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Date 17 July 2015

My Ref SS/CYP/MJH
Your Ref:

Councillor Sue Lent
Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Families, Children and Early Years
County Hall
Atlantic Wharf
CARDIFF
CF10 4UW

Dear Sue

Thank you for attending Children and Young People Scrutiny Committee on 14 July 2015 to help introduce the **Social Services and Well Being Act (Wales) 2014 progress report** and **Corporate Parenting Advisor Committee report**. I would also like to thank Tony Young and Nichola Poole for their full and honest answers that were provided at the meeting. During the consideration of the reports and answers to Members' questions, the Committee identified a number of comments concerns and recommendations which they asked me to write to you.

Social Services and Well Being Act – Progress Report

The Committee welcomed the opportunity to be briefed on the work being undertaken in implementing the regulations and guidance issued by the Welsh Government. Members fully appreciated the vast amount of work that has been undertaken to complete the self assessment tool kit across Cardiff Council, the Vale of Glamorgan, and Cardiff & Vale University Health Board. Members were also pleased to note that it has become apparent that the Welsh Government was allowing some flexibility in the timescales included in the Guidance.

The Members did however question, why, in the completed form, there was some insufficient or poor evidence available to make an assessment. Members noted that these were composite assessment; however the Committee requested that, for Children's Services data, the data should be disaggregated across the three organisations, so that the Committee can assess Cardiff Council's input and seek to investigate further.

Members also expressed some concern that the Governance arrangements indicated in the Act and Guidance did not include the Scrutiny of the Integrated Health and Social Care Partnership Governance Board. Members felt that was a clear deficiency in the Governance arrangements, and Members recommended that this must be reported back to the Welsh Government as part of the consultation exercises.

Finally Members expressed some concern that the Welsh Government were indicating that the implementation of the Act's regulations would be cost neutral. The Committee requested that the resource implications must be included as part of the regular monitoring reports, presented to this Committee.

CORPORATE PARENTING ADVISORY COMMITTEE

The Committee welcomed the presentation of the work of the Committee noted the overview of the work undertaken from October 2014 to April 2015, and that its first full Annual Report will be produced in April or May 2016.

The Members commented that the Committee had not been embedded into the normal democratic process, in particular, the publication of committee meetings and their agendas, however the Committee was pleased to hear that the Director was addressing this with the Director Governance and Legal Services. The Committee considered that the timely publication of Committee agendas and papers was crucial to highlighting the Council's corporate parenting responsibilities. The Members also suggested that the report should be presented to Council as soon as possible, to enable all Council members to be made aware of the work that has been undertaken by the Committee.

The Committee also requested that the agenda for all future Corporate Parenting Advisory Committee meetings should be sent to Martyn Hutchings, Scrutiny Services, so that he can ensure that the members are aware of each meeting.

I hope that these comments, advice and recommendations, detailed above will be of use and support in improving outcomes for children in need and corporate parenting. The Committee looks forward to receiving the requested information listed above together with a positive response to this letter within the next month.

To recap, this letter requests several actions, requests for information and recommendations, as follows and requires a response:

- Disaggregated the self assessment data, across the three organisations, so that the Committee can assess Cardiff Council's input and seek to investigate further;
- Members recommended that the lack of scrutiny arrangements of the Board must be reported back to the Welsh Government;
- that the resource implications of the Act on Children's Service, must be included as part of the regular monitoring reports, presented to this Committee;
- that the Corporate Parenting Advisory Committee report should be presented to Council, as soon as possible.
- That the agenda for all future Corporate Parenting Advisory Committee meetings should be sent to members of the Children & Young People Scrutiny Committee.

Yours sincerely

COUNTY COUNCILLOR RICHARD COOK
Chairperson – Children and Young People Scrutiny Committee

CC: Tony Young, Director of Children's Services
Nichola Poole, Regional Lead, Sustainable Social Services
Melanie Jackson - Personal Assistant to Deputy Leader