

CORPORATE PARENTING ADVISORY COMMITTEE

17 DECEMBER 2014

Present Councillor Susan Lent, Deputy Leader, Cabinet Member Early Years, Children and Families, (Chairperson);
Councillors Jonathan Evans; Heather Joyce; Eleanor Sanders and Susan White

Also: Tony Young (Director of Children's Services); Debbie Martin Jones (Operational Manager Looked After Children); Marie Rosenthal – County Clerk and Monitoring Officer; Gillian James (Achievement Leader, Closing the Gaps, Education); Bethan Davis (Complaints Manager, Children's Services) and Karen Wilkinson (CPAC Panel Administrator)

1 : APOLOGIES

Apologies were received from Councillor Julia Magill – Cabinet Member Education & Skills; Councillor Daniel De'Ath – Cabinet Member Safety, Engagement & Democracy; and Councillor Susan Goddard

2 : MEMBERSHIP

The Council at its meetings on 23 October and 27 November 2014 appointed Councillors McEvoy and White as Members of the Corporate Parenting Advisory Committee.

The Chair welcomed Councillor Susan White to her first meeting.

The Chair advised that unfortunately Councillor McEvoy was unable to commit to attending day time meetings and would not be taking up his place on the Committee. There remained therefore one Opposition Party (Liberal Democrat) vacancy on the Committee.

3 : MINUTES

RESOLVED – That the minutes of the meeting of the Corporate Parenting Advisory Committee on 8 October 2014 were approved as a correct record.

4 : COMPLAINTS AND COMPLIMENTS

Bethan Davis Complaints Officer Children's Services was in attendance to present the Social Services Representations and Complaints Annual Report April 13-March 14.

The Committee received a presentation on Managing Social Services Complaints proposal to amalgamate Adults and Childrens into a single complaints function and on the Quarterly Complaints Reporting process. The Officer explained that she had worked in Child Protection for 30 years giving her the necessary background to meet with complainants and address issues and explained the Complaints process, from Stage 1 – 2. She also mentioned the proposal to amalgamate Adults and Childrens complaints into

a single function. The Director of Children's Services, Tony Young added that these proposals would give a stronger handle on complaints, giving more capacity. There were staffing issues that need to be addressed ensuring staff are on the correct grade but it has been agreed in principal. In addition the Director advised that there was also an Ombudsman enquiry ongoing regarding an adoption case and a report was expected in April on this.

The Officer explained that she also records compliments about the service and processes Subject Access to Records requests (SAR's) where people can request their own information data files held when they were in the Authority's care.

Members were invited to ask questions and Councillor Sanders began by making reference to the Annual report Section 11 'Learning from Complaints' and asked what is the learning process and feedback loop? An action plan is agreed with relevant managers, information is gathered and preventing that kind of situation and ensuring it can't happen again is key. Councillor Evans made ref to section 9.1 Analysis of Complaints that the increase in complaints for this period could also be seen as being deterioration in service. Are there measures of service user satisfaction in place? Director Children's Services, Tony Young pondered are complaints about the service a good or bad thing? He believed that it was a good thing if it results in service improvements. If there are recurring patterns in complaints or a theme around a particular team or service changes would be made, but he acknowledged that transparency could be improved around communicating them. Discussion followed regarding Councillor and MP Enquiries and moved on to capturing Compliments about the service. Councillor Lent Deputy Leader & Chair asked how many complaints regarding children with disabilities and was advised that there had been three in total and provided the detail surrounding each. County Clerk and Monitoring Officer, Marie Rosenthal mentioned that previously in Capital Times there has been a feature on "A Day in the life of..." particular officers to share understanding of that role. It was suggested that perhaps this could be arranged with the Press Office with the Officer which she was in agreement with.

Councillor Susan Lent Deputy Leader & Chair thanked the Director and Officer for attending and for her presentation today.

5 : _REGULATION 32 REPORT - Crosslands Childrens Home

This item is not for publication by virtue of paragraph 12 of Part 4 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972 as amended and pursuant to Paragraph 21 of part 5 of schedule 12A. It was RESOLVED that the public be excluded for consideration of this item.

Debbie Martin-Jones Operational Manager Looked After Children was in attendance to present this item.

The meeting was "closed" to review this confidential information regarding residents at the Children's home.

6 : PERFORMANCE OF LOOKED AFTER CHILDREN IN CARDIFF

Gillian James, Achievement & Partnerships Team Leader was in attendance to present this report of the Director of Education and Lifelong Learning. The Officer explained that she began in post in September 2014 and was keen to account that the way the data is extracted is not consistent. Discussion followed regarding the concept of a virtual school and tracking progress on a termly basis. The officer detailed the Multi Agency Group meetings that take place where issues like Looking at Barriers to progress, standards should improve performance and journey of LAC. It was explained that at the next meeting we are determined to return with more specific data to report on. The PEP plan document has been redesigned and briefing sessions planned on this.

Director Children's Services Tony Young went on to detail that recently joint management meetings have taken place between Children's Services and Education and there is a real sense of common agenda and shared work. Supporting LAC to do well academically and otherwise, encouraged better place. The Committee Members made observations that the report was quite difficult to understand, the format layout and abbreviations. The acronyms need to be either explained or left out.

Gillian James agreed to feed this back to make changes to the 2016 data. It would be useful to see the performance of LAC. It was agreed that Gillian would send Karen Wilkinson, Committee Administrator, the Cardiff averages to distribute to the Committee.

Councillor White asked have we asked the children themselves what they think they could improve on for example could the Bright Sparks achievers talk to other children and young people to inspire others. Debbie Martin-Jones mentioned peer mentoring to the Committee and how this could be formalised and acknowledged that there are many inspiring young people. Tony Young went to respond to Councillor White's view by saying the performance of LAC include the results by that child and their schooling but also about how we work supporting them in the care system. What may be useful is an insight into a child's journey in school, a rounded and balanced report which integrates data and insight into young people. Gillian suggested that this piece of work could be tabled at a joint management meeting for Children's Services and Education. Councillor Evans went on to say that for him the idea of a virtual school presents problems as if the child has to move school twice in one year, tracking their individual progress can be tricky. He asked when did the officer think she would be able to present the data in a usable form? The officer confirmed by the next school year in Sept 2015 it should be in place. It's a very difficult piece of work but no reason to delay it and there is a focus group committed to delivering on this. Discussion followed around attendance of LAC and Debbie Martin-Jones commented that as a result of attendance being focused on, the attendance of LAC in some Primary schools in Cardiff is better than for non LAC. Debbie went on to explain about the schedule of visits set up with schools how they support LAC. Councillor Lent Deputy Leader and Chair asked are the exclusion rates as high now in Cardiff as they were? Debbie responded by informing the Committee that a LAC has not been permanently excluded for 3 years. Gillian offered to bring Fixed Term data to the next meeting to further quantify on these matters.

RESOLVED - That Gillian James, Achievement & Partnerships Team Leader, Education and Lifelong Learning send Karen Wilkinson average performance data for distribution to the Committee and to bring Fixed term data to the next Committee meeting in Feb 2015.

7 : COMMITTEE MEMBERS INDUCTION PROGRAMME

Councillor Lent Deputy Leader and Chair stated that it's important that all members of the Committee have an induction. Director of Children's Services, Tony Young advised the Committee that an initial Workshop would cover the initial training where Members would expect to focus on documents such as If this Were My Child; case material is to be examined; discuss the role of the Members as Corporate Parents and particularly championing role and particularly an opportunity for Members to sponsor all different types of roles. Members discussed ideas such as a visit to Crosslands; meeting with the new advocacy providers; engagement with young people; shadowing and visiting front line teams to get a feel and appreciation; sponsoring Member development beyond the boundaries of the Committee.

Marie Rosenthal advised that the Committee was obliged to report to Cabinet twice a year and to full Council and this would be a very good opportunity to cover this. Discussion followed regarding using the time slot for the next meeting in Feb to hold the workshop, or to run the meeting as normal then follow on the afternoon with the Workshop or if this would be too laborious in one day for all members. Councillor Lent Deputy Leader and Chair was keen to proceed as soon as possible.

RESOLVED - That the Director Children's Services, Tony Young and Councillor Susan Lent Deputy Leader & Chair to have a conversation off line and put proposals forward.

8 : LISTENING EVENT – LOOKED AFTER CHILDREN MARCH 2014. Cabinet Response to a Report of the Children and Young People Scrutiny Committee

The Committee noted that the recommendations were accepted by Cabinet. Councillor Evans and Councillor Lent Deputy Leader and Chair both attended this event and commented how good it was and discussion around more workshops like that and other ways of involving young children. The Director of Children's Services, Tony Young stated that this has got to be a key part of the Committees programme and that the ownership should stem from this Committee consistently and not be a burdenschap on young people. Marie Rosenthal added that as soon the Committee would be reporting into Council an annual report would be required featuring this. Debbie Martin-Jones added that a group of handpicked children could be brought along and questions such as what did you have or not have to get you where you are.

RESOLVED – That a specific agenda item be scheduled for a future meeting. It could be combined with a presentation from NYAS – National Youth Advisory Service who facilitated these previous events.

9 : NEXT STEPS

Members considered the Committee's work programme and proposed agenda for future meetings.

It was suggested to add Advocacy Report on NYAS to February meeting plan.

Marie Rosenthal suggested at April's meeting a discussion around the Committees Annual Report and format so that it could go before the July Council. In addition the importance of developing a Protocol for Members on Child Protection matters.

Councillor Evans suggested Profile of LAC and journey of Looked after population. We have an interest as a committee in who enters the system, and whether we got prevention and support right. Tony Young suggested that the recently commissioned Cordis Bright report could be presented to the Committee.

Councillor Sanders suggested an anti trafficking enquiry report as a protocol to be informed by Education and LAC linking together.

Tony Young agreed it was a great idea when a proposal to create a film to be presented to Council about this is where the Committee intends to travel with this, a short video with snatches of conversations.

It was noted that Carol Jones the newly appointed Assistant Director would be in attendance regularly to be the senior representative from Education.

10 : DATES OF FUTURE MEETINGS

The following dates and times were confirmed

11 Feb 2015 at 11am in Committee Room 4

22 April 2015 at 2.pm in Committee Room 4

16 June 2015 at 2.30pm in Committee Room 4.