

CORPORATE PARENTING ADVISORY COMMITTEE

22 NOVEMBER 2016

Present: County Councillor Lent (Chairperson)
County Councillors De'Ath, Goddard, Merry, Sanders and White

24 : APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Jonathan Evans and Elly Jones.

Councillor Lent had previously advised that she would be late in attending the meeting, as a consequence Cllr Merry indicated that she would take the chair in the interim.

25 : DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

No declarations of interest were received.

26 : MINUTES

The minutes of the meetings on the 19th July and 13 September 2016 were agreed as a correct record and were signed by the Chairperson.

27 : QUARTER 2 PERFORMANCE UPDATE

The Chairperson welcomed Kim Brown (Service Manager, Policy and Performance) to the meeting to present the report, the purpose of which was to enable the Committee to understand the factors that impact on outcomes for children in need and looked after children and also to enable them to consider opportunities for improving these outcomes.

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

- Members referred to the 12 offers of appointment in July and August and queried the up to date position. Officers advised that there were 4 Independent Review Officers (IRO's) posts; they would be filled by the end of December which will negate the need for agency IRO's)
- Members queried the current position in relation to the extension of the notice period for some specific staff and were advised that a report has been prepared and a meeting has been arranged with Trades Union representatives.
- Members advised that they found the presentation style of the report helpful but felt that some context in relation to some of the reviews would be of benefit. Members sought clarification from Officers as to whether or not the same report is presented to Members of the Children & Young People Scrutiny Committee. Officers advised that it is, although some extra information is provided to show changes over time.

- Following a question Members were advised that the fact that 93.8% of statutory reviews for looked after children are being conducted within the prescribed time scale is a testament to staff and has been helped by staffing levels remaining consistent. Members were also advised that currently care proceedings are being concluded within 24 weeks, this figure is the best in Wales; the target figure being 26 weeks.

RESOLVED: To note the content of the report.

28 : CORRESPONDENCE - CHILDREN & YOUNG PEOPLE SCRUTINY COMMITTEE: QUARTER 1 PERFORMANCE

This item was deferred until next meeting of the Corporate Parenting Advisory Committee.

29 : QUARTER 2 COMPLAINTS & COMPLIMENTS REPORT 2016-17

The Chairperson welcomed Kim Brown (Service Manager, Policy and Performance) to the meeting to present the report. The Quarter 2 Report covers complaints and representations from 1st July 2016 through to 30 September 2016.

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

- Members urged caution when providing examples of complaints within the body of the report to ensure that those being referred to cannot be identified.
- Members sought clarification as to why the number of complaints had increased. Officers advised that the number of complaints is generally erratic and that there is no specific reason for the rise during this quarter.

RESOLVED: To note the content of the Report

30 : WORK PROGRAMME - DISCUSSION ITEM

- Members were advised that an approach has been made to CAMHS with a view to them attending meetings in future.

Members were also advised that the Corporate Parenting Launch is due to take place in March next year, it is hoped that it will be aligned with the ARM workshop.

31 : REGIONAL ADOPTION SERVICE REPORT

The Chairperson welcomed Irfan Alam (Assistant Director, Children's Services) to the meeting to present the report, which related to the period between 1 April 2015 – 31 March 2016.

- Further to a question Members were advised that there is a management board which oversees the function of the regional adoption service.

- Members queried the performance in Life Journey material; whether they agreed improvement action will mean that all will be able to have access to that material; and what will happen with children who have not had it provided. Officers advised that they are aware of the identities of those involved. Up until this time the work has not been completed as thoroughly as it should have been.

RESOLVED: To note the content of the report.

32 : ANNUAL QUALITY ASSURANCE REPORT FOR CROSSLANDS

The Chairperson welcomed Siobhan Teague (Manager Crosslands Children's Home) to the meeting to present the Annual Report Quality Assurance Report for Crosslands (April 2015 – 2016)

- Members wished to commend Siobhan Teague for the ongoing positive progress taking place at Crosslands.

RESOLVED: To note the content of the Report.

33 : EDUCATION MATTERS - REPORT ON OUTCOMES 2015/16 (TO BE TABLED)

The Chairperson welcomed Gillian James (Achievement Leader, Closing the Gap), to the meeting to present the Interim Report of Looked After Children's Performance in Cardiff Schools 2015-2016 and in Out of County Provision.

The report identified the main strengths and shortcomings in performance with the Foundation Phase, Key Stage 2 and Key Stage 3 results being final and being based upon actual performance data published by Welsh Government. The Key Stage 4 analysis was based upon the provisional results. Some aspects of the results were incomplete or awaiting the outcome of appeals.

- Further to question asked about the support provided to young people who do not cope well with the standard curriculum, Officers advised that schools are currently looking at alternatives but noted that some young people would not be ready to engage in any sort of traineeship scheme if that were offered at any earlier stage.

RESOLVED: To note the content of the Interim Report

34 : MEMBER VISITS FEEDBACK - DISCUSSION ITEM.

This item was deferred to the next meeting of the Corporate Parenting Advisory Committee.

35 : INDEPENDENT REVIEWING OFFICER - 6 MONTH REPORT

The Chairperson welcomed Irfan Alam (Assistant Director, Children's Services) and Natasha James (Service Manager, Safeguarding & Review) to the meeting to present the Independent Reviewing Officer's report which provides the Committee with

information about the role, function and activity of the Independent Review Officers Service.

- Members sought clarification, bearing in mind the increase in numbers, that the needs of Looked After Children were being met appropriately and were advised that those involved do all they can to avoid children and young people becoming looked after, however city demographics and the complex issues that the children and young people have often means that becoming looked after is the only option.
- Members queried the number of children/young people placed with agency foster carers outside the local authority and were advised that there are can be a number of reasons for that, including: the lack of appropriate placements in the Cardiff area and the nature of the issue(s) the child/young person has.
- Further to a question from Members, Officers advised that all those children in out of county placements are entitled to see independent visitors; work is ongoing with Nyas to ensure that visits are taking place as and when required.

RESOLVED: To note the content of the Interim Report

36 : EXCLUSION OF THE PUBLIC

37 : REGULATION 32 REPORT

This item was not for publication in accordance with paragraph 12 of Part(s)4 and 5 of Schedule 12A Local Government Act 1972. It was RESOLVED that the public be excluded for consideration of this item.

Debbie Martin-Jones, (Operational Manager, Specialist Services) was in attendance to present this report.

38 : DATE OF NEXT MEETING

The next meeting of the Corporate Parenting Advisory Committee is on Tuesday 17th January 2017 in CR 1.

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