

CORPORATE PARENTING ADVISORY COMMITTEE

17 OCTOBER 2017

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

60 : APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Weaver and Councillor Davies.

61 : CHAIRPERSON

It was noted that Council, at its meeting on 28 September 2017, appointed Councillor Sarah Merry as Chair.

62 : MEMBERSHIP AND TERM OF REFERENCE

It was noted that Council, at its meeting on 28 September 2017, reaffirmed the following Membership:

Councillors Davies, Hinchey, Jenkins, Lent, Lister, Merry, Molik, Walker and Weaver.

It was noted that Council, at its Annual Meeting on 25 May 2017 agreed the following Terms of Reference:

- (a) To actively promote real and sustained improvements in the life chances of Looked After Children, Children in Need, Care Leavers and children and young people in the criminal justice system and to work within an annual programme to that end;
- (b) To develop, monitor and review a corporate parenting strategy, and ensure its effective implementation through work plans and corporate parenting training programmes;
- (c) To seek to ensure that the life chances of Looked After Children, Children in Need and care leavers are maximised in terms of health, educational attainment, and access to training and employment, to aid the transition to a secure and productive adulthood;
- (d) To recommend ways in which more integrated services can be developed across all Council directorates, schools and other stakeholders to lead towards better outcomes for Looked After Children, Children in Need and care leavers;
- (e) To ensure that mechanisms are in place to enable Looked After Children, Children in Need and care leavers, to play an integral role in service planning and design, and that their views are regularly sought and acted upon;
- (f) 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;

- (g) To receive all relevant Children's Services inspection and annual reports, including: Children's Homes Quality of Care Report; Case Practice Reviews, Fostering Annual Quality of Care Report; Adoption Fostering Annual Quality of Care Report; 4C's Commissioning; Out of Area Annual Report; Annual Report of Brighter Futures (with education); Children's Complaints reports; and Advocacy Annual Report;
- (h) To report to the Cabinet at least twice a year;
- (i) To make recommendations to the Cabinet where responsibility for that function rests with the Cabinet;
- (j) To report to the Children and Young People's Scrutiny Committee as necessary;
- (k) To recommend the appointment of co-opted members to the Committee for approval by Council;
- (l) To develop and undertake a programme of consultation, listening and engagement events with Looked After Children and care leavers, as well as visits to services providing support and advice to Looked After Children, Children in Need and care leavers;
- (m) To submit an Annual Report on the work of the Committee to full Council.
- (n) All Members of the Committee will be required to undertake relevant training to enable them to properly discharge their duties.

63 : NOMINATION AND ELECTION OF DEPUTY CHAIR

To note that the Committee elected Councillor Lent as Deputy Chair.

64 : DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

No declarations of interest were received.

65 : MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting on the 21 March 2017 was agreed as a correct record and signed by the Chairperson.

66 : CARDIFF SHORT BREAKS AT TY STORRIE CSSIW INSPECTION

The Chair welcomed Bridgette Gater (Director, Action for Children) to the meeting and to present the report. Members were provided with a presentation and copy of a further inspection report dated 17 October 2017 and advised that the non-compliance notice has now been lifted.

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

- Bridgette Cater advised that she was the National Director for Action for Children and outlined her role; Performance Management is now undertaken on an individual basis; and in-house investigations were carried out after publication of the June report, some of those investigations were not upheld.
- The Improvement Plan outlines the changes made in the various areas to include leadership and management. Staff supervision is taking place on a regular basis and moral is improving.
- Work to address staffing issues started before October 2016, however, there was then an incident which exacerbated the situation.
- There have been occasions when agency staff had not turned up for work and trips have been cancelled sometimes as a result of different management styles or what are considered to be reasonable requests. Whilst there has been some impact on the children it is not accepted and was not found that children were ever put in a dangerous position due to the lack of staff.
- The use of agency staff has reduced and those agency staff have become more familiar with the needs of the children at the home.

RESOLVED: To note the information contained in the reports, and in particular that the non-compliance notice has been lifted.

67 : ST DAVID'S DAY FUND - AWARD OF FUNDING

The Chair welcomed Debbie Martin-Jones (Operational Manager, Specialist Services) to the meeting and to present the report. The purpose of the funding is to support young people who are or have been in local authority care to access opportunities that will lead them towards independent and successful lives.

Members were provided with information as to the use of the funds and advised that the young people have also been consulted and are in agreement with the various plans for the funding.

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

- Members were advised that it is understood from Welsh Government that the funding will continue, and that the amount provided will increase.
- In relation to the various examples as to how the money could be used Members were advised that in respect of some applications for funding decisions will need to be made on a case by case basis and that those making the application - Social Workers and Personal Advisors who will be conversant with the needs of the young person involved.

As far as any application for foreign travel is concerned, it would not be funding for a holiday, it would be to broaden the work or life experience of a young person for example volunteering abroad.

In relation to mobile phones, most young people manage to afford to buy and thereafter pay a mobile phone bill, however, there are occasions when it is not possible and a mobile phone would help to address the safeguarding issues faced by a young person.

- Members were advised that before advertising the availability of funding it was important to ensure that agreement had been reached between all parties. All those involved will now be notified and made aware of the funding and how to access said funding.

RESOLVED: To accept and support the plans proposed by the management team, which have been created in line with the spirit of the aware of the Grant.

68 : EDUCATION ITEM

The Chair welcomed Gillian James (Achievement Leader, Close the Gap) to the meeting.

Members were provided with information in relation to the figures produced for Looked After Children – Key Stage 2 & 4 for 2017. The figures provided show how well Cardiff are doing. Members were advised whilst 81.1% of KS4 pupils have SEN – 56% currently have a statement. They are provided with additional support and there are delegated funds for those with SEN. There are designated teacher meetings to make sure that everyone helps to improve the progress of the looked after children.

Members noted that FSM is becoming less precise in terms of additional needs particularly as some of the benefits of been removed and would welcome the opportunity of considering the core data from other areas at a future meeting.

69 : DRAFT ANNUAL REPORT

The Chairperson welcomed Irfan Alam (Assistant Director, Children's Services) to the meeting to present the draft Annual Report.

RESOLVED: To approve the draft report for submission to Council.

70 : CORPORATE PARENTING ADVISORY COMMITTEE OVERVIEW/WORK PROGRAMME - DISCUSSION ITEM

Members discussed/considered the Committee Overview and Work Programme.

RESOLVED:

- To agree the provisional schedule of reports
- To agree the proposed structure for the work programme / themes proposed
- To agree who is leading on each theme
- To plan a schedule of visits to meet the emerging information needs

71 : CROSSLANDS CSSIW INSPECTION

Information Report

RESOLVED: To note the content of the report

72 : REGULATION 32 REPORTS

Information Report

RESOLVED: To note the content of the report

73 : FOSTERING SERVICE, ANNUAL QUALITY ASSURANCE REPORT

Information Report

RESOLVED: To note the content of the report

74 : PERFORMANCE REPORT: Q4 AND ANNUAL OUTTURN

Information Report

RESOLVED: To note the content of the report

75 : COMPLAINTS REPORT: Q4 AND ANNUAL OUTTURN

Information Report

Members expressed concern that there has been no improvement in the response from Social Workers to requests for calls. Members were advised that there have been issues with the mobile phones provided and that they are not fit for purpose; the battery life is poor. Whilst additional phones have been provided there have been difficulties with the WiFi.

Members request an update on the phone issue in readiness for the next meeting.

76 : DATE OF NEXT MEETING

The next scheduled meeting of the Corporate Parenting Advisory Committee is on Tuesday 16 January 2018 at 2.00 pm.

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