

CORPORATE PARENTING ADVISORY COMMITTEE

17 NOVEMBER 2020

Present: Councillor Merry(Chairperson)
Councillors Bowden, Hinchey, Jenkins, Lent, Lister, Naughton

Officers Deborah Driffield, Jade Harrison, Davina Fiore, Sharlane Bird,
Present: Rose Whittle, Gillian James, Leigh Vella

120 : APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence have been received from Elly Jones, NYAS representative (Committee Advisor).

121 : DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

None received.

122 : MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting held on 28 January 2020 were agreed as a correct record subject to the amendment of a typographical error on page 6, minute number 108, which should read Kinship.

123 : ELECTED MEMBER SAFEGUARDING PROTOCOL

Members were advised that the Elected Member Safeguarding Protocol allows Members to consider the revised draft Protocol on the Role of Members on Safeguarding Vulnerable Children and Adults. This Protocol has been independently reviewed and updated.

Davina Fiore, Director of Governance and Legal Services and Phil Hodgson presented the item.

The Director of Governance and Legal Services explained that the document covers issues that Members were concerned about and also refers to the All Wales Safeguarding, GDPR and there was an emphasis on Members Ward roles. Sensitive information was not routinely shared unless consent had been given, but there can be discussion with Ward Members around that.

The document had been considered by Standards and Ethics Committee who had made a few changes and delegated to Director of Governance and Legal Services and Chair of Standards Committee to make any amendments before full Council. The document had also been sent to Scrutiny, will go to Cabinet and then Council for adoption, taking into account any views received.

Phil Hodgson advised that he had met Members and had facilitated workshops around Safeguarding Protocol in January. The introduction to the document reinforces that Safeguarding cannot be achieved by one person or one organisation; it reiterates the importance of dynamic interventions.

Page 17 outlines the responsibilities of elected Members and the process by which to report concerns is set out.

It was noted that a change had been suggested to paragraph 7.6 so that it reads 'process for raising Safeguarding concerns of Officers' to differentiate between Annex 1 and 2.

The Cabinet Member agreed with the change as it had caused some confusion. He thanked Phil Hodgson and the work Welsh Government have done around Child Protection.

The Chairperson invited questions and comments from Members;

Members discussed the first paragraph and considered that it leans quite heavily to an emotional reaction whereas in reality this would be the case if something serious has happened. Officers noted the comments made in the discussion and stated they would talk to the Chair in relation to any amendments.

Members had a discussion around paragraph 7.6 and asked why this was needed as there is already a Members Code of Conduct. Members considered it may feel to new Members that they cannot criticise Officers; 'unwarranted criticism' could be open to interpretation and future Members may feel they cannot raise legitimate concerns about senior Officers. Officers explained that the Members Code of Conduct was high level and did not contain as much detail as paragraph 7.6; they had chosen to add it to provide absolute clarity for Members; it was by no means meant to prevent anyone from raising legitimate concerns, just when a Member behaves in a way that causes problems in managing a Safeguarding situation, not to stifle genuine concerns.

Members were encouraged by the work that has taken place since January and were delighted that Cardiff was setting a bar that others will follow. Members considered it was helpful to have clarity on their role as advocates; bringing issues to Officers who are professionals, to deal with them.

Member discussed the need to obtain written consent to access information, stating that this can cause a delay on a time sensitive issue and cause a dilemma for Members. Officers explained that this is needed in law due to GDPR. Officers would always seek to support Members in their Ward Role and assist them in obtaining written consent but they have to comply with the law. Officers also explained that in complex cases it is not always clear who needs to give that written consent. The Cabinet Member understood the need to know and stressed that this should be balanced with Children's rights, but there is a threshold to be met before information is divulged.

RESOLVED to:

1. Note the revised draft Protocol on the Role of Members in Safeguarding Vulnerable Children and Adults, attached at Appendix A to the report; and

Provide the Monitoring Officer with any comments, views or observations on the draft Protocol for consideration in consultation with the Chair of Standards Committee.

124 : PERSONAL ADVISOR LEAVING CARE UPDATE

The Chairperson invited Sharlane Bird (Social Worker, Personal Advisor Service) to present this item, after which Members were invited to ask questions or make comments.

Members were pleased to see the partnership working and asked in relation to locality working, whether the team covers the whole City working with locality teams. Members were advised that teams work alongside all locality teams; they have created a referral process and they capture the young people at 16 at which time the pathway and planning is pivotal. Members were advised that there were no particular concentration areas in relation to locality teams, they were balanced across the City.

Members noted young people must be emotionally drained and asked Officers if they felt they provided the supportive role that parents would. Officers explained that young people often have many different support workers throughout their lives and building relationships was very important. Between ages 16-18, relationships and trust needed to be further developed. Some young people have clear ideas about i.e. education; some come from the Youth Justice Service; each young person will need different levels of support. Officers deal with crisis on a daily basis. It was also noted that some people are not ready at age 21 and this can cause a breakdown or a crisis so there has been a need to extend to age 25 in some cases.

Members commended the work by Officers. Members asked in relation to Higher Education, how funding is found when there are no parents to fall back on. Officers explained that they support a number of young people in Higher Education with some great success in Cardiff. They help with financial support such as finding bursaries, helping with Council Tax exemption and getting all benefits that they are able to access.

It was noted that PA's are doing so many things and opening up so many avenues for young people, the personal touch they provide is overwhelming. Moving forward it was important to progress the thousands of contacts the Council has to connect young people to its partners such as the Cardiff International White Water Centre.

RESOLVED: To note the Personal Adviser service update which outlines statutory responsibilities to children leaving care; and to make any observations or comments.

125 : YOUNG PERSONS PARTICIPATION UPDATE

The Chairperson invited Jade Harrison (OM, Service Improvement & Strategy) and Leigh Vella (Senior Policy Officer, Service Improvement Strategy) to present this item, after which Members were invited to ask questions or make comments.

Members considered it was an inspiring presentation and were glad that the issue of age groups had been addressed, adding it was important to reach primary age children as well as those hard to reach children who often are not forthcoming in sharing comments but usually have valid points to share.

Members were intrigued about the mutual participation between young people, their forum and CPAC, but sought advice on the format in which the young people would like this to take place. Members suggested that when meeting face to face they could meet somewhere familiar to the young people.

The Cabinet Member thanked Officers for the work stating it was going in the right direction. It was considered that remote meeting would be in place for some months to come and that young people are well used to the technology and participating remotely. He added that in the last six month engagement with young people, digitally had good and the feedback had been positive. Officers added that initial meetings and the setting up of the new group would be in January and by the next committee meeting in March there should be a clear pathway of how to move forward.

Members wished to stress to young people that that they are keen to hear from them and it would be an opportunity for them to raise any issues and would be positive all around. They wished to state it would not be intimidating. Officers stated then when the new group is formed in January, they will invite Members to attend, to meet and welcome the young people into CPAC.

Members discussed Corporate Parenting training and asked that the Chair write to those who have not completed the training, stressing the importance of doing so.

RESOLVED: to note the Young Person Participation update which outlines the mechanisms in place to capture the voice of looked after children; and to make any observations or comments.

126 : CPAC ANNUAL REPORT 2019-20

The Chairperson invited Jade Harrison (OM, Service Improvement & Strategy) to present this item, after which Members were invited to ask questions or make comments.

It was noted that the report was slightly different this year due to the pandemic; the traditional format had been used once again but there was an opportunity to change this format going forward.

Members considered it was a very well written report.

Members discussed various visits that they had been on that were not included in the report but noted the report referred to an historical timeframe.

Members noted that there had been discussion around reviewing the forms in relation to visits to include what Members get from the visits.

RESOLVED: to consider, if necessary amend, and approve the attached draft Corporate Parenting Advisory Committee Annual Report 2019- 20 to be laid before Council.

127 : BRIEFING REPORT(S)

The Chairperson invited Deborah Driffield (Assistant Director, Children's Services) to present a briefing report on Quarter 2 Performance and Complaints, after which Members were invited to ask questions or make comments.

It was noted that the report outlined Complaints and Compliments, it was pleasing that there had been less complaints and only one had progressed to stage 2. It was hoped that more qualitative data would be provided to Committee going forward.

RESOLVED: To note the briefing reports.

128 : WORK PROGRAMMING

The Chairperson invited Jade Harrison (OM, Service Improvement & Strategy) to present this item.

The work programme was outlined to Members and it considered that an informal work programming meeting be scheduled in January for Members to discuss the work programme going forward.

Members thanked Jade Harrison for working with Democratic Services for organising the work timetable, which has improved work over the past year.

129 : URGENT ITEMS (IF ANY)

None received.

130 : DATE OF NEXT MEETING

5 January 2021

The meeting terminated at 4.00 pm