

CORPORATE PARENTING ADVISORY COMMITTEE

22 SEPTEMBER 2015

Present: County Councillor Lent(Chairperson)
County Councillors Sanders, White and Merry

38 : APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Councillors Evans, Goddard and Joyce

39 : DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

No declarations were received.

40 : MINUTES

The Minutes of the 16 June 2015 were agreed as a correct record and signed by the Chairperson. The Committee also asked that updates on issues raised in the minutes be provided by the respective officers.

41 : QUARTERLY COMPLAINTS AND REPRESENTATIONS REPORT -
QUARTER 1 2015-16

The Committee received a report that covered complaints and representations from 1 April 2015 through to 30 June 2015.

New Welsh Government guidance and regulations in relation to social services complaints and representations came into being on 1 August 2014. This guidance replaced "Listening and Learning" which was introduced in 2006. The significant difference between the previous procedure and the new arrangements was the removal of the stage 3 panel. The new procedures placed the emphasis on the initial local resolution stage – Stage 1, with complainants being offered a discussion to resolve the matter. The second formal stage (Stage 2) provided for independent investigation. If the outcome of Stage 2 did not satisfy the complainant there was recourse to the Public Services Ombudsman for Wales.

The Committee noted that where the complaint related to a looked after child, a child in need or a care leaver the local authority had a duty under the Children Act 1989 to provide an advocate as required.

The Committee were informed of the summary of complaints activity during the period. 58% (26) of the complaints received were in relation to the social worker or the service received. 9% (4) of the complaints received were in relation to finance. 7% (3) of the complaints received were in relation to contact. 7 of the 45 complaints (16%) received during the quarter related to looked after children compared with 6 in Quarter 4. 20 complaints were received regarding the Child in Need Service compared with 18 in Quarter 4. The number of new complaints regarding the Intake & Assessment Service had remained the same at 11.

Members were provided with an example complaint received and resolved this quarter.

Members of the Committee were provided with information on the following:

- Independent Investigations
- Stage 3 Review Panels
- Themes emerging during the Quarter

The Committee was advised that teams were more readily sharing the compliments they received from a variety of sources e.g. service users, professional etc. All compliments were recorded electronically.

The Committee received information on the subject access request. This was a request from an individual to see a copy of the information an organisation held about them, or their children. These requests should be responded to within 40 calendar days of receipt. Children Services received 21 Subject Access Requests in Quarter 1 2015-2016. In addition to this, Children's Services received 28 requests from the Police and 3 requests from Legal Services or other Council's for access to records.

The Chairperson thanked officers for the information provided and invited Committee Members to asked questions.

The Committee was advised that Information Managers would record complaints and referred to the specific social worker for action. Unfortunately as a result of the dynamics of Children Services social workers did not have time to come back into the office to address the complaint. However, if a full response was not possible at that time an acknowledgement would be sent to the complainant. Further, new procedures were being put into place to support mobile working of social workers, which would allow them access to their emails whilst out of the office.

A Duty Worker would prepare the request, processed through a virtual white board with administrative staff providing advice on the process. This was known as interface between business support officers and social workers.

The Committee was advised that most cases preferred responses from the respective social worker. In some instances families did not have access to email, and were not in a position to receive an electronic response. Phone calls could be made but data protection procedures were in place and names could not be left on a answer phone service.

42 : REGULATIONS 32 REPORT - CONFIDENTIAL ITEM

EXCLUSION OF THE PUBLIC

RESOLVED – That the public be excluded for the following items of business by virtue of paragraph (s) 12 of Part (s) 4 and 5 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972.

The Committee noted the content of the report.

The Committee suggested inviting Siobhan Teague to a future meeting with a possible visit to the centre to be put in place.

43 : EDUCATION MATTERS - EXAM RESULTS OF LOOKED AFTER CHILDREN - REPORT TO FOLLOW

The Committee were provided with information on the report of looked after children's performance in Cardiff Schools 2014-2015.

The report provided an initial analysis of educational outcomes for the academic year 2014-2015 of Cardiff Looked After Children (LAC) in Cardiff Schools and identified the main strengths and shortcomings in performance.

The Comparative performance of LAC was addressed and the following information was noted:

- Foundation Phase Outcome Indicator – **Cardiff LAC 2015 – 75%**
- Key Stage 2 Core Subject Indicator – **Cardiff LAC 2015 – 56%**
- Key Stage 4 Level 2+ Threshold – **Cardiff LAC 2015 -15%**

The Committee noted the overall improvements in Cardiff for Key Stage 2, Key Stage 3 and Key Stage 4.

The Committee was advised that of the factors impacting on outcomes:

- Over the last year there had been a concerted effort to focus on increasing the transparency of data and a robust tracking system was now in place.
- A stronger working relationship between the local authority and the consortium was ensuring that schools receive the appropriate degree of challenge. Challenge advisers had the names of all LAC pupils so that they could challenge individual performance.
- Stronger, effective partnerships with Children's Service had ensured quicker responses to concerns and barriers impeding pupil progress.
- The progress of and provision for Looked After Children was now discussed in Team Around the School (TAS) meetings and ways forward agreed if revisions need to be made.

The Committee was advised there would be further development of Multi agency meetings (MAG) and identification of pupil's underachievement/ barriers to learning. Central staffing would also be reviewed to meet the needs of the growing complex LAC population.

The Committee was informed that all Cardiff Looked After Children educated in Cardiff or out of Cardiff were now included on the tracking system. Termly assessment data would further assist in the early identification of LAC who were achieving below age related expectations.

The Committee noted that a further update on progress would be provided at the next meeting.

Officers drew attention to the data provided and confirmed this was based on 2013 figures. A further update on this data would be provided at the next meeting.

The intention was to incorporate the data into the Corporate Parenting Strategy with detailed outcomes on achievements would be made. Additional training was being provided for School Governors in order to improve their lines of enquiry.

44 : MEMBERS VISITS - VERBAL UPDATE

Officers explained to the Committee that visits had been made by 3 Members to the 0-14 team. The Chairperson confirmed that she had made a number of others visits and would be providing feedback on the visits and the process.

Officers suggested the Committee attend visits to front line teams, possibly every six months and report feedback to the Meeting.

The Committee discussed future visits and dates and Debbie Martin-Jones agreed to co-ordinate these.

45 : DRAFT WORK PROGRAMME/FORWARD PLAN

The Committee considered the Forward Plan of matters for consideration by the Corporate Parenting Advisory Committee in 2015/16.

RESOLVED: The Committee considered the suggested work programme for 2015/16 and recommended the following topics.

- Younger Children/ Bright Sparks
- Crosslands

46 : CORPORATE PARENTING STRATEGY - UPDATE TO FOLLOW

The Committee received a verbal update on the report.

Officers advised that partnership working was taking place between Children Services and Education in order to monitor progress, especially at children in care, with complex needs. Education attainment was improving, especially in areas where children were cared in long term placements.

It was recognised there was a need for an increase in carers and foster carers, including the use of external users and agency care.

The Committee agreed for the report to be circulated to them in order to provide feedback by the 30 September 2015.

The Committee noted the timeline for delivery of strategy.

47 : DATE OF NEXT MEETING

17 November 2015.