

CORPORATE PARENTING ADVISORY COMMITTEE

24 APRIL 2018

Present: Councillor Merry(Chairperson)
Councillors Hinchey, Jenkins, Lister, Molik, Walker and Weaver

94 : APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies were received from Councillor Lent.

The Chairperson welcomed Jessica Brown in her capacity as one of the representatives for young people and Advisor.

95 : DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

None received.

96 : MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting held on 16 January 2018 were approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairperson.

97 : BRIGHT START TRAINEESHIP SCHEME

The Chairperson welcomed Nicola Wood (Looked After Children Traineeship Coordinator) to the meeting. Members were provided with a presentation on the Bright Start Traineeship Scheme, which covered the following points:

- What is the scheme?
- How does it work?
- Training and Support
- Benefits for young people

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

- Members asked whether there had been engagement with the Youth Service, and were advised that a meeting took place last week between Bright Start and the manager of the Youth Service. Youth mentors have also come and done a workshop with Bright Start.
- Members noted that it would be good to extend the scope of the service to provide young people with opportunities in areas such as engineering and building, and were advised that training can be provided to external companies, and that Bright Start are currently working with Admiral who are keen to mentor young people.
- Members asked what ages the young people are who are referred to the scheme and how many opportunities there are, and were informed that the

children are mainly between the ages of 16-21, and that there are currently around 25 traineeships. There are 20 young people on a waiting list for a traineeship at the moment and it is important to match opportunities with an individual.

- Members also queried how the process works in conjunction with Social Workers and were advised that Bright Start liaise with the Social Worker of the young person and have access to their risk assessments.
- Members asked whether the link-up on Procurement with Kier is strong enough and were informed that the team are working on this, and on raising awareness for different services to offer placements. For example, the Council has 700 different departments, any of whom could offer a placement. External providers are also keen to work with the scheme. Members noted that there is an opportunity for real living wage procurement suppliers to follow this model.
- Members were informed that the length of placements can vary between 2 weeks up to 8 months in some cases, and that some feed into a corporate apprenticeship role. Most placements are for 3 months, but all placements are reviewed on a monthly basis. At the moment only 2% of traineeships lead to a permanent job, but often the placement is a stepping stone to paid employment elsewhere.
- Members queried whether feedback sessions take place and were advised that feedback is received via focus groups and the NYAS participation group.

Members were informed that the Council continues to receive funding from the Welsh Government (WG) and they have chosen to spend the grant on this scheme. As well as this, a proportion of the St David's Day fund is spent on the traineeships. There is sufficient money in the grants to expand the members of the team and thus expand support to young people up to the age of 25.

98 : PERFORMANCE OF CARDIFF LOOKED AFTER CHILDREN 2016-2017

Gillian James (Achievement Leader, Closing the Gap) provided Members with an overview of the report on the Performance of Cardiff Looked After Children 2016-17, in which she explained that there have been some improvements, but overall the results for Looked After Children remain too low when compared with their peers.

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

- Members noted that Key Stage 4 is a concern, with a higher percentage of looked after children being educated outside of Cardiff and none of the cohort achieving the L2+ threshold. Members were informed that it was a complex cohort; 81% of children had Special Educational Needs (SEN) and 25% had become Looked After within the last two years.
- Members asked what support is given to looked after children and what progression has been made. Officers explained that there is a virtual tracker for looked after children, which contains a profile of the child, their history of

placements and test results. Information is also gathered from *Care First*, to keep the information up-to-date. The names of looked after children are given to Challenge Advisors in schools on a termly basis, who then follow-up if a child is not progressing. Education now have better communication with Children's Services, and have also provided training to School Governor's. The Committee noted that they would like a presentation on the virtual tracker at a future meeting.

- Members were informed that Education are working with other teams to see how they can help looked after children, as it is an issue that impacts lots of areas.
- They will also be working with partners such as Admiral, where graduates will become mentors for some looked after children, and with Full Circle on a six week mentoring programme, which if successful, will be rolled out across Cardiff. University College London have worked with seven schools in Cardiff, researching what works for looked after children. Updates on these projects will be provided to the Committee in future.
- Members asked why there are so many out of county placements, and were informed that the main issue is the lack of foster carers.
- Members noted that the term 'out of county' can be misleading, as some areas of the Vale of Glamorgan are very close to Cardiff for example, and it would be best to strategically bring children closer to home which would cut costs. Officers agreed, but said there is still a lot of work to do with neighbouring authorities and that the best place for children is in Cardiff schools.
- Points 18 and 19 of the report discuss analysing the lack of achievement at KS4 and benchmarking performance against English and Welsh authorities. Members asked whether these findings will be presented to the Committee in future, and were advised that while some of the data may be difficult to obtain, progress will be reported on at the autumn meeting.
- Members highlighted St Teilo's C.W. High School as being a good role model and asked whether there is a case to make certain schools specialists in catering for the needs of looked after children. Officers explained that children should have a choice of which school to attend, and that the aim should be to bring all schools up to the same level as St Teilo's. Members are welcome to visit St Teilo's to see the work they do.

RESOLVED: to note the content of the report.

99 : WORK PROGRAMME UPDATE/MEMBER VISITS

Members provided the Committee with updates on their work programmes as follows:

- On the topic of Prevention, Cllr Molik informed the Committee that she has met with Jan Coles, and found it useful to learn more about her role. They discussed the importance of involving School Governors. She also met with

Sarah Woelk, Dan Jones and Alys Jones, but has yet to visit ARC or MASH as dates for a visit haven't been offered.

- Cllr Hinchey updated the Committee on work involving the experience of LAC and outcomes. Around 20 Managers attended a meeting around promoting permanency. The number of Foster Carers still needs to be increased but positive feedback has been received regarding the Council Tax Reduction Scheme. A discussion also took place with Officers around creating more permanent homes in Cardiff. Overall things are progressing well and a plan will be brought to the next meeting.
- Cllr Lent sent her apologies to the meeting, so an update on Specialist Services will be provided at a future meeting.
- Cllr Walker informed the Committee that a session took place around improving the education attainment and achievement for LAC. It was a well-attended and successful session. He added that sharing between schools should be done on a systematic basis. Scotland are doing good things in this area, and it would be good to hear about this at a future meeting.
- Cllr Lister updated the Committee on the work around Corporate Parenting within the Council. He advised that he has written to David Melding AM (Chair of Ministerial Advisory Group) but has not yet had a response. In terms of communication, a newsletter could be sent across the service (including Members) with case studies so that people can be kept up-to-date on the work that is being done. He also highlighted that only a third of Members have completed the essential Corporate Parenting training.

Following these updates a discussion took place to identify the next steps.

RESOLVED:

- That Members will update their Work Plans.
- To plan a schedule of visits to St Teilo's, Rumney Primary School, Crosslands, MASH and ARC.
- That Members will raise awareness of training through Whips.

100 : DISCUSSION ITEM: DRAFT ANNUAL REPORT 2017-2018

Members discussed the option of delaying the submission of the Draft Annual Report to Council until September 2018. It was noted that the report could include Work Plans going forward and that there are lots of outstanding actions that are currently being dealt with. Overall the report needs to be an accurate reflection on the work done by the Committee.

RESOLVED: That the Chairperson liaise with lead Members regarding Work Plans and to agree via email whether or not to delay the Annual Report.

101 : DISCUSSION ITEM: FOSTERING FORTNIGHT (14 - 25 MAY 2018)

Debbie Martin-Jones (Operational Manager, Specialist Services) provided members with information on the upcoming Fostering Fortnight (14-25 May 2018), which aims to promote fostering in Cardiff. Members were advised that various events will be taking place including a display in County Hall reception one day of each of the two weeks, a radio advert on Capital Radio and the launch of a focus group. Merchandise can be made available and that Members are welcome to get involved.

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

- Members noted that it would be good to get support from MP's and AM's and to use social media to promote the event. Officers advised that there will be lots of social media activity.
- Members noted that there could be a stand at Full Council in May.
- Members commented that it would be good to have a roadshow at schools in the future.
- Members were advised that there will be a re-launch of the Foster Carers' Charter during the fortnight, and Members were invited to be involved.

102 : BRIEFING REPORTS

The various briefing reports were noted by the Committee.

103 : QUARTER 3 PERFORMANCE REPORT

Members were provided with Children's Services Performance Overview for Quarter 3 2017/18.

Members noted that the Corporate Parenting Advisory Committee's Terms of Reference require the Committee to ensure performance monitoring systems are in place, and regularly review performance data to ensure sustained performance improvements in outcomes for Looked After Children, Children in Need and care leavers.

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

- Members asked what the main things to be concerned about are and were advised that there is an increase in the number of Look After Children (although this was projected), a dip in performance of Looked After reviews and an increase in Social Worker vacancies, although new posts have been created and internal transfers have taken place, so this figure is not as bad as it first seems. All of these concerns were anticipated.
- Members were informed that Children's Services sickness and absence is on target.

- Members were advised that overall there are no worrying statistics in the report. Outstanding assessments are monitored on a weekly basis and manager intervention occurs when necessary. There were some delays in convening child protection conferences to allow for Officers to attend Signs of Safety training.

RESOLVED: to note the content of the report.

104 : QUARTER 3 COMPLAINTS & COMPLIMENTS REPORT

Information Report.

RESOLVED: To note the content of the report.

105 : REGULATION 32 REPORTS: CROSSLANDS

Information Report. The item was not for publication in accordance with paragraph(s) 12 of parts(s) 4 and 5 of schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972.

RESOLVED:

- To exclude the public for consideration of the report.

To note the content of the report.

106 : REGULATION 32 REPORTS: TY STORRIE

Information Report. The item was not for publication in accordance with paragraph(s) 12 of parts(s) 4 and 5 of schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972.

RESOLVED:

- To exclude the public for consideration of the report.

To note the content of the report.

107 : DATE OF NEXT MEETING

The next scheduled meeting of the Corporate Parenting Advisory Committee is on Tuesday 17th July at 2:00 pm in Committee Room 4.