at county hall and saw over 200 people come together to celebrate the wonderful achievements of Cardiff's looked after children. There were 14 different award categories, including career of the year, performing arts, sport and music. Cllr Merry presented the Bright Sparks Group with the volunteer of the year award. Councillor Sarah Merry and Ash Edwards thanked staff for the efforts they had put into making County Hall feel such a special and stunning environment.

RESOLVED: to note the report.

12 : MEMBER VISIT PROGRAMME

The Chairperson invited Lucy Thomas, CPAC Officer, to introduce the item on the Member Visit Programme.

Members were informed that the visits provided an opportunity for members of the Committee to meet the staff and teams that supported young people. Some of the visits would also provide an opportunity to hear directly from the children and young people. Committee members were reminded that it was important to engage in these

opportunities if possible. There had been an attempt to increase the variety of opportunities on offer this meeting as a result of feedback from the last meeting.

There were opportunities to visit several different service areas including ENFYs (Tuesday mornings 9-10.00 am), Crosslands (Tuesdays or Thursdays at times to be agreed), Cardiff Youth Justice (John Kane Centre), Into Work Service/Bright Start Apprenticeship Programme (dates to be confirmed), Fostering Events (quarterly event held at Mercure Cardiff North Hotel), St Teilo's High School and Rumney Primary School.

The Chairperson stressed the importance of visits and engagements and said that it would be good to get a number of visits done by the next meeting. Members were asked to contact Lucy if interested in doing a particular visit.

RESOLVED:

1. To note the programme of visits as outlined in Appendix A and indicate any expressions of interest in attending any of the visits contained within the programme.
2. To identify any other appropriate and relevant services or organisations to be included within the member visit programme that would benefit the Committee in carrying out their role.

13 : FORWARD WORK PROGRAMME - MAY 2023 - APRIL 2024

The Chairperson invited Lucy Thomas, CPAC Officer, to introduce the item which was to provide an update on the Forward Work Programme May 2023 – April 2024.

Lucy outlined the items being considered for the agenda for the next Committee meeting on 11 March 2024 – which would concentrate on the last priority in the Corporate Parenting Plan – celebrating our children and young people.

The Proposed agenda items were as follows: -

- Bright Sparks Awards Update – An update to the Committee in relation to the Bright Sparks Awards that took place in December 2023.
- Update from the Fostering Team – to receive an update on the recent fostering recruitment.
- Youth Justice Service Report – An update to the Committee in relation to the new Crosslands Programme implemented by YJS.
- Update on Member Visits and Young People Services – Updates would include Member Visit meetings with the Virtual School and young people taking part in the Bright Futures Apprenticeship Programme
- Registered Individual Update on Homes for Children in Cardiff – Registered Individual has legal responsibility for our residential homes for children in Cardiff. An update on our established and new provisions.

- Update on the Corporate Parenting Strategy – To receive a progress report on the review of the Corporate Parenting Strategy and operational plan.
- Annual Corporate Parenting Advisory Committee Report – To give an overview of the work of the Committee in 2023-24.

RESOLVED:

3. To agree the Work Programme and;
4. To identify any other topic for inclusion on the work programme

14 : PERFORMANCE DASHBOARD - QUARTER 3 2023-2024

The Chairperson invited Matt Osborne, Operational Manager, Children's Services, to introduce the item on the Performance Indicator Dashboard (Appendix A).

Members were aware that the Key Performance Indicator Dashboard outlines a range of key data from internal departments and outside agencies that have an impact on the lives of Children Looked After and Care Leavers. This will help members of the Committee understand the services and organisations that support care experienced young people in Cardiff.

Members were informed that from engagement with partners, and as discussed previously by the committee, the key performance indicators included information from the following departments:

- Cardiff and Vale Health Board
- Children Services
- Bright Futures
- Housing Directorate
- Education Directorate
- Criminal Justice System
- Adolescent/ leaving care services

Where Key Performance Indicators for Children Looked After and Care Leavers had not been developed Children Services would work with the relevant organisation to increase the monitoring of Children Looked After and Care Leaver outcomes.

RESOLVED: to note the report.

15 : URGENT ITEMS (IF ANY)

There were no urgent items.

16 : DATE OF NEXT MEETING

The date of the next meeting of the Corporate Parenting Advisory Committee is on Monday 11 March 2024 at 2.00 pm in Committee Room 4, County Hall, Cardiff.

The meeting terminated at 4.15 pm

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**CORPORATE PARENTING
ADVISORY COMMITTEE****11 March 2024**

REPORT OF THE DIRECTOR, CHILDRENS SERVICES

BRIGHT SPARKS AWARDS UPDATE**Reasons for the report**

1. This report provides an update to the Committee of the annual Bright Sparks Awards ceremony and the Bright Sparks group.
2. The Bright Sparks Group is a participation group for children and young people aged between 11-25 who are looked after or care experienced.

Background

3. The Bright Sparks Group was started 18 years ago by two young people who were care leavers who wanted to create a space for children and young people to come together to take part in activities and services that affect their lives.

Issues

4. The Bright Sparks Awards are an annual event which are run by the Bright Sparks Group, to celebrate the achievements of care experienced children and young people.
5. In December 2023, over 200 people attended County Hall to take part in the prestigious event, including more than 50 children and young people, Children's Services Staff and Council Members.
6. There were several partners that made this year's event as special as it was, including The Into Work Service, Encon, Child Friendly City, NYAS and The Youth Service.
7. **Appendix 1** provides an overview of the event in more detail and also includes some details of the winners of each category.

Financial Implications

8. Children's Services allocate funding for the Bright Sparks Awards and additional provisions are purchased by internal and external partners as part of the corporate social responsibilities.

Legal Implications

9. There are no legal implications arising from this report

RECOMMENDATION

10. To note the presentation outlined **Appendix 1** and explore ways in which the members can assist with support for the event in the future.

DEBORAH DRIFFIELD
Director, Childrens Services
21 February 2024

Appendix 1– Bright Sparks Awards Presentation Update

APPENDIX 1

Overview of Bright Sparks Presentation Update

The Bright Sparks is a participation group for children and young people who Looked After or Care Experienced. On 1st December 2023, County Hall hosted the Bright Sparks Annual Awards ceremony to celebrate the achievements of these children and young people who have accomplished so much, despite the challenges they have faced.

The Bright Sparks group was created by 2 young people who had a vision to ensure that care experienced children and young people received the recognition they deserve for all their achievements and accomplishments. Their aim was that these achievements were shared and celebrated and in doing so, some of the stereotypes associated with being looked after would be removed. I

It is one of the highlights of the entire year and an opportunity for us to come together and take part in the celebration of these wonderful young people. The awards have always been young person led with young people at the heart of the process; their voices leading change and making a difference to the services that affect them.

18th Annual Bright Sparks Awards saw successful collaboration across service. The event was sponsored by Into Work Service and Partners across the city- Over 200 people attended.

Jamie's Farm

In October 2023 6 Young people attended Jamies Farm, Monmouthshire Working farm- working with the animals, exploring the outdoors and cooking from scratch

Award Categories

There were 14 different awards categories, including those for sport, music and performing arts achievements.



Nominee Stories

Whilst in their mother's care N lost 163 learning days over a period of 2.5 years. N was also suffering significant neglect, impacting on their emotional wellbeing. N's learning was extremely compromised, and their verbal, reading and written communication was very poor. N was removed from their mother's care, placed into foster care and had to change schools twice. This was very traumatic and challenging for such a young child, yet this brave young person has made tremendous improvements. N is now being taught in a main stream school and since being placed in foster care has been attending school everyday and on time. N has become a fluid reader, has progressed to reading Roald Dahl books at home and is now working to the expected educational levels for their age. N is described by their teacher as demonstrating a strong eagerness to learn and desire to improve, as well as being a kind and thoughtful friend.

R was one of many children that auditioned for a Christmas production in large county theatre. R was adamant that they would not get a part in the production due to not attending any performing arts, dance, drama etc groups, and had never done anything like this before - R just simply had a love of dancing and performing! R's audition was successful and was offered a place in the 'sold out Christmas show'! R was so committed to the lead up of the show, spending most evenings after school and weekends in the theatre practising for the show. R then performed in the show for 2 weeks straight and was truly amazing!

F had a traumatised childhood and experienced significant neglect in their family of origin. They also have complex medical issues causing difficulties with speech and movement. F was placed with a kinship carer several years ago and has recently attended Music therapy. Music therapy has offered F a sense of achievement, building confidence in writing, narrating, and co-producing their own personal songs. F will perform their song at the Bright Sparks Awards, a group that continues to promote confidence, self esteem and resilience.

Lyrics written by a young person who won the music category

You're the sunshine on my cloudy day

With you by my side everything's ok

I'm grateful for your love in every single way

I promise to cherish you each and every day

CHORUS: Cause Darling you, you stole my heart away
And every single day I thank my lucky stars
That I found you, my one and only love
I never knew what true love was until first sight of you

When I first saw you my heart skipped a beat

I never knew true love until our eyes did meet,

You smiled at me and I felt so complete

From that moment on my heart was yours to keep

CHORUS You're the melody to my song, With you I know where I belong I'll love you now and forever long Cause darling, you're where my heart belongs

Nominee Stories Cont'd

I am nominating Stacey Primary School for the support that they gave when a very large sibling group had to be accommodated into foster care. Stacey Primary School have always been brilliant at communicating, sharing worries and offering support to this family throughout our involvement. When the decision was being made to accommodate the children, Stacey Primary School supported us and the children by looking after them after school hours whilst decisions were made, ensuring the children were with familiar individuals. They then supported the children whilst they were being informed of the decision. This was a lovely example of multi-agency working where everyone had the best interests of the children in mind and made the difficult experience of accommodating so many children that little bit more manageable.

T is a single carer for, B who is 2 years old. B was born with complex medical issues and required medical intervention and support. T was approved as a kinship carer and has engaged with all health professionals and undertaken medical training at the hospital and within their own home. At a recent CLAR all professionals commended T for their love and commitment toward their care of B. The love and bond between them is evident and B is thriving since being placed within T's care. IRO said ' T's persistence is unbelievable, I have never seen anything like it' and that 'T really is an amazing human being'. The transformation in B is incredible, they no longer require medical intervention or medication and are meeting all their milestones.

Superstar Support

Corporate Parenting Advisory Committee Members Cllr Sarah Merry and Cllr Ash Lister attended the event, as well as a number of senior members from Children's Services and Education. Children and young people were supported by children's services staff, as well as and those from the wider authority. We also received several good luck messages from Wales and British & Irish Lions Rugby stars.

Update from a Bright Sparks Member

' I have been a bright sparks member for 2 years It has boosted confidence and helped me open up to talk about things. I feel comfortable when I'm at Bright Sparks because everyone is so welcoming. My goal is to make a difference in the care system and I feel like Bright Sparks is helping me to do that. I have made friends with other like minded people- Young people who are care experienced don't know where we stand or where we belong and often struggle to be proud of ourselves. Being nominated for a Bright Sparks Award boosts other young people's confidence-

everyone looks really happy. Its just nice to be around people who understand me- nobody in my friendship group is care experienced, being a part of bright sparks, the people just get it- it's like we are our own community.'

What Next?

NYAS participation contract has now come to an end and therefore there is an opportunity to grow the Bright Sparks group from within CS Already an existing CLA group being facilitated by Youth Service Discussions have taken place for a 3 month pilot for CS/YS to collaborate and deliver a CLA participation group Superb opportunity to ensure services are working as closely together as possible, and aligning ourselves to meet our CPAC objectives.

**CARDIFF COUNCIL
CYNGOR CAERDYDD**

CORPORATE PARENTING ADVISORY COMMITTEE

11th March 2024

CORPORATE PARENTING ADVISORY COMMITTEE ANNUAL REPORT 2023-2024

Reasons for the Report

1. The terms of reference require the Corporate Parenting Advisory Committee to:
Submit an Annual Report on the work of the Committee to full Council.
2. A copy of the Committee's Annual Report 2023/2024 is attached at Appendix 1.
This report outlines the Committee's activities from June 2023 – March 2024

Background

3. The overarching objective of the Corporate Parenting Advisory Committee, as stated in the terms of reference is to champion the life changes 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.
4. The term 'corporate parenting' indicates that the local authority has the same interest in the progress and attainment of looked after children as any reasonable parent has for their own children.

Financial Implications

5. There are no direct financial implications arising from this report

Legal Implications

6. There are no legal implications from this report

RECOMMENDATION

The Committee is recommended to:

- 1) Provide comments on the contents of the Committee's Annual Report 2023/24.
- 2) Delegate authority to the Director of Children's Services in consultation with the Chair, to finalise the Annual Report, having regard to comments provided by Members of the Committee and Members of the Children & Young People Scrutiny Committee; and
- 3) Ask the Chair to present the Annual Report to full Council in June 2024.

DEBORAH DRIFFIELD

Director of Children's Services

11th March 2024

Corporate Parenting Advisory Committee

Annual Report 2023/24

CHAIR'S FORWARD

In 2023-2024, the Corporate Parenting Advisory Committee continued its commitment to providing robust care and support for our children and young people who are care experienced or looked after. This annual report focuses on the progress made in addressing our corporate priorities and highlights several key pieces of work that the Corporate Parenting Advisory Committee has been involved in over the past year.

Throughout 2023/2024 members have been able to learn about the variety of invaluable services provided by the authority and its partners to support the children and young people in our care. The Committee have also been given opportunities to engage with care experienced children and young people in Cardiff. This has allowed the children and young people to share their views, experiences, and challenges with the committee members directly.

A particular highlight for me has been attending the annual Bright Sparks awards. This ceremony has been running for 17 years and recognises the achievements of Children Looked After, families, carers and staff. It was fantastic to see so many children and young people enjoying the celebrations and to witness their accomplishments, resilience and determination.

I was privileged to be able to give out an award on the evening to the members of the Bright Sparks group. Bright Sparks is a participation group of care experienced children and young people who come together to discuss topical issues and participate in fun activities. The group provides children and young people with a safe space to have their voices heard, enabling them to lead changes and make a difference to the services that affect them.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank members of the Committee for their contributions and active involvement throughout the year. In the next municipal year, the Committee will focus on continuing with our support for The Accommodation Strategy and promoting Cardiff homes for Cardiff children across the authority. We will strengthen the implementation of NYAS' My Things Matter Campaign throughout the service, following the pledge made in June 2023 and look to expand our participation

services, which will be facilitated by the publication of the new Participation Strategy in 2024.

Councillor Sarah Merry
Chair, Corporate Parenting Advisory Committee

DIRECTOR'S OVERVIEW

The 2023/2024 Annual Report highlights the range of initiatives undertaken by the Corporate Parenting Advisory Committee in the past year. The report explores the various updates received by the Committee; the growth of the Virtual School and Virtual Headteacher, expansion of the emotional wellbeing and mental health services and the rapid development of the Accommodation Strategy. The aim of the Committee is to ensure there is a consistent and sustained focus on each of the corporate priorities throughout the authority and its partners.

It is encouraging to see the enthusiasm from the Committee to engage in the member visit programme as this provides meaningful opportunities for members to hear directly from our young people. I would like to take this opportunity to thank members of the Committee for their contributions and active involvement throughout the year. With the event of the new national Corporate Parenting Charter, we are in an exciting time where we are looking to review the role of the committee. It will also see us strengthening our partnership working with our Corporate Parenting Statutory partners, as part of the implementation of this charter. I look forward to seeing how we can continue to support the committee in achieving the best possible outcomes for our children and young people.

Finally, it was wonderful to see so many young people taking part in the Bright Sparks Awards in December. The Bright Sparks is a participation group that is run by young people for young people. It creates a space for them to come together with other people who understand exactly who they are and what it means to be care experienced. The achievements of our young people are incredible, and it was a privilege to hear about all of their successes and accomplishments.

Deborah Driffield
Director, Children's Services

Introduction

It is the collective responsibility of members, partners, and the council to ensure that children who are looked after are provided the best possible care and safeguarding. Every staff member and employee has a statutory responsibility to act for those children in the same way that a good parent would act for their own child.

Cardiff Council's Corporate Parenting Advisory Committee are collectively responsible for achieving this and ensuring children and young people receive the best possible care and support, that they are appropriately safeguarded, and achieve the best possible chances in life. The Committee actively works to promote the life chances of looked after children in the care of Cardiff Council and those young people who are care leavers. The voice of those children and young people in care help to drive and shape the Committee's agenda and priorities, this also includes monitoring services that are delivered across all statutory and voluntary sector organisations.

This report presents the Committee's main activities during 2023/24. It begins with background information that is helpful in understanding the Committee's function, purpose, and the scale of its responsibilities. This includes:

- A record of meetings and attendance
- Committee Training
- Young People Engagement
- Activity of the Committee
- Monitoring Performance

What does it mean to be a Corporate Parent?

“When a child or young person enters the care of the Council, the role of being a parent is taken on by the Local Authority. This is known as Corporate Parenting. The term describes how Cardiff Council collectively fulfil their parenting responsibilities, by seeking positive outcomes for Children Looked After and young adults who are care leavers in the same way we do for our own children. From early years into adulthood

all our children, young people and young adults should be kept safe, are happy and have every opportunity to thrive. Leadership & Effective Corporate Parenting requires not only strong collective ownership and leadership but influence at the most senior level” (**Cardiff Corporate Parenting Strategy 2021-2024**).

Who are the Committee?

The Cardiff Corporate Parenting Advisory Committee brings together strategic partners to work with elected Councillors to improve outcomes for Children Looked After and Care Leavers. The Committee’s values highlight the right results can only be achieved by all professionals working together and listening to children and young people to understand what matters to them.

Record of meetings and attendance

During the 2023/24 municipal year, 4 Committee meetings were held. The scheduled meetings were held on:

- 26th June 2023
- 6th November 2023
- 22nd January 2024
- 11th March 2024

Membership

Membership of the Committee is approved by Council at its Annual Meeting each year. Seats are allocated on a politically proportionate basis.

The Committee is chaired by the Deputy Leader of the Council. In 2023/2024 the Members were as follows:

COUNCILLOR REPRESENTATIVE		ATTENDANCE	
		Meetings: Possible	Meetings: Actual
Sarah Merry (Chair)	Labour (Deputy Leader, Cabinet Member for Education, Employment and Skills)	4	4
Cllr Ash Lister	Labour	4	4
Cllr Mike Ash Edwards	Labour	4	3
Cllr Chris Lay	Labour	4	4
Cllr Margaret Lewis	Labour	4	3
Cllr Maliika Kaaba	Labour	4	3
Cllr Peter Littlechild	Conservative	4	4
Cllr Daniel Naughton	Liberal Democrats	4	3
Cllr Rhys Taylor	Liberal Democrats	4	4

Meetings were also attended by a core group of senior managers from Children's Services, Education, Cardiff and Vale University Health Board and NYAS Cymru. They attended in the capacity of advisors to respond to questions. Invited guest speakers also presented to the Committee. Further information is provided on those discussions in the following section of this report.

26th June 2023

Priority 1: Improving Emotional Wellbeing and Physical Health

Children and Young People Emotional Wellbeing Mental Health Service Update

Members of the Corporate Parenting Committee were provided with an overview of the Children and Young People's Emotional Wellbeing and Mental Health Service, part of the Children and Young People & Family Health Service (CYPF).

Previously, Services were delivered under a South Wales CAMHS Network hosted by Cwm Taf University Health Board. However, in 2016, Primary Mental Health was repatriated to Cardiff and Vale University Health Board and then later, in 2019, SCAMHS followed.

The committee heard how the aim of the new service is to provide an integrated Children and Young People's Emotional Wellbeing and Mental Health Service, with a single point of access and no wrong door approach.

A number of improvements were made to the service following its repatriation into Cardiff and Vale University Health board. These included significant growth in workforce, a single point of access with a consultation line for professionals, clear pathways of care and communication platforms that were co-produced with children and young people.

The Committee also heard how the service has introduced several other provisions, including:

- Intensive Home Treatment Service
- Specialist Eating Disorder Service
- Schools In Reach Team and Specialist Emotional Wellbeing School Nurses
- Embedded Mental Health Practitioner in the Early Help Service
- Community Connections: Social Prescribing Project

The committee were then told about future plans for the service and where it's focus would be. A primary target is to improve waiting times, an issue that is shared across

several areas within the service. CYPF also explained how in the coming year they would be looking to increase their visibility in communities, launch an EmPower Programme and continue with their exploration of alternatives to admissions.

Childrens Services Emotional Wellbeing Project

Childrens Services Operational Manager, Suki Bahara Garrens attended to deliver an update to the Committee on the Emotional Wellbeing Project undertaken by the Safeguarding Team. Members of the were told about the significant increase in the number of Cardiff children and young people presenting to emergency units following self harm or suicide attempts during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Members heard that whilst the majority of young people were able to be discharged back to their homes once they were medically fit, there was a growing number of young people who did not meet the criteria for Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS) or tier 4 in-patient support. This was due to the fact their needs were not described as related to a 'mental illness', however, the young person did require ongoing support to enable them to safely return to living within the community.

Children's Services collaborated with Health and other partners to work on a multiagency project to improve outcomes for children and young people in emotional crisis. The progress of the project created close partnership working with Health to create joint hospital discharge procedures and safety plans for our children and young people in emotional crisis.

The committee were told of the successful implementation of weekly multi-agency meetings between Local Authorities and Health colleagues to discuss any issues or concerns. A dedicated CAMHS Social Worker was recruited to deliver much needed work across several agencies. The dedicated CAMHS Social Worker was also available to offer consultancy support to social work staff, in order to provide them with a space to discuss young people where there are concerns about emotional crisis or mental illness.

Members were pleased to note that staff from across agencies have undertaken specialist training to further their knowledge and understanding so that they are able to offer the best level of support to this group of young people.

Enfys A Psychology Led Service For Children That Are Looked After Update

Members were provided with an overview of Enfys, a psychology led service for Children Looked After from the Lead Psychologist Libby Erin. Enfys was previously known as the Developmental Trauma Service, was established in August 2016 and was originally just a part-time Clinical Psychologist who then became full time in August 2017.

Enfys has grown since the last presentation to the Committee and now consists of a team of 15, comprising Psychologists, Graduate Mental Health Workers and Occupational Therapists. Members were informed that Enfys used a pyramid model to deliver their services and explained how support was offered.

To meet the demand of having over 1300 children who are looked after in Cardiff and the Vale of Glamorgan, the service provided a predominantly consultation-based model of service delivery. Once a family or child had support at one level, they could move up to the next level of the pyramid if it was considered there was a need for more intensive support. Members were informed that the number of families Enfys worked with at each level decreased as the pyramid was ascended. The service supported foster carers, social workers, teachers, or anybody else involved in a child's care, to complete the nurturing attachment group.

Members were provided with information on the ongoing support to families provided by Enfys as follows:

- Assessment and formulation of therapeutic need
- Based on child, young person or family individual needs (needs led)
- Dyadic Developmental Psychotherapy –based support
- Members of the team are skilled in a variety of therapeutic models, as well as integrative working (e.g. play based work, EMDR Eye movement desensitization and reprocessing), Dialectical behaviour therapy (DBT) and others).

Members were also informed of the work with Enfys undertook alongside other agencies which included:

- 6-weekly supervision with CLA nurses
- 6-weekly supervision to post-adoption service
- Co-location with East, North, South teams in Cardiff Children's Services every month
- Co-location with post-adoption service every 2 weeks
- ARC – dedicated psychologist embedded in the edge of care service

Members were advised that so far, this year, 5 Enfys groups had been run for individuals from both Cardiff and Vale and within Cardiff and that Enfys has provided 246 Advice and Support Sessions since January 2023.

Members were appreciative of the fact that Enfys had supported many of Cardiff's children and young people and passed on their thanks for the positive difference that they had made.

Statutory Health Information For Looked After Children Update

Becci Ingram, General manager at the Children, Young People and Family Health Services, and advisor to this Committee, provided a presentation to Members on Statutory Health and Information for Children Looked After.

Members were informed that the Children Looked After team in health were an important part of the Children, Young People and Family Health Directorate and delivered an area of work where there were statutory health requirements. Children in care have traditionally had more adverse health outcomes, so the assessments were aimed at improving health outcomes and reducing health inequalities, as well as ensuring identified health needs are actioned and monitored. The service was provided by a small staffing team of Consultant Paediatricians and Specialist Nurses.

Members were provided with a summary and overview of the statutory responsibilities for monitoring the health of Children Looked After and the role of the key people in

assessing and monitoring the health needs of Children Looked After, including the Looked After Health Nurses.

The Committee were advised that there had been a growth in the number of children looked after with a direct impact on the number of Health Assessments the team were required to deliver. Until recently the team had not grown in line with the growth in demand. Recognising these pressures, Becci Ingram explained that the Health Board had taken the above actions to mitigate this, which were outlined to Members.

NYAS My Things Matter Campaign

Members were given an overview of the My Things Matter Campaign from Candice Lloyd, Service Manager for NYAS (National Youth Advocacy Service).

The aim of the campaign was to raise awareness of how important it is to treat the belongings of children and young people with respect, should they have to move between placements. The Committee heard how there was a collaboration with Madlug, who for every bag they sell, donate a compact travel bag to a child or young person who is looked after. This was to ensure that no child would have their belongings put into a bin liner and feel as though their personal items were worthless.

Members were informed that to date, a total of 32 Authorities had already signed the pledge and were encouraged to become signatories to the NYAS My Things Matter Campaign. All CPAC Members signed the pledge and as a result, Cardiff City Council updated its guidance and policies and publicised the campaign.

6th November 2023

Priority 4: Educational Achievement, Employment & Training

Virtual Headteacher and School Overview and Update: Looked after Children in Education Annual Report

Deborah Williams, Virtual Headteacher, Libby Jones Child Looked After Virtual School Cardiff Project Manager and Davina Miller, Inclusion Teacher, Child Looked After Virtual School Cardiff were invited to the meeting to provide an update to Members on the Children Looked After in Education Annual Report 2022-23 and the Virtual School and Virtual Headteacher Update. Members were informed how the Virtual School and Virtual Headteacher was working to further priority 4 of the Corporate Parenting Strategy: Educational Achievement and Training.

Members were informed that since the last Educational Report to the CPAC, there had been changes to the LACE (Looked After Children in Education) Team. Following a successful application for Welsh Government pilot funding, the Virtual School and the role of the Virtual Headteacher began in July 2022, Welsh Government agreed to extend the funding for a second year.

The Virtual School Headteacher advised members that a written review of the work of the Virtual School was being undertaken and reported to Welsh Government.

Members were informed that the National Development Group for Child Looked After met in July 2023 for the first time since the pandemic and that there were plans in place for the Virtual School Headteachers to meet and work collaboratively.

The following performance information was provided to Members:

- 63% of Cardiff Children Looked After were educated in a Cardiff School or setting
- 32% of Cardiff Children Looked After were educated in an out of county setting
- 5% of Cardiff Children Looked After were in Education other than at School (EOTAS)

Work being undertaken to support Children Looked after in Education included:

- Collaborative and integrated working with Education and Children's Services
- Working with schools and other education settings in and out of county
- Leadership and managing the change from the Looked After Children Education to the Virtual School Team
- Developing partnerships and relationships with other professionals and agencies

Members were also provided with a summary, and able to clarify, the priorities and future plans in Education to improve outcomes for Children and Young People Looked After including vision, funding, impact and timescales.

Cardiff Commitment Update

Members were given an update from Carly Davies, Project Manager of Cardiff Commitment.

Members were informed that Cardiff Commitment had been developed as a programme to support the Capital Ambition, which was that all learners progressed into education, employment or training post-16. Members were advised that supporting the progression of young people was a key priority for the Education Directorate and Cardiff Commitment was building strong relationships between Cardiff schools, employers, and higher and further education partners to support young people to access jobs and careers.

Carly Davies informed members that to do date, over 300 employers in Cardiff are working with Cardiff Commitment to offer young people employment and training opportunities, work experience and curriculum enrichment activities.

Members were given an overview of what success looked like, which included the goal of ensuring no young people became 'NEET' (Not in Education, Employment or Training), particularly from vulnerable groups such as Children Looked After and low income families.

In terms of targeted support for Children Looked After, members were informed that a Child Looked After Working Group was being developed to support pupils across Cardiff schools with meaningful career and work-related experiences. The Group would help to promote high aspirations and seek to secure the best outcomes for those children and young people.

Members were told the group would be chaired by the Child Looked After Virtual Headteacher and Headteacher at Cardiff West Community High School. It would look at how meaningful opportunities could be developed within the Cardiff Commitment network to support Cardiff's Children Looked After to develop their aspirations and support them to realise their ambitions for the future. The views of Children Looked After would be central to this work and they would be consulted for their views in relation to the support needed to raise their aspirations and realise their ambitions. The intention was that Cardiff Commitment would listen to their ideas and needs and respond with a Call to Action across their partner network.

Into work Advice Service- Bright Futures Update

Members were provided with a presentation from Kate Elias, Into Work Service Co-ordinator, who gave an update on the Bright Futures Project.

Members were informed that the Bright Futures Project sat within the Into Work Advice Service as part of a wide team of employability and training projects. The Service provides employment, training, volunteering and digital support to Cardiff citizens who were actively seeking work or looking to upskill. The Bright Futures Project provides support for Care Experienced young people (16-24) who were identified as Not in Education, Employment or Training (NEET) or at risk of becoming so and needing intensive help to access training and the workplace. A team of Youth Mentors liaises with partners in Children's Services and Youth Services to ensure that all Care Experienced young people were given the opportunity to reach their potential and be supported into education and work.

Members were informed that the support consisted of:

- Intensive youth mentor support for care experienced young people in Cardiff to help them remove the barriers into employment, education or training;

- Financial support was available to help young people get into employment; access to a flexible barrier fund to help them with clothing, transport, training, childcare etc;
- Support to prepare for 6 month Bright Start Work Placements;
- Access to wellbeing and confidence building, including summer wellbeing sessions and access to ICare boxed in partnership with the Youth Service

Members were provided with a snapshot of engagement since April 2023 with 52 young people having signed up for mentor support, 16 young people were helped into employment, 24 young people completed training, 22 young people completed Bright Start placements and 244 were supported into Employment or Education since the launch of Bright Futures in 2020.

Katy Elias shared some quotes from young people with the members. One young person said, *“This chance you helped me with could change my life now, thank you so much.”*, *“Thank you so much ... for going above and beyond. I feel so much better after talking to you”* and *“Without the support from you I would have been on a very dark path. Thank you for being constant and not giving up on me.”*

To conclude the presentation, Katy Elias informed Members of the Bright Start Trainee Scheme. Members were told of the existence of the Bright Start Trainee Scheme, whereby young people were supported to undertake up to 6 months of paid work experience placements. Partners who offer the young people these placement opportunities include- The Dogs Trust, Clayton Hotels and Cardiff Motorcross. Members were given the opportunity to incorporate a meeting with some of the young people participating in the trainee scheme into their member visit programme.

Participation Strategy Update

The members were given an update on the Participation Strategy by Matt Osborne, Operational Manager of Childrens Services. Members were advised that a consultation had been undertaken in collaboration with Children’s Services, NYAS and Cardiff Youth Service to develop a participation strategy.

Members were informed that the consultation had been co-produced by members of the Bright Sparks groups, as well as children and young people who attended services provided by Cardiff Youth Service and the Personal Advisor Service. It was explained that the aim of the Participation Strategy was to develop a strategy that would set out how the Authority engaged with Cardiff's children, young people and families and how services could be shaped in the future to better meet their needs. The strategy would be co-produced with children and young people, ensuring their voices were at the heart of the strategy development.

Members were told that a steering group was set up with members from Children's Services, Cardiff Youth Service and NYAS to map out a structure to engage with children and young people. Matt Osborne explained that in September 2023, all children and young people open to children's services between the ages of 8-18 years were invited to take part in the co-produced online questionnaire. A target of 100 responses was set and 122 responses were received.

Members were updated on direct work that was undertaken by way of visits to young people in residential homes and schools, and were advised that the strategy was at the point where all the information gathered from young people was being analysed.

Members were given valuable insight of some of the responses that had been received as part of the consultation. It was notable how many young people mentioned their families were important to them as well as the importance of sport and activities. An early draft would be presented to Members in order for them to communicate their views.

Support for Care Leavers Report

Hayley Beynon, Personal Advisor Service Team Manager and Jess Lloyd, Senior Personal Advisor updated Members on the Support for Care Leavers Report. Details were shared about the current work being undertaken to support young people leaving care, as well as work planned for future development. It was explained to members that the Personal Advisor Service is a fundamental service providing support, advice and guidance for young people aged between 16-25 years of age.

It was highlighted that since the last presentation to the CPAC Committee, the service had moved into Adults, Housing and Communities Service Area. Members were told how the alignment of the service helped to provide a holistic and cohesive approach to address the needs of young people with more of a 'wrap around' of services.

Members were also given an update on the recent Basic Income Pilot (a £1600 monthly payment for care experienced young people turning 18) which was being undertaken with 98 young people across the service. The entry to the pilot has now ended but it will continue to progress until 2025.

Hayley Beynon explained to members that the main concern for the PA Service was that in receiving the basic income payment, the young people would no longer be entitled to universal credit and rent support. Therefore, it was necessary for them to engage in meetings to undergo financial health and benefits checks.

The future aims for the service were outlined to the Committee, which included working with young people at an earlier age (15 and a half), a leaving care pilot/website in conjunction with a virtual youth hub, parenting support groups and entitlement support groups.

Passport To The City Report

In November 2023, the Committee heard from the Passport To The City Achievement Officer about a their programme, which ensures children and young people from all backgrounds are able to enjoy the amenities Cardiff had to offer.

Members were informed that the programme, which had been running for a year, provided fun, engaging, and aspirational experiences across the city for children and young people, in particular Cardiff's most vulnerable, to help improve their self-esteem, confidence, and well-being.

Examples of these opportunities included tickets to watch professional cricket matches at Sophia Gardens, Wales Millennium Centre tickets and BBC studios tours. More than 200 tickets were also obtained for Children and young people who are looked after to attend Bute Park Christmas Lights.

22nd January 2024

Priority 2: Better Connections and Improved Relationships

National Youth Advocacy Service (NYAS) Update

A detailed presentation was delivered to Committee Members by Candice Lloyd, Service Manager and Scott Giles, Project Co-ordinator, of the National Youth Advocacy Service (NYAS) Cardiff.

Members were provided with an overview of the service as a whole and advised that NYAS Cymru are a leading rights-based charity who provide independent advocacy services for children and young people aged between 5-25 in Cardiff. NYAS ensure that the rights of children and young people are upheld and that their views, wishes and feelings are respected and their voices are heard.

Members were told of the two different types of service offered by NYAS; the Active Offer and the Issue Based Advocacy. The Active Offer relates to children and young people who are new to the looked after or child protection system. Issue based advocacy is available to children and young people who are looked after, receiving care and support or are on the child protection register. Issue based advocacy is also available to care leavers.

Candice Lloyd informed members that between April and September 2023, NYAS have received 408 referrals comprising 230 Active Offers and 178 issue based advocacy services for children and young people in Cardiff. As part of this service, NYAS has supported 24 children and young people with disabilities, 10 Unaccompanied Asylum Seeking children and 17 young people placed out of county.

Members were provided with a case study which included firsthand information from a young person and highlighted the difference advocacy made to their life.

Voices From Care Cymru Update

To link with the theme of the January 2024 Corporate Parenting Advisory Committee meeting, Voices from Care provided members with an update on their current projects.

Helen Mary Jones, Head of Policy and Communications provided information about the independent Welsh voluntary organization which has been supporting care-experienced children and young people for thirty-five years.

Support is provided by way of various well-being services; allowing young people the opportunity to develop resilience and independent living skills, as well as facilitating peer support in both formal and informal settings. Members heard how Voices from Care Cymru offers enjoyable activities to allow care-experienced individuals to relax and bond with others who share similar experiences, whilst empowering them to collaborate and influence decisions affecting their lives.

In terms of well-being, Voices from Care Cymru offer tailored support to address barriers to successful independent living. Members heard how this included practical skill workshops which focused on topics such as budgeting, fostering healthy relationships, and addressing past traumas. The organization has recently expanded its services to include professional counselling. They also offer peer support cafes and a project called the Sky's the Limit which cater to specific age groups.

Members were informed how Voices from Care Cymru places a strong emphasis on influencing policies and decisions to improve the lives of care-experienced individuals. It actively engages young people in developing manifestos and collaborates with the Welsh Government to implement policy commitments. Voices From Care Cymru assisted with the development of the Basic Income Pilot and also played a key role in the creation of the Corporate Parenting Charter. Committee members were given an in depth update on the Summit Meeting between Welsh Ministers and care-experienced young people, which was held to discuss a reform of services.

Residential Homes Update

Members were provided with an update on the Accommodation Strategy from Nick Blake, Operational Manager Children's Services. The Strategy is part of the new Children's Services Strategy, which was been developed to set out the vision and direction for service provision in Cardiff over the next 3 years. It outlines how Cardiff will seek to work with partners to meet the needs of children, young people and their families, using the least interventionist approach. There will be a focus on three key areas: Place, People and Practice.

The Accommodation Strategy sets out the accommodation provision required to implement 'The Right Place Model' in Cardiff and gives an overview of the ambitious plans to increase residential care provision for children and young people.

Members were told that one of the reasons behind the need for more residential provision, is the consistent reduction in foster carer recruitment. The proposal is to use current assets within the authority, as well as the acquire and develop a number of other properties.

The Committee heard how Childrens Services currently have 5 new operational properties (3 General, 1 Mental Health and Emotional Wellbeing and 1 for Children with Disabilities) with a further 4 due to be completed in the first half 2024. The service is also exploring the potential to purchase 4 smaller homes which would be used for solo, respite and shared care placements for children and young people who require additional health and disability support.

The Committee were encouraged to hear that the Right Place Model is also supported by the commitment from Welsh Government to end private profit from the care of children who are looked after.

The overriding aim for the next phase of The Accommodation Strategy is to provide homes for Cardiff children and young people where they feel safe, nurtured and protected.

Youth Service Report

Cardiff Youth Service Manager, Craig Bartlett attended the January 2024 Committee meeting to provide members with an update on the service and its offer to children and young people in Cardiff. Operating under the Education Department of Cardiff Council, The Youth Service supports children and young people aged 11-25 years to enhance their personal, social, and educational development. This is done by offering engagement through community activities, participatory experiences, and comprehensive information, support, and guidance to help young individuals achieve their full potential.

The Committee were advised that the service operates across a variety of settings, offering both universal and targeted support to young people which is all based on the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child.

With 13 youth work teams, Cardiff Youth Service engages young people in youth centres, clubs, schools, streets, and communities. All youth workers are nationally qualified and registered, ensuring high standards of professionalism.

Specialist Looked After Youth Mentors provide tailored support, including one-to-one sessions focusing on improving well-being, attendance, and academic performance. Delivery is flexible, accommodating school, community, or home settings, even for children placed out of county.

There is a Children Looked After Wellbeing Group that offers care-experienced young people a supportive environment for socialising, sharing experiences, and participating in themed workshops. The workshops are aimed at promoting emotional health and wellbeing including cooking, games/activities, iCare Programme, and accredited activities such Youth Achievers Award and Duke of Edinburgh Award.

Guaranteed Interview

The members of the Corporate Parenting Advisory Committee heard from Corporate Policy Officer, Lucy Thomas about the proposal for a guaranteed interview scheme for care leavers.

Members were told of the plan to introduce a guaranteed interview scheme for young people who have left the care system when they apply for vacancies within Cardiff Council.

The proposed scheme would be applicable only to job vacancies within Cardiff Council where the Council has the authority to employ individuals, so excluded from the scheme are school-based jobs or partnership posts.

Under the proposed scheme, care leavers would be guaranteed an interview if they identify as such on their application and meet the essential criteria outlined in the person specification.

Members were advised that the implementation of the scheme is targeted to be completed by the end of the first quarter of the 24/25 financial year, with efforts to expedite the process if system changes can be accommodated sooner.

Prior to implementation, several changes are necessary. This includes collaboration with Human Resources to update all recruitment systems, application documentation and recruitment and selection policy. It is also necessary to undergo a consultation with Trade Unions to address any concerns or considerations.

Mentoring Scheme Report

Members were updated about the Children's Services Mentoring Scheme being developed to support children and young people who are looked after in Cardiff.

The Mentoring Scheme is designed to support and empower children and young people by offering them practical experiences and opportunities within the authority. The purpose of the Mentoring Scheme is to provide a structured programme focused on offering guidance, support, and assistance to children and young people in various aspects of their lives.

Members heard how the scheme will pair young people with adult mentors to offer them supervision, positive role modelling, and opportunities for personal and academic

growth. This will be facilitated by way of practical work experience and volunteering opportunities within the authority.

The aim of the scheme is to increase social, academic and life skill development in children and young people by giving them positive, consistent role models to learn from. It is hoped that this will create a sense of community and belonging for those young people taking part in the scheme.

Members were pleased to note that this is an authority wide initiative and were told how each Directorate had been contacted for their suggestions as to how they can support the mentoring scheme. These suggestions will then be included in the Corporate Parenting Operational Plan for 2024-2025.

Member Visit Programme

Committee Members Cllr Rhys Taylor and Cllr Peter Littlechild visited Ty Storrie Children's Home in Cardiff. The Members were extremely grateful for the warm welcome they received and were inspired by the care and support staff provide to the children and families reliant on Ty Storrie.

Ty Storrie is a Home for children and young people aged between 6-17 with disabilities and complex needs. It has 8 en suite bedrooms, 2 lounge areas along with a playroom and sensory room. There are currently 33 children having regular overnight respite care, however it is hoped that with the right support, this can grow to 45.

The Members wished to highlight the complexities of settling a child, prior to them enjoying their first stay at Ty Storrie. It is a gradual, phased process and can sometimes take up to 4 months before a child stays overnight.

Cllr Mike Ash Edwards visited the Youth Justice Service and met with Angharad Thomas, Operational Manager as well as a number of support officers.

Cardiff YJS is a multi disciplinary partnership between the Youth Justice Board, Welsh Government and The Police & Crime Commissioner to provide intervention and support for young people and their families. Cllr Ash Edwards learned how the aim of

the partnership is to prevent anti-social behaviour, offending and re-offending by young people aged 10-17. It also offers support to victims of youth crime and anti-social behaviour.

Cllr Dan Naughton visited St Teilos Comprehensive School and met with the Headteacher, Mr Ian Loynd. Cllr Naughton also had the opportunity to speak to pupils and youth service mentors working within the school. Mr Loynd gave an in-depth overview of the ethos of the school and their adoption of trauma informed processes for all of their pupils.

Cllr Mike Ash Edwards attended a fostering catch up coffee morning where he discussed various aspects of the fostering process with carers in attendance. Cllr Ash Edwards shared with members how one carer had looked after over 80 children during her time as a foster carer and expressed how privileged she felt to be in this position. Cllr Ash Edwards heard how there is still a national shortage of foster carers but with the support of the Welsh Government and Foster Wales' recruitment campaign, it is hoped that the situation will improve.

Committee members Cllr Ash Lister and Cllr Sarah Merry attended the annual Bright Sparks Awards in December 2023. The event was held at County Hall and welcomed over 200 people. Members were impressed at the effort may by staff to make the committee rooms look spectacular so that the children and families felt special.

There was a red carpet and photobooth area, complete with a balloon arch and aesthetic lighting. There was also a quiet area for any children who needed to withdraw, and a good selection of food was provided. There were 14 different award categories and every young person that was nominated received a certificate, goody bag and some Christmas chocolates. The Bright Sparks group hosted the entire evening and had complete autonomy in how the event was run.

Forward work programme

The Forward Work Programme for the Corporate Parenting Advisory Committee sets out the Committee business that will be considered during the period identified in the programme.

The programme has been developed to enable the Committee to monitor the progress being made to support the children looked after by the authority. Following a recent engagement session with children and young people looked after, several themes have been identified which are mirrored in the Forward Work Programme to effectively plan the work of the Committee for the forthcoming municipal year. This will ensure that the agenda and issues considered at the Committee will reflect the needs of our young people.

Monitoring Performance

The terms of reference for the Committee requires the regular review of performance data and to ensure performance monitoring systems are in place to achieve sustained improvements.

Key Performance Indicator dashboard

A Key Performance Indicator Dashboard was agreed by the Committee to help monitor and understand the services that support Children Looked After and Care Leavers.

The Key Performance Indicator Dashboard is a standing performance management item on the Committees agenda and is reported bi-annually to the Committee. The dashboard shows a range of key data from internal departments and outside agencies that have an impact on the lives of Children Looked After and Care Leavers in Cardiff.

Partners who contribute and provide key performance indicators include:

- Cardiff and Vale Health Board
- Children Services
- Bright Futures

- Housing Directorate
- Education Directorate
- The Youth Justice Service
- Adolescent/ leaving care services

The dashboard continues to be developed to help include relevant data will help members of the Committee in their role.

The Corporate Parenting Operational Plan

The Corporate Parenting Operational Plan outlines key deliverable outcomes that aim to improve the lives of care experienced young people in Cardiff.

The Children and Young People's Board is a multi-agency operational group that oversees the implementation of the Corporate Parenting Operational Plan. The Children and Young People's Board includes representation from:

- Children Services
- Housing
- Child Friendly City Team
- Education
- Youth Service
- Cardiff Commitment
- HR

Members of the Committee were informed that the action plan for the Operational group outlined a set of key clear deliverable outcomes that help to improve the lives of care experienced young people in Cardiff. Members of the group provide updates to the progress made against the actions.

The Cardiff Council Operational Plan is in the process of being updated, and will be presented to the Children and Young Person's Board in April 2024. A draft will be

presented to the Corporate Parenting Advisory Committee in June 2024, for review and members contribution. This will celebrate the hard work and effort of all Cardiff Council departments as Corporate Parents for our Children Looked After. We will also be inviting our Corporate Parenting Statutory Partners and the Independent Sector to review our Operational Plan and contribute.

Conclusion

During 2023/2024 Committee members received a wide range of updates and information from a variety of organisations which helped the Committee gain an understanding of the issues impacting care experienced young people and the services, projects and initiatives that support them.

Areas of particular interest from Committee Members for 2023/2024 were:

- The Accommodation Strategy
- The Virtual School Annual Report
- The Participation Strategy for Children and young people
- Bright Sparks Awards

Looking ahead the focus will be building on the information we have gained from the participation consultation and look to use this to expand ways of listening to children and young people to ensure they are at the heart of our decision making.

The themes and discussions from listening to our young people have been reflected in the members Forward Work Programme. This year, there will be a focus on building connections between young people, working closely with schools in the authority and supporting young people to take part in vocational and educational activities.

The new Corporate Parenting Charter presents a new opportunity for the Committee to review how Cardiff Council can work together with our statutory partners and the independent sector. The charter provides us with the prospect of improving engagement and joined up work, as well as strengthening our combined Corporate Parenting responsibilities.

**CYNGOR CAERDYDD
CARDIFF COUNCIL**



**CORPORATE PARENTING
ADVISORY COMMITTEE:**

11 MARCH 2024

REPORT OF THE DIRECTOR, CHILDRENS SERVICES

**FORWARD WORK PROGRAMME – MAY 2024 – APRIL 2025 AND THE WELSH
GOVERNMENT CORPORATE PARENTING CHARTER**

Reasons for the Report

1. This report seeks discussion in relation to the Welsh Government's Corporate Parenting Charter, provided at **Appendix 1**.
2. The Committee are asked to discuss how the Charter will be incorporated into the Forward Work Programme at **Appendix 2** and how future Committee meetings forthcoming municipal year will showcase the implementation.
3. The Committee are also asked to discuss Cardiff Council's signature of the Charter and the steps necessary to facilitate this.

Background

4. The Forward Work Programme (FWP) for the Corporate Parenting Advisory Committee sets out the committee business that will be considered during the period identified in the programme.

5. Previously, the Committee identified that the agenda for its meetings should be driven by Children Looked After in Cardiff and that a greater emphasis should be placed on the participation of young people in the work of the Committee.

Issues

6. The themes of the Forward Work Programme reflect the Corporate Parenting Priorities:
 1. Improving emotional well-being and physical health
 2. Having a safe and stable home in and after care
 3. Education, employment, and training
 4. Better connections, improved relationships
 5. Celebrating Success
7. Each meeting of the Committee will focus on one of these themes with relevant reports and updates being provided by the service areas and partners. The incorporation of the WG Corporate Parenting Charter needs to be a combined Authority approach in collaboration with our Corporate Partners
8. Other items will be added to the Committee Forward Work Programme to ensure that it meets the requirements under its terms of reference.

Member Development

9. The Forward Work Programme identifies a range of topics which committee members may be unfamiliar with. Committee members are requested to identify any learning opportunities which will support them in their role and would be beneficial to be added to the Member Development Programme.

Financial Implications

10. The report and accompanying appendix provide an overview of the planned work programme for the Corporate Parenting Advisory Committee. As the committee fulfils an advisory role, there are no financial implications directly arising from this report. Any activities referenced within the report or programme are to be funded from within existing available resources.

Legal Implications

11. There are no legal implications arising from the report.

RECOMMENDATIONS

12. To consider the Corporate Parenting Charter (**Appendix 1**) and develop the Forward Work Plan (**Appendix 2**)

13. To identify ways other Corporate Parents can expand and develop the Corporate Parenting Operational Plan.

DEBORAH DRIFFIELD

Director, Childrens Services

27th February 2024

Appendix 1 – Corporate Parenting Charter

Appendix 2 – Forward Work Programme

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Llywodraeth Cymru
Welsh Government

Corporate Parenting Charter – A Promise from Wales

“A SHARED PARENTING PLEDGE”

What is Corporate Parenting?

- Corporate parenting promotes the collective responsibility of local authorities to safeguard and promote the rights and life chances of care-experienced children and young people. Children can find more information about their rights here: [Children’s Commissioner for Wales – UNCRC Childrens Rights](#).
- Supporting care-experienced children and young people through their childhoods and as they leave care should be the responsibility of all public sector bodies.
- We want these bodies to understand and develop their responsibilities towards care-experienced children and young people, and to ensure they have the same life chances as all children living in Wales.



Why a Charter? What’s it for?

- A Charter is a set of principles and promises. This Charter has been developed in collaboration with care-experienced young people.
- This Charter is a set of promises that can be adopted by any public sector body when engaging with care-experienced children and young people.
- It also sets out shared principles that all bodies and their leaders should follow when providing services to care-experienced children and young people.
- We want all public sector bodies and senior leaders to sign up to this Charter as a good Corporate Parent. This Charter is not exclusive to local authorities and public bodies, and we would welcome any members of the third sector and private sector to sign up and become a Corporate Parent.
- The development of this Charter takes into account the overarching duties laid out in Part 2, General Functions of the Social Services and Well-being (Wales) Act 2014. Specifically, that a person exercising functions in relation to an individual for example a looked after child must have regard to the characteristics, culture and beliefs of the individual (including, for example, language). www.law.gov.wales/social-services-and-well-being-wales-act-2014-further-legislation-codes-and-guidance-made-under-act
- The Social Services and Well-being (Wales) Act 2014, Part 6 Code of Practice (Looked After and Accommodated Children) will be revised to include additional guidance on the Charter. The updated Code of Practice will be published in 2024 and Charter will be reviewed as part of this process.

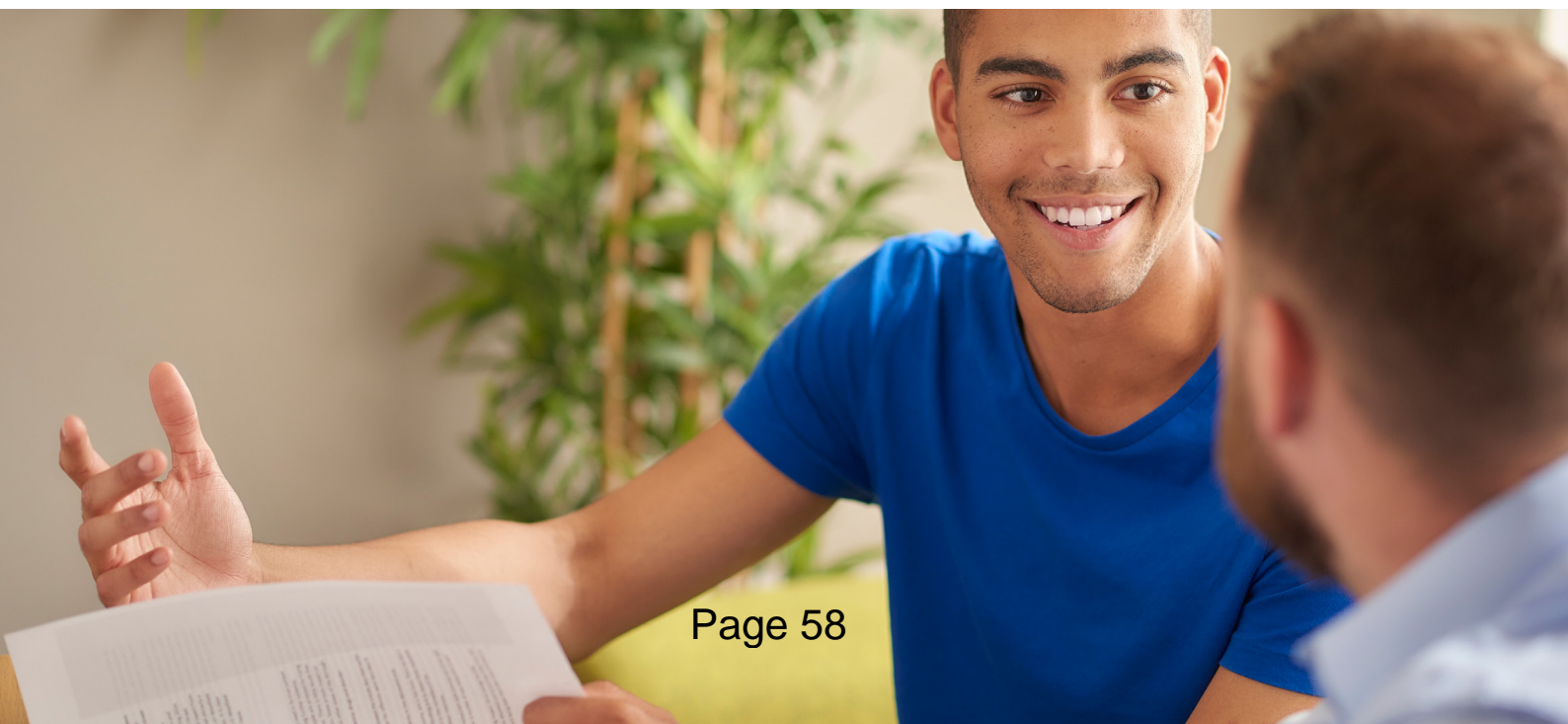
Which kind of public sector body, public service or professionals do we mean?

This charter is for any public sector body or individual who engages with or is responsible for care-experienced children and young people to adopt. For example:

- Politicians – Welsh Ministers, Members of the Senedd, (**United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child, Article 4**).
- Independent Bodies – The Children’s Commissioner, The Future Generations Commissioner and The Welsh Language Commissioner.
- Local Authorities – councillors, chief executives, directors of social services, local authority commissioners and procurement teams, housing and education, Foster Wales and National Adoption Service.
- Local Health Boards.
- NHS Trusts.
- Regional Partnership Boards.
- Social Care Providers – Local authorities, residential children’s homes and independent foster agencies.
- Social Care Professionals and practitioners – social workers, Independent Reviewing Officers (IROs), personal advisers, youth and support workers, residential children’s home staff, foster carers, kinship carers and adoptive parents.
- Housing Providers – housing associations.
- Education – schools, governors, universities, colleges and Qualifications Wales.
- Transport for Wales.
- Third Sector Organisations and voluntary adoption agencies or services.
- Inspectorates – Care Inspectorate Wales (CIW), Estyn and Health Inspectorate Wales (HIW).
- Cafcass Cymru.
- Department for Work and Pensions.
- Police – youth justice teams and those supporting individuals in custody.
- Employers/Apprenticeship/Traineeship providers.
- Other public bodies: National Resources Wales, National Park Authorities, The Arts Council of Wales, Sport Wales, National Library of Wales and National Museum of Wales. (**As listed in Section 6 of the Wales Future Generations Act 2015**).

Shared Principles for Corporate Parents

- **Equality** – We will support care-experienced children and young people to have the same life chances as every other young person in Wales. This is because all children have rights, no matter who they are (Article 1. UNCRC)
- **Eradicate Stigma** – We will recognise care-experienced children and young people for who they are, not just by their experience of being in care. This is because all children have a right not to be discriminated against (Article 2)
- **Togetherness** – We will work alongside care-experienced children and young people to ensure their views, feelings and ideas are integral to, influence and inform the services they receive and the way they receive those services. This is because all children have a right to be listened to and taken seriously (Article 12).
- **Support** – We will ensure professionals working with care-experienced young people understand their care experiences children and young people’s needs and/or have access to information an training.
- **Ambition** – We will ensure every care-experienced child and young person reaches their potential and can enjoy a wide experience of leisure, cultural, sport and social activities. This is because all children have a right to be the best they can be (Article 3 and 29) and have the right to relax and play (Article 31).
- **Nurture** – We will make all care-experienced children and young people feel valued, respected, cared for and loved. This is because all children have a right to be safe and protected from harm (Article 19) and because all children who are not living with their families should be checked on regularly to make sure they are okay (Article 25).
- **Good Health** – We will provide support to access the right health care and advice needed to support the best physical, mental health and general well-being for all care-experienced children and young people. This is because all children have the right to the best possible health and support (Article 24 and 39).
- **A Stable Home** – We will seek out and provide stable places to live that are right for all care-experienced children and young people. This is because all children have a right to special protection if they don’t live with their family (Article 20). This is because any adoption must be overseen by Government to make it supports the young person in their growth and development, is lawful and that it prioritises children’s best interests (Article 21).



- **A Good Education** – We will provide opportunities and support for all care-experienced children and young people to learn/develop and help them become who they want to be. This is because all children have a right to an education (Article 28 and 29).
- **Thrive** – We will ensure all care-experienced children and young people are prepared for the future and are able to make positive choices for independent living and adulthood. This is because all children have a right to reach their potential (Article 3 and 29).
- **Lifelong** – We will work to provide access to and raise awareness of the support and information available after leaving care. This is because adults have a duty to act in children's best interests (Article 3).

Our Promises as Corporate Parents

Set out below are the promises all Corporate Parents should fulfil when working with care-experienced children and young people:

- We will take time to listen to all care-experienced children and young people and ensure their views, wishes and feelings are heard and actively considered in all decisions made about them.
- We will treat all care-experienced children and young people with respect.
- We will involve all care-experienced children and young people in decisions that are made about them.
- We will keep all care-experienced children and young people informed about our involvement with them and explain our actions to them.
- We will use straightforward language when we communicate with all care-experienced children and young people.
- We will show compassion when considering the needs of all care-experienced children and young people.
- We will work with all care-experienced children and young people to help them achieve their goals.
- We will advise all care-experienced children and young people of the process to make a complaint should they feel we are not adhering to this charter.
- We will advise all care-experienced children and young people that they have a right to access independent advocacy to make sure their views, wishes and feelings are heard during decisions being made or when they are unhappy and want something stopped, started or changed.



References

Reference	Description
UNCRC Article 2	The Convention applies to everyone whatever their race, religion, abilities, whatever they think or say and whatever type of family they come from.
UNCRC Article 4	Governments should make these rights available to children.
UNCRC Article 12	Respect for children's views. Children have the right to give their opinions freely on issues that affect them. Adults should listen and take children seriously.
UNCRC Article 19	Governments should ensure that children are properly cared for, and protect them from violence, abuse and neglect by their parents or anyone else who looks after them.
UNCRC Article 20	Children who cannot be looked after by their own family must be looked after properly, by people who respect their religion, culture and language.
UNCRC Article 21	Adoption. Government must oversee the process of adoption to make sure it is safe, lawful and that it prioritises children's best interests.
UNCRC Article 24	Children have the right to good quality health care and to clean water, nutritious food and a clean environment so that they will stay healthy. Rich countries should help poorer countries achieve this.
UNCRC Article 25	(Review of treatment in care). If a child has been placed away from home for the purpose of care or protection (for example with a foster family or in a hospital they have a right to a regular review of their treatment, the way they are cared for and their wider circumstances.
UNCRC Article 28	Children have a right to an education. Discipline in schools should respect children's human dignity. Primary education should be free. Wealthy countries should help poorer countries achieve this.
UNCRC Article 29	Education should develop each child's personality and talents to the full. It should encourage children to respect their parents, their own and other cultures and the environment.
UNCRC Article 31	All children have a right to relax and play, and to join in a wide range of activities.
UNCRC Article 39	Children who have been neglected or abused should receive special help to restore their self-respect.

UNCRC

The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) is an international agreement that protects the human rights of children up to the age of 18. It recognises not only their basic human rights but gives them additional rights to protect them from harm as one of the most vulnerable groups in society. In 2011 the Welsh Government made the UNCRC law in Wales, with the Rights of Children and Young Persons (Wales) Measure 2011. The Measure places a duty on Welsh Ministers to have a due regard to the UNCRC and its Optional Protocols when making their decisions. Altogether there are 54 articles in the convention. Articles 1-42 set out how children should be treated.

For further information on the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child please visit: The Welsh Government's UNCRC website [Children's rights | Sub-topic | GOV.WALES](#).

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WORK PROGRAMME CORPORATE PARENTING ADVISORY COMMITTEE 2024 -2025– v.2

Topic type	Agenda Item	Agenda topic	Description	Responsible Service Area and Additional Invitees
Committee Date: March 2024				
Celebrating Success	1.	Bright Sparks Awards Update	Comprehensive presentation updating the Committee on the Bright Sparks Awards. Members will hear from a young person about why the group is special to her	Children’s Services
	2.	Book reading and signing	Members will hear from a young person who has recently published and illustrated a book. The author will sign the book and will be presented to the authority.	Children’s Services
	3.	Forward Work Programme	Members will be asked to discuss the Welsh Government’s Corporate Parenting Charter and how this can be incorporated into the CPAC Operational Plan and Forward Work Programme	Children’s Services and CPAC Members
Performance management	4.	To receive draft annual report for the Corporate Parenting Advisory Committee	To receive the draft annual report covering the Committees work from March 2022- March 2023.	Children’s Services

Topic type	Agenda Item	Agenda topic	Description	Responsible Service Area and Additional Invitees
Committee Date: June 2023				

A comfortable safe and stable home whilst in care and after	1.			
	2.			
	3.			
	4.	Voices from Care Cymru Update	Update on the National Summit	VFCC
	5.	Residential Homes Annual Report Update	To receive a update on the Residential provision for children in Cardiff	Children's Services
Performance management	6.	CLA Performance Dashboard Q1 of 2024-2025	To receive an update on the progress of Looked After Children and to make any observations or comments	Childrens Services, Education, Health, Youth Justice Service

Topic type	Agenda Item	Agenda topic	Description	Responsible Service Area and Additional Invitees
Committee Date: October 2023				
Emotional Health and Wellbeing	1.			
	2.			
	3.			
	4.			
	5.			
	6.			
Performance Management	7.			
	8.			

Topic type	Agenda Item	Agenda topic	Description	Responsible Service Area and Additional Invitees
Committee Date: January 2024				
Educational Achievement	1.	Annual Education – Performance of Cardiff looked after children report 2023- 2024	To receive the Education report for looked after children and to comment, seek clarification or raise questions on the information received.	Education Directorate
	2.	Mentoring Scheme Report	Overview of the Mentoring Scheme pilot whereby volunteers of Authority employees will work with a small cohort of young people in supported lodgings	Children’s Services
	3.			
	4.			
	5.			
	6.			
	7.			
Performance Management	8.	CLA Performance Dashboard	To receive an update on the progress of Looked After Children and to make any observations or comments	Childrens Services, Education, Health, Youth Justice Service

Topic type	Agenda Item	Agenda topic	Description	Responsible Service Area and Additional Invitees
Committee Date: March 2025				
	1.			

Better Connections & Improved Relationships	2.			Children's Services
	3.			
	4.			
Performance Management	5.			
	6.			
	7.	Annual Corporate Parenting Advisory Committee Report	To give an overview of the work of the committee in 2024-2025	Children's Services
	8.	Forward Work Plan for 2025-2026	For the Committee to agree the forward work plan and programme for 2025-2026	CPAC

**CORPORATE PARENTING
ADVISORY COMMITTEE**

11 March 2024

REPORT OF THE DIRECTOR, CHILDRENS SERVICES

MEMBER VISIT PROGRAMME

Reasons for the report

1. This report sets out a programme of activity that will help the Committee to find out about the services and organisations that support care experienced young people in Cardiff.
2. The proposed members visits outlined in **Appendix 1** have been developed to show the Children Services teams and other services within and outside of the local authority that support care experienced young people.

Background

3. To ensure members of the Corporate Parenting Advisory Committee gain a wider understanding of the services and organisations the proposed Members visits focuses on those services in line with the following 5 priorities of the Corporate Parenting Plan:
 - Priority 1: Improving emotional well-being and physical health
 - Priority 2: Better connections, improved relationships
 - Priority 3: A comfortable safe stable home whilst in care and after
 - Priority 4: Educational achievement, employment and training
 - Priority 5: Celebrating our children and young people

Issues

4. The members visits will provide an opportunity for members of the Committee to meet the staff and teams that support young people. Some of the visits will also provide an opportunity to hear directly from the children and young people. It is proposed that the members who undertake the visits will then provide an update to the rest of the Committee.
5. To ensure that an open discussion can take place it is proposed that some of the visits to smaller establishments are limited to two members of the Committee per

member visit. The visits will be organised and facilitated by the Corporate Parenting Officer.

6. **Appendix 1** sets out proposed dates, times and venues for the members visits with a short description of the services. These proposed times have been agreed by the organisation and service area but can be amended to work around the commitments of members of the Committee.
7. Additional visits can be set up on request if there are other services or provisions members would like to find out more about. The work programme will then be amended to reflect this change.

Financial Implications

8. In the event of there being costs arising as a result of the visit programme then this will need to be managed within the existing budgetary allocations for Member expenses thus effective communication needs to take place with Member Services.

Legal Implications

9. There are no legal implications arising from this report

RECOMMENDATION

10. To note the programme of visits as outlined **Appendix 1** and indicate any expressions of interest in attending any of the visits contained within the programme.
11. To identify any other appropriate and relevant services or organisations to be included within the member visit programme that would benefit the committee in carrying out their role.

DEBORAH DRIFFIELD
Director, Childrens Services
26 February 2024

Appendix 1– Member Visit Programme

Members Visits Programme

Service Area	Description	Proposed Date & Venue	Member Visiting
ENFYYS	Enfys is an NHS based service within Child Psychology. Meet the team of clinical psychologists, graduate mental health workers, trainee clinical psychologists and an occupational therapist to find out about the support provided	Enfys Tuesday Mornings 9.00 – 10.00 Woodlands House, Maes-y-Coed Road, Cardiff, CF14 4TT	
Crosslands	Meeting staff at the home	Tuesdays or Thursdays at times to be agreed	
Cardiff Youth Justice Team/Service	Opportunity to meet and view the re-decoration of the centre, undertaken by some of the young people	John Kane Centre, 213a North Road, Cardiff CF14 3GH	
Into Work Service/Bright Start Apprenticeship Programme	Meet with staff and young people to hear about their experiences	1,14, 15, 18, 21 March	
Fostering Events	Meeting families, carers and young people at a 'Cuppa & Catch up' support group	Quarterly event held at Mercure Cardiff North Hotel	
St Teilo's High School	Meeting teaching staff and children and young people at the school	Term time dates to suit members	
Tŷ Storrie Childrens Home	Meeting children and young people aged between 6 and 17 with disabilities and complex needs	Any Monday or Wednesday at a time to suit members	

Youth Service	Opportunity to meet with CLA Youth Mentors and discuss the work being delivered by Cardiff Youth Service to support CLA	Wednesday and Thursday throughout March	
Virtual School	Discussion with the Virtual Headteacher and staff within the virtual school to provide information and context regarding the work they do with CLA	Tuesday, Thursday and Friday afternoons	