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## AGENDA

<b>Committee</b>	CORPORATE PARENTING ADVISORY COMMITTEE
<b>Date and Time of Meeting</b>	TUESDAY, 17 NOVEMBER 2020, 2.00 PM
<b>Venue</b>	REMOTE MEETING VIA MS TEAMS
<b>Membership</b>	Councillor Merry (Chair) Councillors Bowden, Hinchey, Jenkins, Lent, Lister, Naughton, Whittle and James

*Time approx.*

**1 Apologies for Absence**

To receive apologies for absence.

**2 Declarations of Interest**

To be made at the start of the agenda item in question, in accordance with the Members' Code of Conduct.

**3 Minutes (Pages 5 - 10)**

To approve as a correct record the minutes of the previous meeting.

**4 Elected Member Safeguarding Protocol (Pages 11 - 30)**

2.10 pm

To enable Members to consider the revised draft Protocol on the Role of Members in Safeguarding Vulnerable Children and Adults.

**5 Personal Advisor Leaving Care Update (Pages 31 - 44)**

2.40 pm

**6 Young Persons Participation Update (Pages 45 - 48)**

3.00 pm

**7 CPAC Annual Report 2019-20 (Pages 49 - 84)**

3.20 pm

To enable Members to consider the committees draft annual report prepared for 2019-20

- 8      **Briefing Report(s)** (*Pages 85 - 96*)      3.40 pm
- To enable Members to review the Quarter 2 performance and complaints reports.
- 9      **Work Programming** (*Pages 97 - 102*)      4.00 pm
- 10     **Urgent Items (if any)**
- 11     **Date of next meeting**
- The next scheduled meeting of the Committee is on Tuesday 5 January 2021 at 2.00 pm via MS Teams.

**Davina Fiore**

**Director Governance & Legal Services**

Date: Wednesday, 11 November 2020

Contact: Mandy Farnham, 02920 872618, Mandy.Farnham@cardiff.gov.uk

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CORPORATE PARENTING ADVISORY COMMITTEE

28 JANUARY 2020

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

Officers Present: Sheila Davies (OM, Legal - Community)

Advisors Present: Claire Marchant (Director, Social Services), Deborah Driffield  
(Assistant Director, Children's Services) Rose Whittle and Gillian James

104 : APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

No apologies for absence were received for this meeting.

105 : DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

No declarations of interest were received in accordance with the Members' Code of Conduct

106 : MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting held on 17 September and 18 November were agreed as a correct record and signed by the Chairperson.

107 : OUT OF AREA PLACEMENTS BRIEFING/UPDATE

The Chair welcomed Kate Hustler, Operational Manager, Substitute Family Care to the meeting.

Members were provided with a presentation outlining the current position relating to placements as at 21 January 2020. The presentation outlined the themes for placements, the location of placements based on type (residential, kinship care, in house foster carers and Independent Fostering Agencies), Issues, work in progress with in house residential progress and the next steps.

The Committee were invited to comment, seek clarification or raise questions on the information received.

- Members queried how the authority kept in touch with those children resident further afield and were advised that Social Workers undertake visits and reviews. Members were advised that the IRO would always have an oversight. They are also offered advocacy. It is also hoped to increase independent visits.
- Members queried whether all care was regulated wherever the children were placed. Members were advised that the last time that any form of unregulated care was used was in Christmas 2018.

- Members referred to occasion when the specific needs of the child meant they were placed out of the area and asked whether there was a clear understand of what drives that. Members were advised that it usually relates to siblings, sometimes it is difficult to place larger families, there are also occasions when it is in the best interest of the siblings. Usually siblings can be placed together if it is in-house, it is more difficult in residential care. An assessment is always carried out to identify whether it is in the best interest to stay together.
- Members welcomed the update in relation to the work underway to develop an in house assessment unit and were advised that there will be consultation with Members and there will be due diligence carried out in relation to the area.

#### 108 : CORPORATE PARENTING STRATEGY CONSULTATION UPDATE

Members were provided a presentation updating the position in relation to the Corporate Parenting Strategy Consultation. Members noted the current timescales:

- February – Consultations complete, stakeholder sessions and literature review;
- March – Strategy writing and co-production group sessions
- April – CMT and CPAC Draft Strategy
- May – Scrutiny and Cabinet
- May – Launch of the Strategy

The Committee were invited to comment, seek clarification or raise questions on the information received.

- Members felt that Kingship carers and organisations needed a voice particularly as they have been traditionally under represented.
- Members felt that the timescale was optimistic.

#### 109 : VOICES FROM CARE PRESENTATION

The Chair welcomed Chris Dunn, Programmes Manager, Voices from Care Cymru to the meeting who provided Members with a presentation.

That presentation outlined provided Members with some general introductory information about the project; the values and key initiatives; the importance to young people of emotional and mental health, of sibling relationships; of being loved; and of stability and breaking the stigma that young people in care cannot do things that others can.

The Committee were invited to comment, seek clarification or raise questions on the information received.

- Members discussed funding and whether enough was being received. Members noted that no statutory services are provided which makes a difference in the position with funding. Funding has also been cut centrally however, working is ongoing with charitable trust to try and ease the funding burden. The lack of funding has mean that projects have had to be halted.
- Members were concerned to know what they could do to help and were advised that it was important to have conversations about the responsibilities of corporate parents and raising an awareness of the voices from care; if there are activities and initiatives taking place young people would welcome the attendance of corporate parents; be champions for care experienced young people; question what the Council and partners are doing to support young people – for example Welsh Government are about to take on 6 care leavers in Cathays Park. The Council can also offer placements and traineeships.

#### 110 : EDUCATION ITEM - PERFORMANCE OF CARDIFF LOOKED AFTER CHILDREN 2018-2019 INFORMATION REPORT

Members had been provided with a Briefing report in respect of the Performance of Cardiff Looked After Children which provided analysis of the educational outcomes for the academic years of Children Looked After in years 2, 6 9 and 11. Members were advised that it was important to note, with particular reference to the Key Stage 4 information, the reporting mechanism has changed; the information provided is from a specific point in time, namely the end of March 2019 which shows that 79 young people were looked after in year 11, 27 of which were out of County.

The Committee were invited to comment, seek clarification or raise questions on the information received.

- Members referenced the difference in performance of those in care and school locally as opposed to those out of county. Members were advised that emphasis is placed on bringing young people back to Cardiff as soon as possible and that the best chance for those young people is that they are attending school locally so that they have access to all the support services that can be provided.
- Members were concerned to know whether it was felt that schools were doing all that they could not to exclude children in care in the secondary sector and were advised that the school is always challenged by the team about the any proposed exclusion, but again if children are in school out of county is it is far more difficult to challenge.
- Members asked why we do not receive the same information from other local authorities in relation to those young people who are placed out of county as the information obtained from our own virtual tracker. The officer advised that whilst all Local Authorities have a tracker, our system talks to our tracker – it is the same

other authorities however, the new PEP system is helping to provide a greater amount of information.

- Members noted that the new PEP format and system of responsibility was initiated in September of 2019. It is an ongoing developmental priority but there are already improvements in the information being collated and provided.

## 111 : IRO REPORT

The Chairperson welcomed Matt Osbourne (Service Manager, Children's Services) to the meeting to present the Independent Reviewing Officers (IRO) Monitoring Report; a report the Committee received from the IRO service twice a year.

The Committee were invited to comment, seek clarification or raise questions on the information received.

- Member discussed the increase in the Looked After Children population and noted the trends identified through case audits and population analysis in particular reference to the Courts making greater use of a legal process to place children at home with a parent under Placement with Parent Regulations (PWP). Members noted that it can be difficult to evidence satisfactory progress to the Court that there has been sufficient change that would warrant changing the order. A team has been reviewing all the PWP care orders, there are about 100 cases. The review has taken longer than at first anticipated, families have often become reliant on the involvement of Social Services and they do not want that Social Service to be withdrawn. Whilst the PWP is in place, although the young person is living at home, the Local Authority has the same statutory duties as any other Looked After Child.
- Members noted that the increased level of turnover has inevitably led to drift despite the new social workers and managers doing what they can to minimise delay. The Director advised that retention and recruitment of staff is a significant priority and something that the Directorate has been struggling with. Whilst recruitment appears to be improving retention is still an issue; some of that is due to promotions elsewhere but some is due to neighbouring authorities paying more. The Cabinet Member for Children's and Families advised that finance are currently working on a package of improvements. An update can be provided in due course.
- Members discussed the Targeted and Specialist Services moving to localities in the East, West and South of the City during the course of the next week. Officers believe that it is the best overall outcome for our Looked After Children but accept that at the moment is a difficult time and that the changes and restructure have been disruptive.



- Members expressed concern that the drift has also led to reviews not being conducted on time and queried how that would be affecting our Looked After Children. The Officer advised that whilst the rising number of children has placed additional pressure on staff workloads no local authority is meeting the 100% threshold. Reviews are very rarely more than a few days out of time and if that is the case IRO's make a concerted effort to ensure as much information is available to ensure the best for the child.
- Members queried the time scales for the production of minutes/reports as a result of Looked After Reviews or Child Protection Conferences and were advised that there are no set timetables however, there is best practice. Monitoring Forms are to be completed within 5 days, the majority of which are done within that time, they are then sent to Team Managers to review. The process is being reviewed and improved regularly.

#### 112 : CHILDREN'S SERVICES QUARTERS 1 & 2 PERFORMANCE REPORT

Members were provided with the Children's Services Quarter 1 and 2 Performance Reports in respect of Children Looked After.

RESOLVED: To note the content of the reports.

#### 113 : CHILDREN'S SERVICES QUARTERS 1 & 2 COMPLAINTS REPORT

Members were provided with the Children's Services Quarter 1 and 2 Complaints and Representations Reports in respect of Children Looked After.

RESOLVED: To note the content of the reports.

#### 114 : MEMBER WORK STREAMS

AGREED: To confirm the work streams, ensure all areas are covered and arrange meetings with individual members.

#### 115 : MEMBER VISITS

RESOLVED: To note the information contained in the report.

#### 116 : FORWARD WORK PROGRAMME

The Assistant Director advised the development of the strategy is currently ongoing and a revised suggested work programme is to be circulated.

#### 117 : BRIEFING PAPERS

VVC Adoption Annual Report.  
Members noted the content of the Report.

118 : URGENT ITEMS (IF ANY)

No urgent items were tabled at the meeting.

119 : DATE OF NEXT MEETING

The date of the next scheduled meeting of the Corporate Parenting Advisory Committee is on Tuesday 17 March 2020 at 200 pm.

The meeting terminated at 4.50 pm

**CARDIFF COUNCIL  
CYNGOR CAERDYDD**

**CORPORATE PARENTING ADVISORY COMMITTEE**

**17 NOVEMBER 2020**

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**REPORT OF THE DIRECTOR OF GOVERNANCE & LEGAL  
SERVICES**

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**MEMBER PROTOCOL ON SAFEGUARDING  
VULNERABLE CHILDREN AND ADULTS**

**Reason for this Report**

1. To consider a revised draft of the Protocol which aims to provide guidance and advice to elected Members on their roles and responsibilities in relation to safeguarding vulnerable children and adults.

**Background**

2. In January 2016 the Council adopted a Protocol on the Role of Elected Members in Safeguarding Vulnerable Children and Adults ('the Protocol'), in line with the recommendations of the Standards and Ethics Committee, following an Independent Review into the role of Members in dealing with parent's complaints and acting as advocate in child protection proceedings.
3. The Protocol aims to provide guidance and advice to elected Members on their roles and responsibilities in relation to safeguarding vulnerable children and adults.

**Issues**

4. The Protocol has been independently reviewed and updated, following extensive discussion with Members, to ensure it remains fit for purpose. Flowcharts have been incorporated to clarify the process for Members to make a safeguarding referral or to raise other safeguarding concerns.
5. In January 2020, Council considered and approved an ordinary resolution which welcomed the independent review of the Members' Safeguarding Protocol and put forward proposals in relation to the remit of the review. It was also resolved that any recommendations from the independent review would be considered by the Children and Young

People's Scrutiny Committee, Corporate Parenting Advisory Committee and Cabinet, prior to submission to full Council for approval.

6. The Standards and Ethics Committee considered the revised draft Protocol at its meeting on 30<sup>th</sup> September and recommended clarification of certain sections, including the sections relating to advocacy and disclosure of information about individual cases. The Monitoring Officer was authorised to amend the draft Protocol, in consultation with the Chair, having regard to comments made by the Committee, and to submit the revised Protocol to full Council for approval.
7. In order to reinforce the importance and effectiveness of the Protocol, the Standards and Ethics Committee recommended that the approved Protocol should be incorporated within the Constitution and the Cardiff Undertaking, which will be included within its recommendations to full Council.
8. The revised draft Protocol, with appended flowcharts, is attached as **Appendix A**, for any comments or suggested amendments Members may wish to make.
9. The Children and Young People's Scrutiny Committee have been provided with the documents attached as Appendix A and have been asked to provide comments, views or observations to the Monitoring Officer by end of business on 12 November 2020. Cabinet is due to consider the revised Protocol at its meeting scheduled for 19<sup>th</sup> November; and the revised Protocol is to be reported to full Council in November for approval.

### **Legal Implications**

10. An advisory committee (established under section 102(4) of the Local Government Act 1972) is empowered to advise the Cabinet or the Council on any matter relating to the discharge of its functions, within the Committee's approved terms of reference.
11. Other relevant legal implications are set out in the body of the report and in the Protocol at **Appendix A**.

### **Financial Implications**

12. There are no direct financial implications arising from this report.

### **Recommendations**

The Committee is recommended to:

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

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

**Davina Fiore**

**Director of Governance & Legal Services and Monitoring Officer**

9 November 2020

**Appendices:**

Appendix A: revised draft Protocol – The Role of Elected Members in Safeguarding Vulnerable Children and Adults

Background papers:

Standards and Ethics Committee report, 'Member Protocol on Safeguarding Vulnerable Children and Adults', December 2015 and September 2020

Council report, 'Member Protocol on Safeguarding Vulnerable Children and Adults', January 2016

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## **PROTOCOL**

### **THE ROLE OF ELECTED MEMBERS IN SAFEGUARDING CHILDREN AND VULNERABLE ADULTS**

#### **1. Purpose of the Protocol**

To provide guidance and advice to Elected Members on:

- their roles and responsibilities in relation to safeguarding children and vulnerable adults; and
- how Members should raise any concerns and receive assurance about children and adults who may be at risk.

#### **2. Introduction**

Safeguarding and Protection is not something that can be achieved by one person or organisation. The emotional reaction of the public when children and adults have been harmed, neglected or exploited is understandable and experienced by those people who are professionally skilled practitioners who are directly working with and responsible for safeguarding and protecting people from harm.

Key public statutory agencies, together with independent, private and third sector organisations that provide services to the public who are vulnerable, have a critical role in safeguarding and protecting children and adults.

Responsibility for protecting people, who through no fault of their own are vulnerable, rests with parents, families, and those professional staff who have a duty to care. Analytical and accurate assessments, good, relevant and focused communication, dynamic multi agency intervention and treatment is critical in safeguarding and protecting vulnerable children and adults.

#### **3. The All Wales Safeguarding Procedures (2019)**

The All Wales Safeguarding Procedures have been developed to ensure policy and practice in Wales consistently applies the legislation and statutory guidance as required by The Social Services and Well-Being (Wales) Act 2014.

The Procedures are designed and intended to standardise practice across Wales. Awareness amongst policy makers and practitioners has emphasised the need for common systems and processes to protect both children and adults at risk of abuse and neglect.

The Procedures identify arrangements for responding to safeguarding concerns about practitioners and people in a position of trust, power or influence. The Procedures provide a clear process for investigation where the nature of activity of a practitioner or person who is in a position of trust has raised concerns.

#### **4. The Members' Code of Conduct**

The Members' Code of Conduct places a number of duties on Elected Members, which will apply whenever they are responding to the concerns raised by their constituents or other members of the public. The Code of Conduct requires Elected Members to ensure their comments do not disclose confidential information. They must not conduct themselves in a manner likely to bring the Council (or the office of councillor) into disrepute. They should show respect and consideration for others, and not use bullying behaviour or harass anyone. They should not use their position, or Council resources, improperly. The application of the Code is explained further in paragraphs 7.3 to 7.7 below.

Breaches of this Protocol by Elected Members may lead to complaints that the Cardiff Council Member Code of Conduct has been breached. Complaints about a breach of the Code of Conduct will be dealt with by the Council's Monitoring Officer and/or the Public Services Ombudsman for Wales and may lead to a public hearing by a Hearings Panel of the Council's Standards and Ethics Committee. If an Elected Member is found by the Hearings Panel to have breached the Code of Conduct, a sanction may be imposed of up to six months suspension from office and forfeiture of the Members allowance for the relevant period.

#### **5. Social Media**

The Welsh Local Government Association (WLGA) Social Media: A Guide for Councillors provides helpful guidance and advice about issues to consider when using social media. The WLGA guidance helpfully refers to the Code of Conduct and offers an overview and important detail to consider when dealing with complex casework matters.

The Code of Conduct applies to Elected Members when conducting the business of your authority, acting, claiming to act or giving the impression you are acting in your official capacity as a member or representative of your authority. The Code also applies even when you are not acting in your capacity as a Member if you conduct yourself in a manner which could reasonably be regarded as bringing your office or your authority into disrepute.

Key messages include:

- Maintaining respect for others and not disclosing confidential information about individuals or the council.



- Negative comments about or to individuals which could be interpreted as bullying or intimidation.
- Making unfair or inaccurate criticism of your authority in a public arena may be regarded as bringing your authority into disrepute.

## **6. The Role of the Council and its Elected Members**

6.1 All Members of the Council have a strategic role in relation to Social Services and need to satisfy themselves that the Council as a whole is discharging its statutory responsibilities and demonstrates good practice wherever possible.

6.2 A number of high profile public inquiries have highlighted the importance of ensuring that safeguarding services are prioritised and adequately resourced, and all Elected Members have responsibility in this regard.

6.3 The Council as a whole is the 'corporate parent' of all Children Looked After. This requires Elected Members, relevant Council managers and staff to work together to discharge their different roles and responsibilities, to ensure the best possible care and opportunities are provided for Children Looked After. The responsibility to ensure the best possible care and opportunities also applies to children receiving Care and Support services.

6.4 Elected Members have an important role to play in safeguarding children and vulnerable adults, as the eyes and ears in the community. This particularly applies where ward surgeries and local ward networks enable Members to be alerted to early signs of safeguarding concerns, whether general patterns of behaviour or concerns about a particular child or vulnerable adult.

6.5 The Members of the Cabinet, the Corporate Parenting Advisory Committee, the Children and Young People's Scrutiny Committee and the Community and Adults Scrutiny Committee have additional specific responsibilities, as outlined in section 12 below.

## **7. Responsibilities of Elected Members**

7.1 It is the responsibility of all Elected Members to bring concerns they have about vulnerable children or adults to the attention of the responsible officer. **If a Member is concerned that a child or vulnerable adult may be at risk of harm, this should be reported immediately - please refer to Section 8, and the contact list at the end of this Protocol. Briefly:**

**Children (up to 17 years old) - Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH).**

**Adults (age 18 and over) - The Adult Safeguarding Team.**

## **Out of Hours – The Emergency Duty Team (EDT).**

### **Note: Flowchart at Annex 1. Making a Safeguarding Referral.**

7.2 Where constituents or other members of the public have sought advice/assistance from a Member, the Elected Members may also wish to make written/oral representations in order to satisfy themselves that concerns or problems are being dealt with appropriately.

7.3 **Members' Code of Conduct** - Whilst Elected Members have an important role to play in responding to the concerns of their constituents or other members of the public, they must be mindful of their obligations under the Members' Code of Conduct, in particular:

7.4 **Personal Interests** – Members must be mindful of their duty under the Members' Code of Conduct to disclose any personal interest in a particular case in which they may be making representations. For example, a personal interest may arise from the Member's personal relationship with a service user or from the Member's involvement in a particular organisation. Members must ensure that their personal or private interests do not conflict with their public duties, to the Council as a whole or to all ward constituents.

7.5 **Advocacy for Service Users** – Although Members may routinely respond to queries and investigate concerns on behalf of constituents and other members of the public as part of their casework role, it is not appropriate for an Elected Member, unless exceptional circumstances apply, to act as an independent advocate for a service user during case conferences or other formal meetings attended by Council officers or Members, due to the potential conflict of interest and confusion over the role in which the Member is acting. Elected Members are part of the Council and have a duty to make decisions in the public interest and to represent all ward constituents fairly and equally; whereas the role of an independent advocate is to represent and act on behalf of an individual, to provide emotional support and help them to understand the process and to raise questions and issues as necessary. An Elected Member seeking to act as an independent advocate is likely to have an actual or perceived conflict between his/her duties to:

- (i) the Council and its Officers.
- (ii) the individual service user, and
- (iii) other ward constituents.

An Elected Member's involvement may also create an impression to those involved of undue influence being exerted in any relevant decision making process, in view of the Member's position within the Council. The Council has a responsibility to ensure that service users have access to advocacy services wherever necessary, and can provide contact details of independent advocacy service providers and professional advocates upon

request. In certain court proceedings, service users will also have the benefit of accessing free legal advice, should they choose, and can be legally represented in Court, therefore always having a voice in Court and their interests protected. In court proceedings where there is limited/no access to free legal advice, the service user can again have access to advocacy services where necessary and can seek guidance/assistance from the Support from Court service that is available.

It is only in exceptional circumstances (such as where an Elected Member is a family member of a service user or is a professional advocate), that it may be appropriate for an Elected Member to act as an advocate for a service user. However, any such exceptional circumstances must be explained and agreed in advance with the Director of Social Services or the Monitoring Officer.

**7.6 Criticism of Officers** – Elected Members should ensure that any concerns about Council officers are raised with the relevant Director (or the Chief Executive) in accordance with the Protocol on Member/Officer Relations, as staffing issues are the statutory responsibility of the Chief Executive, as Head of Paid Service. Elected Members should note that case law regarding a Councillor’s right to freedom of expression under Article 10 of the European Convention on Human Rights (Heesom v. Public Services Ombudsman for Wales 2014) has held that:

- Council officers are not expected to tolerate the same level of criticism as politicians during political debate;
- Unwarranted criticism of officers by Councillors damages the mutual duty of trust and confidence between Councillors and officers; and that
- There is a public interest in ensuring that officers are not subjected to unwarranted criticism which could undermine the performance of their public duties and public confidence in the administration.

**Note: Flowchart at Annex 2. Process for Raising Safeguarding Concerns with Officers.**

**7.7 Political/Public Debate** – When raising issues politically in public debate, during Council meetings, using social media etc, Members must ensure their comments do not disclose confidential information or personal information about identifiable individuals; must not make unwarranted criticism of officers, and must not conduct themselves in a manner likely to bring the Council (or the office of Councillor) into disrepute.

**8. What to do if you are concerned that a child or vulnerable adult may be at risk of harm?**

**(Please see Flowchart at Annex 1: Making a Safeguarding Referral)**

**8.1 Children (up to 17 years old)** - If an Elected Member has any information which raises concerns about harm or potential harm to any child, a child protection referral should be made immediately to the Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH) or, if outside office hours, to the Emergency Duty Team (please see Contact List at the end of this Protocol) where an appropriately trained Social Worker will ensure Children in Need of Care and Support or Child Safeguarding Procedures are initiated if needed, and will provide you with any required advice or guidance.

**8.2 Adult (age 18 and over)**- If any information raises concerns about harm or potential harm to a vulnerable adult, these concerns should be reported immediately to the Adult Safeguarding Team or, if outside of office hours, to the Emergency Duty Team (please see Contact List at the end of this Protocol) where an appropriately trained Social Worker will ensure that any appropriate procedures are initiated, and will provide you with any required advice and guidance.

**8.3 If a Member has concerns about immediate danger needing a emergency response or thinks a crime is being committed, the police should be contacted on 999. You should never delay taking emergency action to safeguard a child or vulnerable adult.**

## **9. Raising any other safeguarding concerns**

**(Please see Flowchart at Annex 2: Process for Raising Other Safeguarding Concerns)**

If an Elected Member has any other concern relating to safeguarding, such as:

- any concerns following a referral made to the Children's Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH) or the Adults Safeguarding Team;
- any concerns about a specific case where the Member knows that social services are already involved; or
- any general concerns about safeguarding arrangements, not relating to a specific child or vulnerable adult,

the Member should bring this to the attention of the Director of Children's Services or the Assistant Director or Director of Adults Services (as appropriate), or the Director of Social Services.

## **10. What to Expect?**

10.1 All concerns will be investigated and assurances given to the Councillor that the welfare of the child or vulnerable adult is being safeguarded.

10.2 All referrals of children or vulnerable adults at risk of harm will be promptly investigated in accordance with the timescales provided for in the **All Wales Safeguarding Procedures** and a response will be given to the Councillor within 24 hours to confirm that relevant/appropriate action has been taken. The Council will not, however, be able to confirm the outcome of any particular investigation due to confidentiality and data protection laws.

10.3 Any other safeguarding queries or non-specific casework concerns will be carefully considered and a response will be given to the Councillor within 10 working days. If a full response cannot be provided within 10 working days, the response will indicate a reasonable timescale within which a full reply will be given.

10.4 Any complaints made by or on behalf of the service users will be considered in accordance with the council's complaints procedures, which fully comply with all relevant statutory provision and best practice.

- (i) Complaints about the handling or outcomes of child protection conferences will be dealt with under the "Procedure for handling complaints from parents, caregivers, and children about the functioning of the child protection conference". This procedure is appended as Annex 3 to this Protocol.
- (ii) All other complaints about Cardiff Social Services will be dealt with under the 'Social Services Complaints Policy and Procedure' (established in accordance with The Social Services Complaints Procedure (Wales) Regulations 2014 and The Representations Procedure (Wales) Regulations 2014). This procedure is appended as Annex 4 to this Protocol.

## **11. Members' Rights to Information and Information Sharing**

11.1 The Protocol on Members' Rights of Access to Information and Documents (set out in Part 5 of the Constitution), sets out Members' rights to information held by the Council and how to access such information.

11.2 **Personal Information** - Access to personal information is restricted by data protection legislation (see below); and any information provided under the "need to know" principle must only be used in connection with the Member's duties as a Councillor, and must not be disclosed to any other persons (unless and until the information properly enters the public domain).

Under the "need to know" principle, all Members have a right to inspect any Council documents if access to the documents is reasonably necessary to enable the Member to properly perform their duties as a Member of the Council.

11.3 The Council will ensure that all Elected Members have access to general information about trends and issues affecting children and vulnerable adults as well as the quality and range of services provided.

### **Personal information/information about individual cases**

11.4 Information relating to individuals is protected (as 'personal data') under data protection legislation, and such information may also be confidential. Personal data includes any information relating to an identifiable individual, even if the individual is not explicitly named. General advice on Members' data protection responsibilities is set out in the 'Data Protection' section of the Members' Handbook.

11.5 The Council is legally responsible (as the 'Data Controller') for personal information held by the Council (or held by Members for the purpose of Council business). Each Elected Member is legally responsible (as 'Data Controller') for personal information held for constituency work purposes. The Council and all Elected Members must carefully consider, on a case by case basis, their legal obligations in respect of any particular personal information they may hold.

11.6 The law requires that all personal information must be handled fairly, lawfully and securely. In particular, personal information about individual cases must not be disclosed without the consent of the individual/s, concerned, unless a legal exemption applies. This means that **the Council can only disclose information about individual cases to Members if it is satisfied that the individual/s concerned have consented to such disclosure and that the individual has the capacity to give such consent.**

11.7 If a Member is asked by a ward constituent or other member of the public to assist them in resolving a social services matter, the Member will be dealing with personal information, some of which will be sensitive personal information ('special category data', defined by law as information about a person's racial or ethnic origin; political opinions religious or philosophical beliefs; trade union membership; physical or mental health or condition; genetic or biometric data; or sexual life or orientation; and 'criminal offence data' meaning information about alleged criminal activity; or court proceedings), and subject to additional legal protection and restrictions.

11.8 Members must ensure that:

- The individual/s concerned understand how the Member intends to use their personal information and have consented to this. Members should be mindful that some service users' level of understanding may require further consideration and assistance due to their vulnerabilities.

- If the Member intends to make enquiries with the Council about a particular case, then the Member should obtain written consent from all individuals involved, expressly authorising the Council to disclose their personal information to the Member; and provide a copy of this consent to the Council (If it is not possible to obtain written consent in any particular case, the Member should discuss this with the appropriate Assistant Director or Director)
- All personal information relating to individual cases must be used only as necessary and appropriate in order to take the agreed action on behalf of the individual; and must not be used or disclosed for any other purpose, for example, political purposes.
- Members must have robust systems for holding personal information securely and only for as long as necessary.

11.9 Further advice is available from the Council's Information Management Operational Manager. The Information Commissioner's Office website also publishes helpful guidance for Councillors on their data protection responsibilities (see Background Documents listed at the end of this Protocol).

## **12. Decision Makers and Accountability**

In addition to the strategic role of full Council, referred to in section 6 above, the key decision makers and their accountabilities are as follows:

### **Cabinet; Cabinet Member, Children and Families; and Cabinet Member, Social Care, Health, and Wellbeing**

12.1 The Cabinet has a collective corporate leadership role and decision making powers in respect of children's and adults' services, subject to compliance with the Council's approved Policy Framework. The Cabinet Member for Children and Families has particular responsibility to lead and inform the Cabinet's work on safeguarding, child protection, corporate parenting and looked after children matters. The Cabinet Member for Social Care, Health and Well-being has particular responsibility to lead and inform the Cabinet's work on adult social care and safeguarding vulnerable adults matters. Both Cabinet Members are regularly briefed by the Statutory Director of Social Services on the performance of Social Services functions, any identified weaknesses and recommended improvement actions.

### **Statutory Director of Social Services**

12.2 The Statutory Director of Social Services is responsible for providing professional leadership and discharging core responsibilities in respect of all Social Services functions of the Council. The Director submits a Statutory Annual Report to Cabinet on the discharge of the Council's Social Services functions, including a report on all Social Services complaints.

### **Corporate Parenting Advisory Committee**

12.3 The Corporate Parenting Advisory Committee is responsible for advising the Council and the Cabinet on the discharge of the authority's corporate parenting functions. The Committee provides advice and makes recommendations to the Cabinet or Council regarding the discharge of corporate parenting functions. The Committee ensures that Corporate Parenting has a role and status within the Council.

### **Children and Young People Scrutiny Committee**

12.4 The Children and Young People's Scrutiny Committee is responsible for scrutinising, measuring and actively promoting improvement in service provision and compliance with the Council's approved policies, aims and objectives in relation to children and young people, including children's social services.

### **Community and Adult Services Scrutiny Committee**

12.5 The Community and Adult Services Scrutiny Committee is responsible for scrutinising, measuring and actively promoting improvement in service provision and compliance with the Council's approved policies, aims and objectives in relation to community and adults' services, including adults' social services.

#### **CONTACT LIST:**

The Multi Agency Safeguarding Team (MASH)-	029 2053 6490
The Adult Safeguarding Team	029 2233 0888
Emergency Duty (out of hours) Team (EDT)	029 2078 8570
Director of Children's Services	xxx
Assistant Director of Adult Services	xxx
Director of Adults Services	xxx
Director of Social Services	029 2087 2900
Operational Manager, Information Management	029 2087 3988



## **APPENDICES:**

- Annex 1. Flowchart – Making a Safeguarding Referral.
- Annex 2. Flowchart – Process for Raising Other Safeguarding Concerns with Officers.
- Annex 3. “Procedure for handling complaints from parents, caregivers and children about the functioning of the child protection conference’, Cardiff and Vale of Glamorgan Local Safeguarding Children Board.
- Annex 4. ‘Social Services Complaints Policy and Procedure’, City of Cardiff Council.

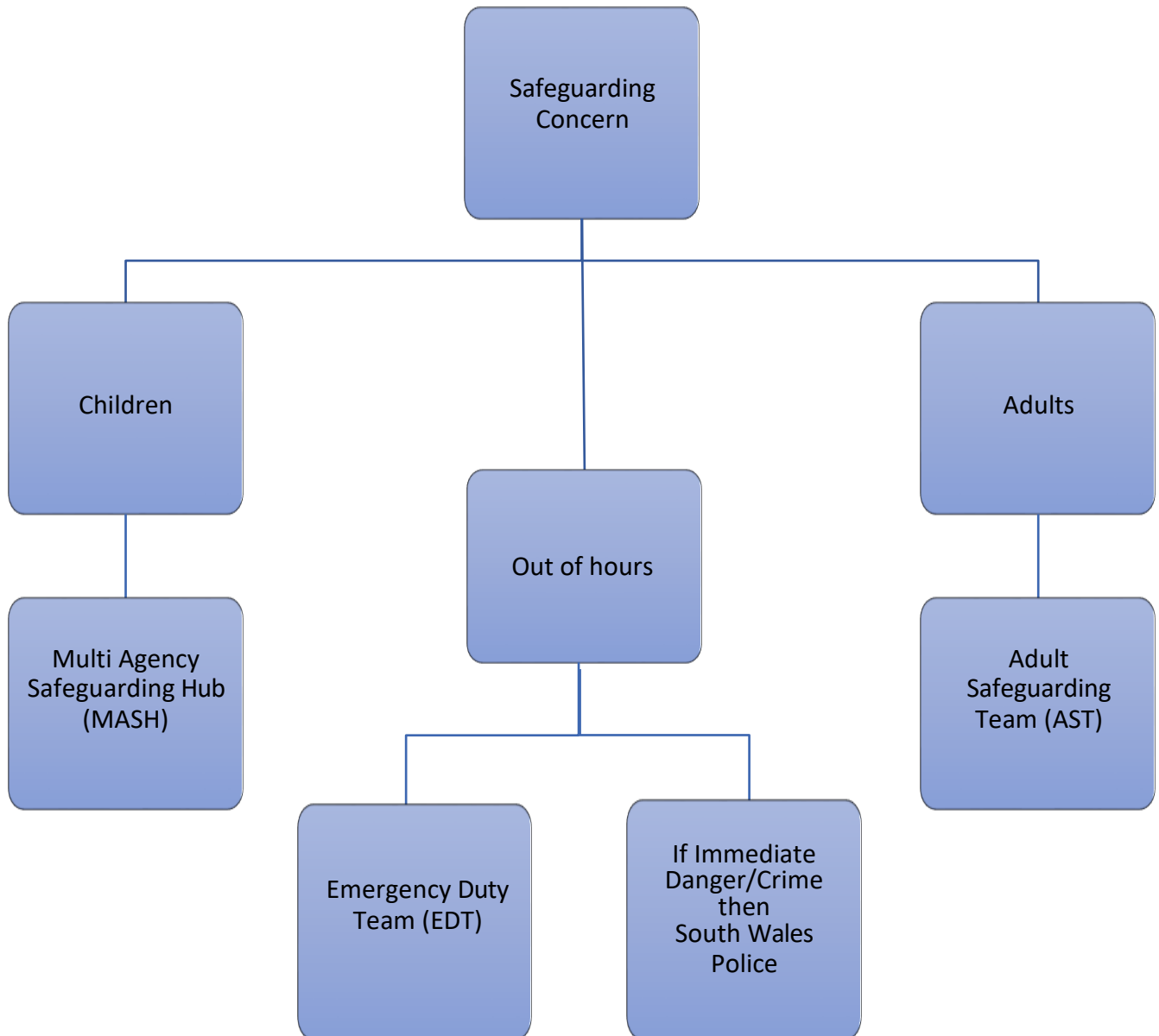
## **BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS:**

- Members’ Code of Conduct.
- WLGA Social Media Guidance.
- Social Services and Well-Being (Wales) Act 2014, Part 10 Code of Practice (Advocacy)
- Protocol on Member/Officer Relations.
- Protocol on Members’ Rights of Access to Documents and Information.
- Members’ Handbook, ‘Data Protection’ section.
- Information Commissioner’s Office, ‘Advice for elected and prospective councillors’.
- GDPR and Data Protection Act.

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**Protocol: The role of Elected Members in Safeguarding**

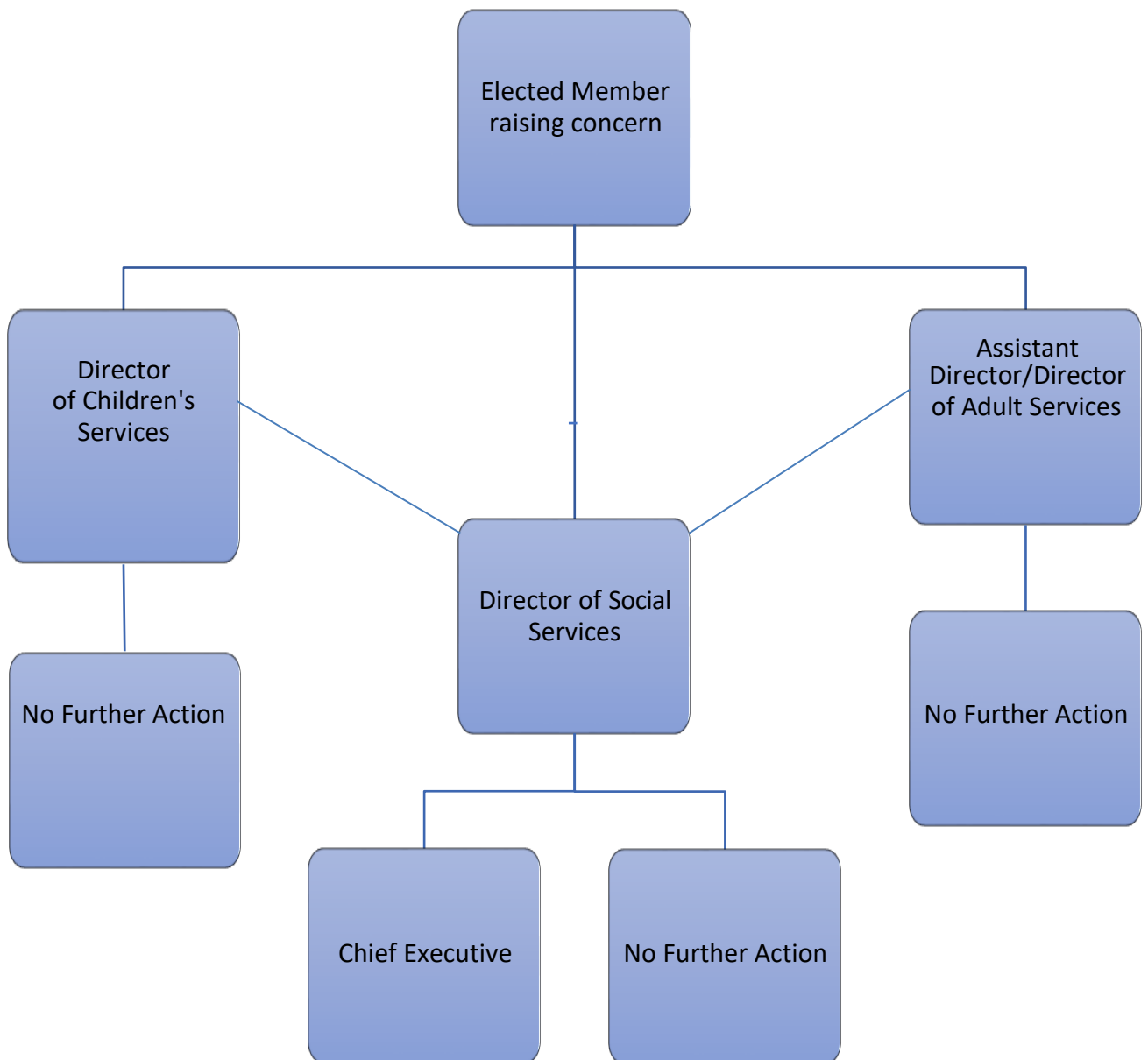
**Making a Safeguarding referral**



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**Protocol: The role of Elected Members in Safeguarding**

**Process for raising any other Safeguarding concerns**



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**CARDIFF COUNCIL  
CYNGOR CAERDYDD****CORPORATE PARENTING ADVISORY COMMITTEE****17<sup>th</sup> November 2020**

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**PERSONAL ADVISER SERVICE UPDATE**

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**Reasons for the Report**

1. The report has been prepared to provide the Committee with an update in relation to the Personal Adviser service. The update aims to inform the Committee on the current work that is undertaken to support young people leaving care, including provisions that have been put in place to support young people leaving care during the COVID 19 pandemic as well as future plans for the service in accordance with its terms of reference.

**Background**

2. The Personal Adviser service is a fundamental service providing advice and guidance for young people aged 16- 25 leaving care. The service is a statutory requirement outlined in the Social Services and Wellbeing (Wales) Act 2014.
3. The main function of the service is to participate in the assessment, preparation, implementation and review of Pathway Plans as well as to coordinate the provision of services to young people and take reasonable steps to ensure young people make use of services that could meet their needs.
4. The Personal Adviser service aims to act as an advocate for young people and support their engagement with other advocacy services to ensure their voices are heard and responded to accordingly.

## **Issues**

5. At present the service is now Home Working in line with COVID19 UK government advice. The service has maintained contact with all young people open to our service and provided up to date advice to young people. Contact is via telephone, skype and text. The service has rag rated the young people open to us and those who are presenting in the red/black risk category have been shared with the Operational Manager and individual risk plans in place.
  
6. The service has adapted working hours with staff managing their time effectively in order to ensure that we are meeting the needs of the young people and the service. Staff are starting work later to maintain contact with young people who have requested this to also support them at times when they may feel more vulnerable and isolated. Some young people who live independently are also being contacted on weekends should they wish to maintain contact with their Personal Advisor We have also introduced a buddy system to support staff who are managed these high risk young people to support staff's emotional wellbeing.

## **Financial Implications**

7. This report is for information only and does not, in itself, lead to any new financial commitments. However, the report references work currently being undertaken to extend the service. To date, no additional costs have arisen as a result of this extension, however, if in the future there are costs associated with this, they will need to be absorbed within the existing Children's Services budget and funded from within existing internal or external resources.

## **Legal Implications**

8. There are no legal implications arising from this report



## **RECOMMENDATION**

The Committee is recommended to note the Personal Adviser service update which outlines statutory responsibilities to children leaving care; and to make any observations or comments.

**DEBORAH DRIFFIELD**  
**ASSISTANT DIRECTOR OF CHILDREN'S SERVICES**  
**11 November 2020**

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# Personal Adviser Service

Support, advice and guidance for young people leaving care in Cardiff

## Purpose:

- Statutory service as outlined in the Social Services and Wellbeing (Wales) Act 2014
- To provide young people leaving care with advice and guidance, including practical advice and support.
- To participate in the assessment, preparation, implementation and review of Pathway Plans
- To coordinate the provision of services to young people and take reasonable steps to ensure young people make use of services that could meet their needs
- To act as an advocate for young people and support their engagement with other advocacy services to ensure their voices are heard and responded to accordingly.

Who are we:

Current team of 22 people, based in Hafan Gobaith in Fairwater.

Team Manager: 1

Senior Personal Advisers: 3

Personal Advisers: 18

## The young people we support:

- Young people leaving care in Cardiff. Approximately 354 young people open to the service at present. This only includes over 18 year olds.
- Each Personal Adviser has an average caseload of 30 to 35 young people.
- Ages - 16 to 25
- Ages 16 to 18, the Personal Adviser co-works with the young persons social worker, builds a relationship and supports the development of the pathway plan. Additional 143 co-working young people.
- Ages 18 - 21, the Personal Adviser provides support, advice and guidance around all aspects of a young persons life, while continually reviewing the pathway plan and working towards the young person becoming an independent adult.
- Ages 21 - 25, the Personal Adviser Service provides support for young people who are in full time, progressive education.

## The support we provide:

- To coordinate the provision of services to young people and take reasonable steps to ensure young people make use of services that could meet their needs, in all walks of life.
- Practical support with housing, finance, education, employment, family contacts, health, independent living etc.
- Financial support - exercised with discretion and based on individual needs.
- Referrals to other services that can support the young person's needs.
- Advocacy on behalf of young people to ensure their voices are heard.
- Multi-agency approach to ensure the support, advice and guidance that we provide is relevant, accurate and up to date.

Some of our key multi-agency partners:

- Department of Work and Pensions
- Housing - Young Persons Gateway/Supported Lodgings Team
- Into Work Services - Bright Futures
- Locality Social Work Teams
- Cardiff and Vale College
- National Youth Advocacy Service



## How have the service adapted to meet the needs of young people during the pandemic

- At present the service is now Home Working in line with COVID19 UK government advice. The service has maintained contact with all young people open to our service and provided up to date advice to young people. Contact is via telephone, skype and text. The service has rag rated the young people open to us and those who are presenting in the red/black risk category have been shared with the Operational Manager and individual risk plans in place.
- The service has adapted working hours with staff managing their time effectively in order to ensure that we are meeting the needs of the young people and the service. Staff are starting work later to maintain contact with young people who have requested this to also support them at times when they may feel more vulnerable and isolated. Some young people who live independently are also being contacted on weekends should they wish to maintain contact with their Personal Advisor We have also introduced a buddy system to support staff who are managed these high risk young people to support staff's emotional wellbeing.
- We have a duty system in place with two duty workers available during working hours. In an emergency and with Operational Management agreement the duty 2 worker will be available to respond to going into the community should a situation arise and following a risk assessment of the situation. We have agreed that any requests must be put in writing and the worker will respond after 2pm. This means that if there are a few requests for dropping off of food parcels etc. that the duty worker will only be asked to go into the community once and this reduces risk to them and their families. Risk assessments will be undertaken in all request.
- Weekly subsistence payments are now being paid to via BACS. For young people who do not have bank accounts we have an agreement with housing providers that they will hold subsistence and give them to young people weekly. This is in place with projects holding 6 weeks' worth of subsistence with a view to review and continue if needed. As far as possible, all payments to be made via BACS. This means that in an emergency we can transfer additional money if needed without having to have any staff out in the community.

## What next for us

- Extending Entitlement - extending Personal Adviser Services for all 21-25 year olds.
- Development of partnership with Bright Futures Youth Employment Mentors
- Production of a Leaving Care Booklet, app and training day to inform and empower young people in relation to their rights as a young person leaving care.
- Consultation with young people to ensure we provide a tailor made service.
- Development of partnerships with other Children's Services teams to widen knowledge and gain awareness of support available for young people leaving care.

Thank you

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**CITY AND COUNTY OF CARDIFF  
DINAS A SIR CAERDYDD**

**Corporate Parenting Advisory Committee**

**17<sup>th</sup> November 2020**

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**YOUNG PERSON PARTICIPATION UPDATE**

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**Reasons for the Report**

1. The report has been prepared to update the Committee about the current mechanisms in place that are used to seek the views, concerns and issues facing looked after children throughout Cardiff.
2. The update outlines legislation which promotes the active and informed participation of children as citizens and right holders, details are also provided on current ways looked after children are able to have their voices heard as well as plans to strengthen and build on current participation mechanisms in place.
3. The Terms of Reference require the committee to develop and undertake a programme of consultation, listening and engagement events with Children Looked After, Children in Need and Care Leavers as well as visits to services providing support and advice to those children and young people

**Background**

4. Children and young people have 42 rights under the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC). These 42 rights give children and young people what they need to grow up happily, healthily and safely.
5. The requirement to obtain the views of young people are outlined in Article 12 of the UNCRC which states;

*“Every child has the right to express their views, feelings and wishes in all matters affecting them, and to have their views considered and taken seriously”*

6. When participating with young people there are a set of national standards that should be adhered to in order to ensure that the views of young people can make a difference to services and issues impacting them.
7. The Committee are regularly updated on how the voice of looked after children have been incorporated in a range of areas of work and were made aware of a range of initiatives and projects in development to further strengthen the voice of the child.
8. Through a number of reports such as Complaints and representations reports and Independent Reviewing Officer service report the voice of looked after children are placed at the centre. There has also been a wide range of specific Participation initiatives, programmes and projects presented to the Committee aimed to strengthen the voice of a young person and ensure that our young people have meaningful engagement to have an active role in shaping services that affect them. Members also have the opportunity to directly engage with young people when the undertake member visits.

### **Issues**

9. There are some areas of work that needs further development to strengthen the voice of looked after children and children leaving care in Cardiff. There are also future projects aimed to strengthen the voice of looked after children including the Mind of your Own – a digital app that supports looked after children to have a say in their care.
10. The Bright Sparks forum is the main platform where looked after children can have a say on the issues impacting them, the forum meets fortnightly and plan and organise the annual Bright Sparks awards , a celebration event for Looked after children across the city. Working with the Bright Sparks Forum membership will be strengthened as well as links between the Corporate Parenting Advisory Committee.

### **Financial Implications**

11. As outlined in the report, this proposal will result in new activities and initiatives, some of which will lead to new financial commitments, such as the Mind of My

Own app. However, these financial commitments will be met from within existing available financial resources, including external funding such as the Integrated Care Fund.

### **Legal Implications**

12. There are no legal implications arising from the report.

### **RECOMMENDATION**

13. The Committee is recommended 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.

**DEBORAH DRIFFIELD**  
**ASSISTANT DIRECTOR OF CHILDREN'S SERVICES**  
**11 November 2020**

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**CYNGOR CAERDYDD  
CARDIFF COUNCIL**

**CORPORATE PARENTING ADVISORY COMMITTEE**

**17 NOVEMBER 2020**

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**CORPORATE PARENTING ADVISORY COMMITTEE ANNUAL  
REPORT 2019-20**

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**Reasons for the Report**

1. The terms of reference require the Corporate Parenting Advisory Committee to:
  - Submit an Annual Report on the work of the Committee to full Council.
  
2. A copy of the Committee's Annual Report 2019/20 is attached at Appendix A. This report outlines the Committee's activities from May 219 to March 2020

**Background**

3. The overarching objective of the Corporate Parenting Advisory Committee, as stated in the terms of reference is to champion the life changes and rights of Children Looked After; Children in Need; Care Leavers and children and young people in the criminal justice system across the Council with Elected Members and partners.
  
4. The term 'corporate parenting' indicates that the local authority has the same interest in the progress and attainment of looked after children as any reasonable parent has for their own children.

## **Financial Implications**

5. There are no direct financial implications arising from this report.

## **Legal Implications**

6. There are no legal implications arising from this report.

## **RECOMMENDATION**

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

**DEBORAH DRIFFIELD  
INTERIM DIRECTOR, CHILDREN'S SERVICES  
12 NOVEMBER 2020**

Cardiff Council

# Corporate Parenting Advisory Committee

Annual Report  
2019/20

# Chair's Foreword

I am delighted to introduce the 2019/20 Annual Report of the Corporate Parenting Advisory Committee. I have been proud to chair this important Committee again this year. As Deputy Leader of the Council and Chair of the Committee I would like to thank my fellow Committee members for their focus and hard work to ensure the wellbeing of our looked after children and care leavers.

As you will see from the report the Committee has once again considered a very large volume of work during the year and we have been very busy. Highlights have included hearing detailed feedback from young people through a number of engagement sessions which will inform our work as a Committee and for the upcoming Corporate Parenting Strategy. It has been great to see the experiences of our looked after children first hand and their feedback will be vital in our forward work plan.

Our commitment to our looked after children and care leavers and the importance Committee members place on their role can be seen from the variety of work undertaken throughout the year. Of particular interest has been finding out more about our Child Friendly City Programme an exciting programme aimed at ensuring Children rights are adhered to and that young people across the city can have a voice and have an input in decisions that impact them.

Attendance at Committee meetings has remained high throughout the year showing the dedication our individual elected members have to the work undertaken by the Committee and the will to support our looked after children and care leavers across the city.

I look forward to chairing the Committee again in 2019/20 and for us all to continuing to work as corporate parents to nurture, respect and to be as ambitious for our looked after children and young people as we would for our own children.

I would also like to thank those managers and partners who have taken time and effort to share and impart their knowledge and understanding of issues, solutions, good practice and achievement. We as Committee members are grateful for those insights.

**Councillor Sarah Merry**

Chair of the Corporate Parenting Advisory Committee

# Assistant Director's Overview

The Annual report for 2019/2020 continues to showcase the wide range of work the Corporate Parenting Advisory Committee have been involved in over the past year. Throughout the report there is a strong focus on the voice of our looked after children across the city. A great example of this is from a wide range of engagement sessions held with our Bright Sparks Forum and previous engagement through our Bright Spots Survey.

Based on what our young people have told us about their concerns, things that are working well and their dreams and aspirations for the future the annual report has been structured to highlight the work undertaken by the Committee based around a number of these themes. This information will also be used to shape our Corporate Parenting Strategy.

This exciting strategy will aim to strengthen the links between our looked after children and Corporate Parenting Committee and our shared Corporate Parenting action plan will bring together our key stakeholders to help improve the lives of our looked after children and care leavers.

The links between our looked after children across Cardiff and the Corporate Parenting Committee will be strengthened with our young people shaping our future work programme for the upcoming year.

This will build on a wide range of initiatives to support our young people across the city such as Cardiff 2030 vision, our Child Friendly City programme and Cardiff Commitment all aimed at improving the outcomes, educational attainment and aspirations for young people across the City.

**Deborah Driffield**

Assistant Director Children's Services

# Introduction

Cardiff Council's Corporate Parenting Advisory Committee are collectively responsible for ensuring that all children who are looked after by the Council receive the best possible care and support. That they are appropriately safeguarded and achieve the best possible chances in life.

This report presents the Committee's main activities during 2019/20. It begins with background information that is helpful in understanding the Committee's function, purpose and the scale of its responsibilities. Following sections summarise activity. Those sections include:

- A record of meetings and attendance.
- Young Person Participation.
- The Annual Programme
- Activity in Monitoring Performance.

## Background

### Corporate Parenting

The term "corporate parenting" indicates that the local authority has the same interest in the progress and attainment of looked-after children as a reasonable parent has for their own child.

The Welsh Local Government Association Corporate Parenting Workbook states:

*"...good corporate parenting only happens when elected members and officers are working together to protect and promote the interests of looked-after children".*

The overarching objective of the Corporate Parenting Advisory Committee as stated in the terms of reference is:

*"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".*

### Governance

A Corporate Parenting Panel was established in Cardiff during 2007 as a good practice mechanism to support the discharge of the Council's responsibilities. That Panel had no statutory role or formal decision making powers.

In 2014 the Corporate Parenting Panel and the Children and Young People Scrutiny Committee undertook a joint Inquiry to consider:

- Ways to raise the profile of corporate parenting.
- The role of the Panel.
- Lines of accountability.

As a result of the recommendations arising from the inquiry, a formal Corporate Parenting Advisory Committee was created to replace the Panel. The Committee met for the first time on the 8th of October 2014. The current Membership is now in its third year, with a small number of changes in individuals during the period.

The Annual report covers the period of beginning of May 2019 to the end of April 2020

The Current Terms of Reference for the Corporate Parenting Advisory Committee are set out below which covers the period reported. The current Terms of Reference are under review and subject to change.

An independent expert was appointed to under a review of the Member Safeguarding Protocol. In January 2020, Council considered and approved an ordinary resolution which welcomed the independent review of the Members' Safeguarding Protocol and put forward proposals in relation to the remit of the review which included; the development of a protocol on the corporate parenting role of Councillors to align with the Member Safeguarding Protocol; a review of the terms of reference and operation of the Corporate Parenting Committee; and, make recommendations on how the role of the committee can be strengthened. Due to restrictions as a result of the Covid-19 pandemic the review was not completed during this reporting period.

## **Terms of Reference**

As a Committee, the Corporate Parenting Advisory Committee has a remit:

- To advise and make recommendations to the Cabinet or Council (pursuant to s.102 (4) of the Local Government Act 1972) with regard to the discharge of corporate parenting functions.
- To ensure that Corporate Parenting has a role and status within the Council.

During 2019/20 the Committee operated within the following terms of reference:

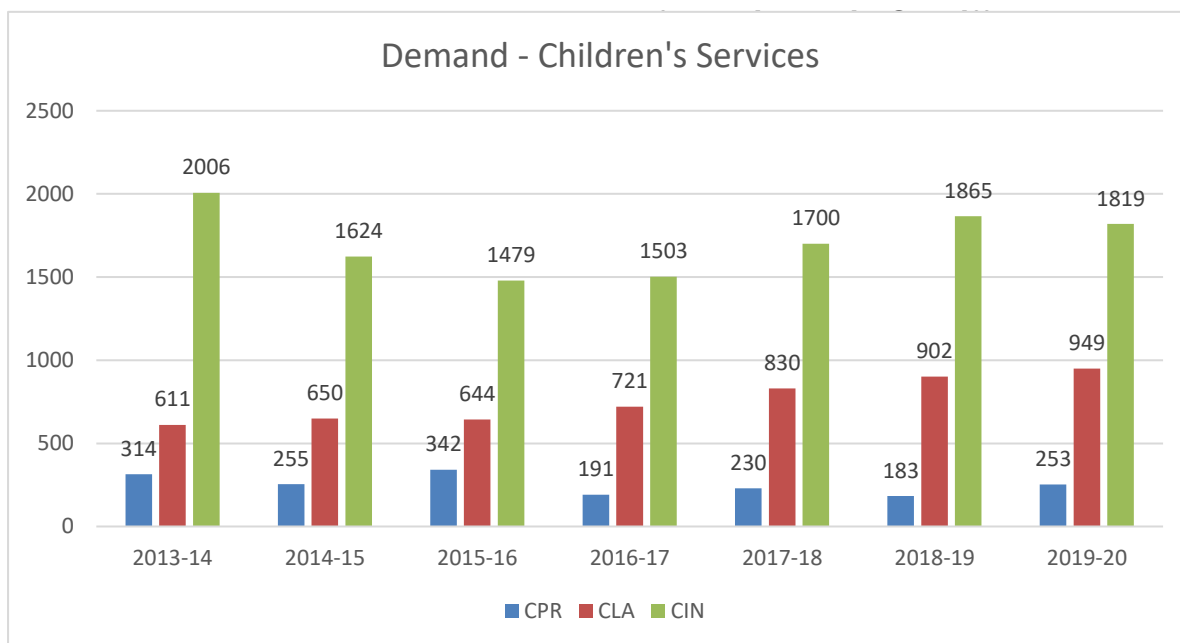
- |     |  |
|-----|--|
| a)  | To champion the life chances and rights of Children Looked After; Children in need; Care Leavers and children and young people in the criminal justice system across the Council, with Elected Members and partners. |
| (b) | To actively promote real and sustained improvements by ensuring that there are mechanisms in place to:   |

ascertain and have regard to the child or young person's view, wishes and feelings, so far as reasonable practicable; have regard to the importance of promoting and respecting the child or young person's dignity; have regard to the characteristics, culture and beliefs of the child or young person; have regard to the importance of providing appropriate support to enable the child or young person to participate in decisions that affect them; have regard to the importance of promoting the upbringing of the child by the child's family, in so far as doing so is consistent with promoting the child's well-being; Where the child is under the age of 16, ascertain and have regard to the views, wishes and feelings of those with parental responsibility for the child, in so far as doing so is consistent with the well-being of the child, and reasonably practicable; That there is a follow on provision for young people leaving care that meets the need of young adults.

- (c) To develop and undertake a programme of consultation, listening and engagement events with Children Looked After, Children in Need and Care Leavers as well as visits to services providing support and advice to those children and young people.
- (d) To recommend ways in which more integrated services can be developed across all Council directorates, schools and other stakeholders to lead towards: - Improved education attainment and achievement for Children Looked After, Children in need and Care Leavers; Emotional and Mental Health and Well-being Support for Children Looked After, Children in Need, and Care Leavers; Improvements in services for children with disabilities; To encourage Looked After Children, Children in need and Care Leavers to become active citizens.
- (e) To ensure performance monitoring systems are in place, and regularly review performance data to ensure sustained performance improvements in outcomes;
- (f) To benchmark and learn from best practice of other Local Authorities;
- (g) To receive all relevant Children's Services inspection and annual reports, including: Children's Homes Quality of Care Report; Child Practice Review Themes, Fostering Annual Quality of Care Report; Adoption Fostering Annual Quality of Care Report; 4C's Commissioning; Out of Area Annual Report; Education Report; Children's Complaints reports; and Advocacy Annual Report;
- (h) To develop, monitor and review a corporate parenting strategy, and ensure its effective implementation through work plans and corporate parenting training programmes;
- (i) To submit an annual progress report to the Cabinet and make recommendations 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 submit an Annual Report on the work of the Committee to full Council;
- (m) All Members of the Committee will be required to undertake relevant training to enable them to properly discharge their duties;

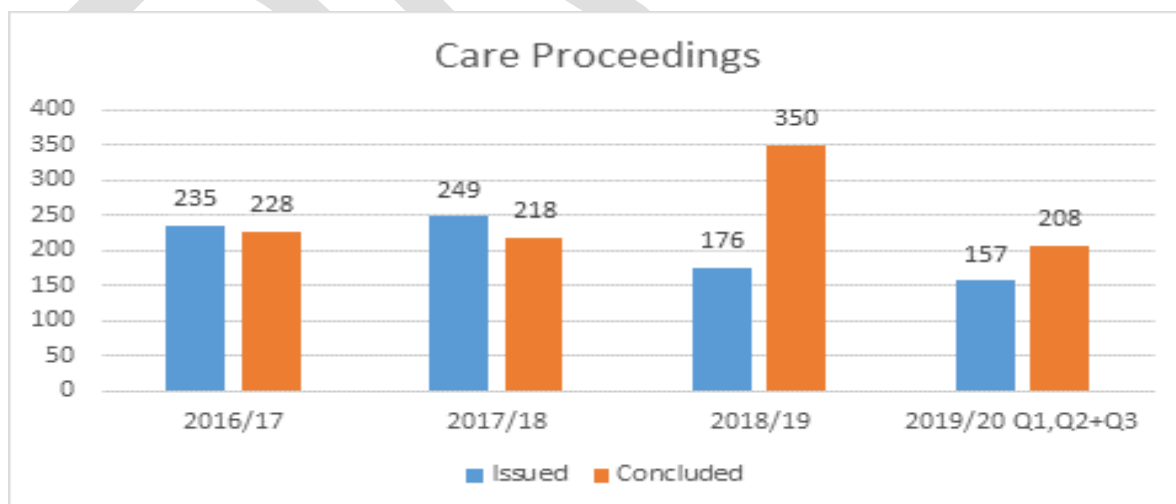


# The Population

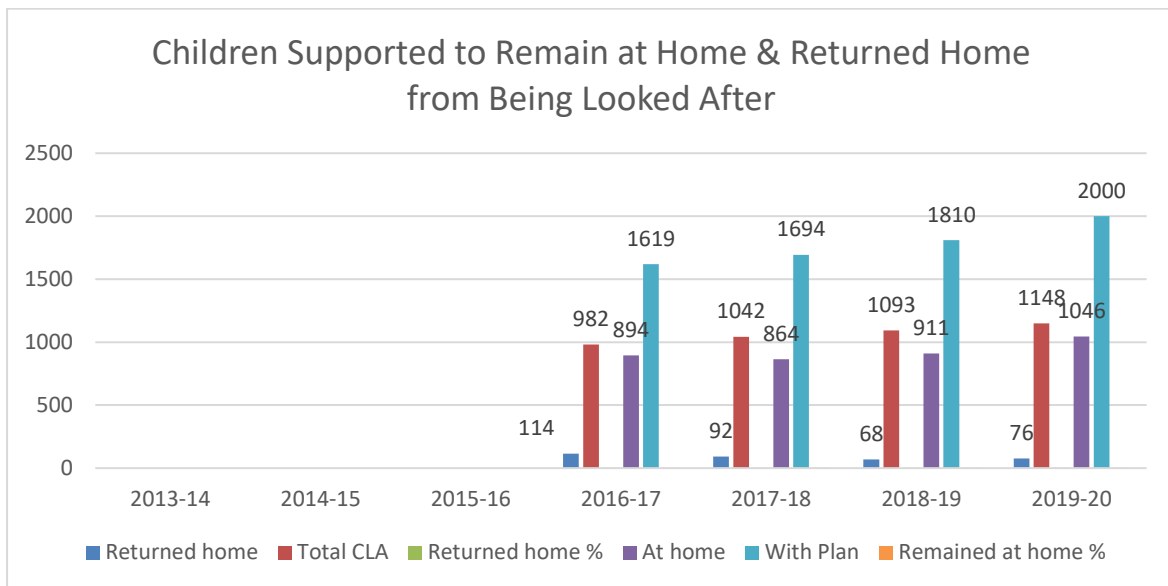


Of the 2000 children with a Care and Support Plan at 31<sup>st</sup> March 2020, 52.3% were supported **to live at home** and were therefore not being looked after.

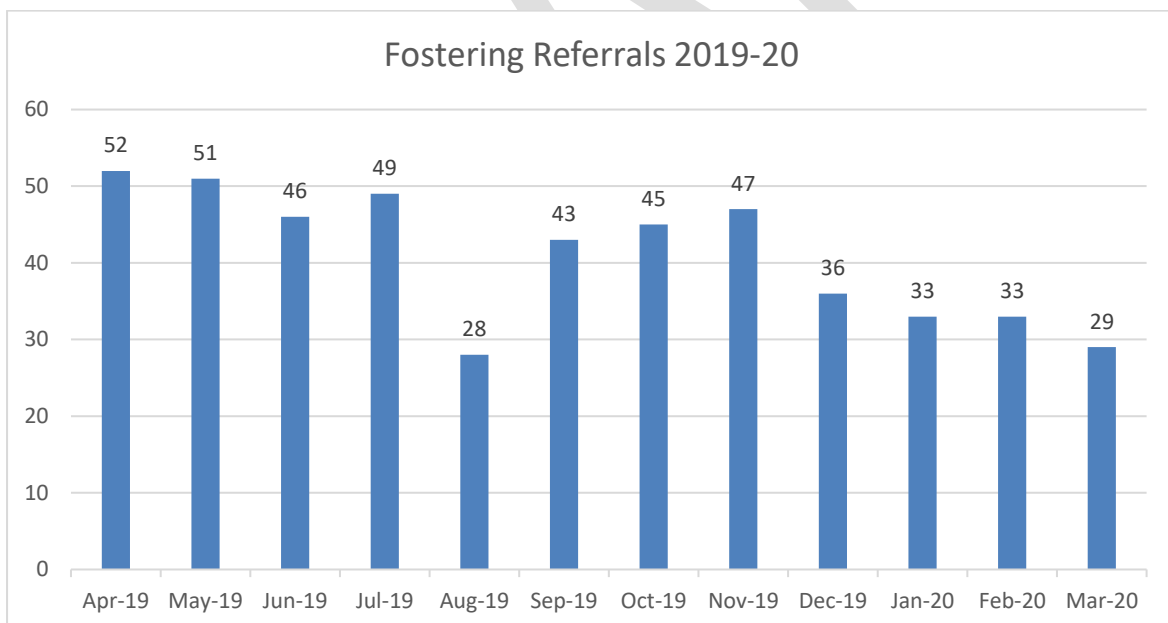
Care proceedings data outlined below cover up to quarter 3, quarter 4 data is currently unavailable at the time of report due to difficulty in collating manually during COVID 19 pandemic restrictions.



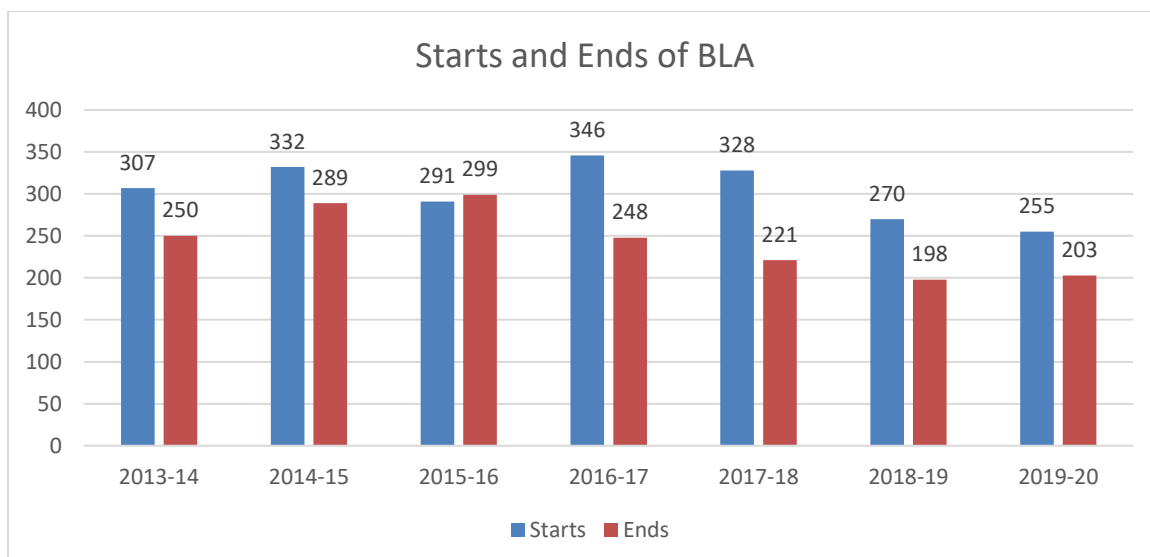
Of the total number of 1,148 children who were looked after during the 2019/20 year, **76 returned home**.



In addition to the 76 children who were returned home from care, **171 children were in the care of their parents**, but remain subject to a Care Order, and **148 children were placed with relative carers**.



Care proceedings issued and concluded data covering 2018-2019 is still being formulated at the time of the report.



56.6% (388/685) of looked after children in regulated placements were placed in Cardiff as of 31<sup>st</sup> March 2020

65.5% (449/685) of looked after children were in **external provider placements** as of the 31<sup>st</sup> March 2020.

Of the children who were **care leavers** in 2018/19, **54%** (40/74) were engaged in **education, training or employment** one year after leaving care.

Of the total number of **care leavers**, **21.39%** (77/360) experienced **homelessness** during the year.

As of 31<sup>st</sup> March 2020 **81 children were in external residential placements**

93.7% of care leavers were in suitable accommodation at the time of leaving care

8.07% (77/954) of children experienced **more than 3 placements**. The ceiling target is not to exceed 9% which we were in line with. Cardiff were and continue to strive to ensure all children are in the right placement for them and that children are returned to Cardiff from out of area placements where appropriate for their needs.

# Attendance

## Meetings

During the 2019/20 municipal year, four Committee meetings were held

The scheduled meetings were held on the 15th July 2019, 17<sup>th</sup> September 2019, 18<sup>th</sup> November 2019 and 28<sup>th</sup> January 2020.

## Membership

Membership of the Committee is decided at the beginning of each year by full Council. Seats are allocated on a politically proportionate basis. The Committee is chaired by the Deputy Leader of the Council and includes 3 Cabinet members. There were two changes of individual membership during the 2018/19 term. During 2018/19 members of the Committee were as follows:

COUNCILLOR REPRESENTATIVE		ATTENDANCE	
		<i>Meetings: Possible</i>	<i>Meetings: Actual</i>
Sarah Merry Chair	Labour (Deputy Leader, Cabinet Member for Education, Employment and Skills)	4	4
Cllr Sue Lent Deputy Chair	Labour	4	3
Cllr Fenella Bowden	Independent	4	4
Cllr Sean Driscoll *	Conservative	3	3
Cllr Fenella Bowden	Independent	4	4
Cllr Graham Hinchey	Labour (Cabinet Member for Children & Families)	4	4
Cllr Robert Hopkins**	Liberal Democrats	3	3
Cllr Shaun Jenkins	Conservative	4	3
Cllr Ashley Lister	Labour	4	4

\*Members who left the Committee during the year. \*\*New Members of the Committee.

Meetings were also attended by a core group of senior managers from Children's Services Education and Cardiff and Vale University Health Board along with a young person. They attended in the capacity of advisors to respond to questions. Invited guest speakers presented to the Committee. Further information is provided on those discussions in the following section of this report.

# Summary of 2019/20 Business

## Engagement / participation of young people

The Committee's current terms of reference require its members to hold events and undertake visits. To ensure 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 to act upon feedback. The Committee may recommend the appointment of co-opted Committee Members for approval by Council.

### Children's Rights

The rights of children and young people must be upheld in accordance with the Social Services and Wellbeing (Wales) Act 2014, the Children Act 2004, Children Act 1989, the United Nations (UN) Convention on the Rights of the Child 1991, and the Human Rights Act 1998.

The UN Convention on the Rights of the Child infers that:

- All departments and all levels should put children's interest first (article 3).
- Special attention should be given to any children who are suffering discrimination (article 2).
- The active and informed participation of children as citizens and rights holders should be promoted (article 12.)

### Extracts from the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child

#### Article 2

1. States Parties shall respect and ensure the rights set forth in the present Convention to each child within their jurisdiction without discrimination of any kind, irrespective of the child's or his or her parent's or legal guardian's race, colour, sex, language, religion, political or other opinion, national, ethnic or social origin, property, disability, birth or other status.

2. States Parties shall take all appropriate measures to ensure that the child is protected against all forms of discrimination or punishment on the basis of the status, activities, expressed opinions, or beliefs of the child's parents, legal guardians, or family members.

#### Article 12

1. States Parties shall assure to the child who is capable of forming his or her own views the right to express those views freely in all matters affecting the child, the views of the child being given due weight in accordance with the age and maturity of the child.

2. For this purpose, the child shall in particular be provided the opportunity to be heard in any judicial and administrative proceedings affecting the child, either directly, or through a representative or an appropriate body, in a manner consistent with the procedural rules of national law.

The Committee throughout the year were updated on how the voice of looked after children have been incorporated in a range of areas of work and were made aware of a range of initiatives and projects in development to further strengthen the voice of the child.

It should be noted that listening, consultation, and engagement permeates throughout the Committee's programme, as detailed in further sections of this report. Through a number of reports such as Complaints and representations reports and Independent Reviewing Officer service report the voice of looked after children are placed at the centre. There has also been a wide range of specific Participation initiatives, programmes and projects presented to the Committee aimed to strengthen the voice of a young person and ensure that our young people have meaningful engagement to have an active role in shaping services that affect them.

## **Theme**

### **Participation**

1. 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;

### **The experience of looked after children and outcomes**

2. Promoting permanency
3. Providing high quality placements.
4. Provide young people leaving care with appropriate preparation for adult life, taking account of all of their needs including their wellbeing.

### **Specialist services**

5. Continue to improve services for children with disabilities, including short break care.
6. Improve and support the emotional health and mental wellbeing of looked after children.

### **Education**

7. Improve the education attainment and achievement for all looked after children.

### **The role of the Corporate Parenting Advisory Committee within the Council**

8. Strengthening the role of the Corporate Parenting Advisory Committee within the Council.

## Young Person Participation

### **Presentation on UNICEF UK Child Friendly City Strategy**

During July 2019 a member of the Community Education team presented to the Committee. The presentation informed members on the Partnership between Cardiff and UNICEF UK in working towards Cardiff becoming a Child Friendly City. The programme is aimed to help make cities and communities places where all children including the most vulnerable feel safe, heard and nurtured.

The vision of the Child Friendly City was shared with the Committee

*“A city with children and young people at its heart, where the voices, needs and rights of all children and young people are respected.*

*“A city where all children and young people, regardless of belief, ethnicity, background or wealth are safe, healthy, happy and able to share in the city’s success”*

Details were given on how the vision could be reached through a set of 5 goals with 17 commitments to action showing how the goals would be reached

The 5 goals presented to the Committee were:

- Goal 1** Every child and young person is valued, respected and treated fairly
- Goal 2** Every child and young person has their voice, needs and priorities heard and taken into account
- Goal 3** All children and young people grow up in a safe and supportive home
- Goal 4** All children and young people access high quality education that promotes their rights and helps them develop their skills and talents to the full
- Goal 5** Children have good physical, mental and emotional health and know how to stay healthy

Members expressed concern at the number of elected members who have still not undertaken the UNICEF training and queried whether there is an expectation that all staff will undergo the training. Members were advised that the training provided by UNICEF concentrated on police officers, those officers from education and social services as opposed to across the board. However, there is a mandatory eLearning module which staff have to undertake.

Discussions were held for the need for a child in care to get their voice heard, the prioritisation of education for the child who is looked after and queried how is more funding and support being identified for these children and not necessarily through a classroom environment. Members were advised that it is a difficult challenge, and that engagement can only take place when they feel it is appropriate. It is important to have the processes and structure to be able to have meaningful conversations. There is still work to be done on this, the Child Friendly City is an umbrella but Children’s Services and Education have the responsibility of doing the work.

## **The Mind of my own app**

In November 2019 the service manager for children services provided a presentation on a digital app to increase participation of looked after children. The Mind of my Own App would provide an opportunity for looked after children to provide real time feedback to services and support. Members were given case studies and key statistics outlining how the app has worked in other local authorities. Information was also given on how looked after children with additional needs would be able to access the app and get their voices heard.

Members expressed concern as to what would happen if communication was urgent, officers informed members that there is a process whereby reports are screened and contact will be made after. Such details will be clearly identified through an implementation plan. Discussions were held around the age of the young people using the app and how those with additional learning needs would be able to benefit. The Committee were informed that those children with additional learning needs who may struggle to share their views with the App will be able to share their views, wishes and feelings via Mind of my Own Express which is aimed at supporting communication in a primarily pictorial format.

CPAC were informed that a small group of young people in the Bright Sparks group tested the app, one person had literacy needs. The young people were actively engaged in the app and thought it was something that would benefit them and they would use.

## **Bright Sparks Awards**

On the 15<sup>th</sup> November 2019 Committee members Councillor Hinchey and Councillor Lister attended the Bright Sparks Awards ceremony, in 2019 the theme chosen by young people was the theme of "Heroes" providing an opportunity for looked after children to reflect on what and who a hero is. The event was attended by approximately 150 people including a range of staff from Social Services and the Lord Mayor. As part of the awards, the young people chose to introduce a Lifetime Achievement Award and dedicated the award to a foster carer who has provided an amazing 25 years of service to caring for children and young people. Committee members noted that it was really encouraging to hear young people talk of their parents, teachers and caregivers as heroes and to see how they recognised the people who have made a positive impact on their lives.

## **Voices from Care Cymru**

Voices from Care Cymru is an organisation that provides an independent voice for care experienced children and young people in Wales and delivers a range of services to support young people.

During January 2020 the Programmes Manager from Voices from Care Cymru provided the Committee with information about the project including the importance on supporting young people with their emotional and mental health, of sibling relationships; of being loved; and of stability and breaking the stigma that young people in care cannot do things that others can.



Members expressed concerns on how they could help support the Voices from Care organisation and were advised that responsibilities of corporate parents and raising an awareness of the voices from care; if there are activities and initiatives taking place young people would welcome the attendance of corporate parents; be champions for care experienced young people.

<b>Presentations / Reports</b>	<b>Dates presented</b>	<b>Guest speaker</b>
1. Child Friendly City strategy	July 2019	Community Education team
2. Mind of my own App	November 2019	Operational Manager
3. Voices from Care Cymru	January 2020	Programme Manager – Voices from Care Cymru

## **Experience of looked after children and outcomes**

### **Good practice in leaving Care**

Sections 105 to 115 of the Social Services and Well-being (Wales) Act 2014 place duties on a local authority to provide support for children and young persons who it has 'looked after' when they cease to be looked after (care leavers). The support provided is intended to be equivalent to that which a child who has not been looked after might reasonably expect from his or her parents.

During July 2019 Committee meeting, members were presented with what support was available to those Looked after children who have left care. The Committee were presented with information about categories of looked after children leaving care and what support is available.

The presentation outlined the key challenges facing care leavers that is faced UK wide:

- 43% are not in training, education or employment at the age of 19 years. (Wales figures)
- 43 per cent of care leavers felt the main professional supporting them had been unhelpful in helping them think about future housing needs. (UK figures)
- 40 per cent of care leavers say that not having enough savings for a deposit was a barrier to accessing accommodation. (UK figures)

Under section 108 of the 2014 Act, local authorities have duties towards young people in foster care who wish to continue living with their foster parents beyond the age of 18. The Committee were given information on the "When I'm ready" scheme.

During the meeting, members discussed a range of issues in relation to support for care leavers. Members referred to the Mind of My Own app and asked whether consideration is being given to those leaving care being allowed access. Officers noted that as the app is being purchased by the authority, the view is that access should remain with care leavers certainly until the age of 25. Members queried how we support our young people who are attending university. Officers advised that Personal Advisors were very good at providing advice, whether that be finance and budgeting issues, housing, the yellow box scheme which is an equipment exchange. It is largely about creating independence as opposed to dependency. As officers it is also necessary to sign off on financial assistance, for example for a gap in finance for accommodation. As parents we would provide that for our children, and the authority has to offer similar assistance.

## **Fostering update**

The recruitment and retention of foster carers continues to be a priority area for the service to address the balance between placements with in-house foster carers and independent fostering agencies. In January 2019, a Fostering Project Team was established to review fees & allowances and recruitment & retention.

The Operational Manager for Substitute Family Care provided an update to the Committee in September 2019 on the Fostering arrangements and provisions across Cardiff. Information was given on the recruitment and retention of foster carers, the impact on recruitment and plans for the future.

Members were informed of next steps including a review of resources and an additional funding of 300k recurring this will help with service modernisation, providing 24 hours informal support and plans to introduce 'finder's fee' for existing foster carers.

The Operational Manager noted the impact including a significant increase in enquiries including enquiries from IFA foster carers wishing to transfer to the in house service.

However, the Operational Manager stated that there was no quick solution and that the timeframe for application of fostering arrangements to placement is approximately 9 months. During the meeting members discussed the compliance monitoring which has now been in place for the last few months which allows the team to look at blockages and drift.

Members were advised that currently foster carers receive in the region of £450 per week, the majority of the monies received is not taxable and foster carers are still entitled to other universal benefits.

## **NYAS residential review**

The National Youth Advocacy Service (NYAS) is a service that provides advocacy support to children and vulnerable adults.

In November 2019 Committee meeting, members were provided with a presentation from the service manager of (NYAS) on its participation programme. Members were informed of the meaning of participation and the Committee were invited to comment, seek clarification on the presentation.

The Committee discussed the involvement of young children and the feedback provided. It was noted that small focus groups were formed with young people to discuss the service provided by Social Workers, the quality of the support provided, the contact provided and the aftercare support for care leavers. It was also noted that young people have been taking part in the interview process with in the service. Members queried the nature of changes as a result of the participation and were pleased to note that there were tangible outcomes and that the listening events provided a good source of feedback.

## **Children Services Locality Review**

In November 2019 members were provided with a detailed presentation outlining the new locality model for Children's Services. The Committee were informed that Cardiff will be split into three areas, with each area having an Operational Manager; Cardiff North, Cardiff East and Cardiff South.

The Committee were informed that the goal was to deliver excellence and to improve a child's journey by aligning services to the model. A number of key factors were analysed in establishing the areas:

Key factors were:

Deprivation,  
Policing,  
Education,  
Health

It was noted that as the city grows the population density changes the proposed areas will need to be periodically reviewed. Officers also presented the current cases held in each area:

1. Cardiff North -718 cases,
2. Cardiff East- 877 cases
3. Cardiff South - 791 cases.

Members expressed their support and for the model and locality regions that have been created. Discussions were held around the need for joint working, particularly between Social Workers and Education. Members raised the need for funding for children who are looked after, it was noted that the PDG for looked after children is administered by the consortia. Members welcomed the opportunity of hearing from the Consortia as to how that funding is allocated.

## Out of area placements update

Members were provided with an update on Children's out of area Placements at the January 2020 Committee meeting. Information was presented in regards to the types of placements, issues and a forward work plan. Officers presented information in regards to the reasons a child may be placed out of county:

- Exploitation/High risk behaviour
- Abuse and Neglect
- Drug & alcohol
- Terminally ill parents
- Domestic violence
- Sexual Abuse

Information was shared in regards to the issues facing out of area placements such as the insufficient numbers of in house foster carers, the reliance on independent fostering agencies and that placements are often led by what vacancies were available at the time.

The vision of local placements for local children was shared with the Committee and a forward plan to meet some of the challenges was outlined to members. This included actively recruiting in house foster carers and working with IFAs and local residential providers to develop relationships as well as introducing planning and forecasting.

The Operational Manager outlined to the Committee what work was underway to meet some of these challenges, such as a new in house residential provision. This would provide an in house assessment unit and would provide the opportunity to assess children and young people over a 12 week period, avoiding crisis driven moves.

Members queried how the authority kept in touch with those children who reside further afield and were informed that Social Workers undertake visits and reviews and that the Independent reviewing Officer would always have an oversight.

<b>Presentations / Reports</b>	<b>Dates presented</b>	<b>Guest speaker</b>
1. Good practice leaving care	July 2019	Operational Manager – Specialist Services
2. Fostering update	September 2019	Operational Manager
3. Locality Review	November 2019	Operational Manager
4. NYAS review	November 2019	Service Manager for NYAS
5. Out of area placements	January 2020	Operational Manager

## **Specialist Services**

### **Care and Support Plans**

The Social Services and Wellbeing Act (Wales) 2014 places a requirement to record information under the act there is a statutory requirement for every looked after Child to have a Part 6 Care and Support plan in place within 10 days of becoming looked after. These plans need to be updated regularly, including in preparation for a Looked after Child Review.

In July 2019 the Operational Manager for Specialist Services presented the importance of the voice of young people involved in their care and support plans as outlined in legislation. Details were given of when a care and support plan begins, how the plan is reviewed and what the plans aim to achieve in order to provide the best outcomes for looked after children.

### **Cardiff and the Vale UHB emotional and mental health development work**

In September 2019 the Committee were provided with information from a clinical psychologist on the Developmental Trauma Service for children who are looked after. The Committee were provided information outlining the service model, team structure and the challenges facing the service.

Members were given an outline of the service including the issues that were faced by young people and their families and the nature of problems and barriers that arose during meetings. Discussions also took place around funding, work with schools and training.

### **Fostering Well-being Programme**

In November 2019 Committee members were provided a presentation on a new Welsh Government funded Fostering Wellbeing programme. Members of the Fostering Network team presented a short video and outline of the programme.

Following a successful pilot in conjunction with Cwm Taf social services 2017 – 2019. The Fostering Network noted that they were rolling out the programme in phases by across Wales.

The programme aims to run a series of masterclasses to enable foster carers and supervising social workers to gain the skills, competence and confidence needed to help inspire and equip children and young people to fulfil their potential.

The programme focused on 5 basic needs that contributes to a looked after child's well being

- 1- Social – including being confident and forming appropriate relationships

- 2- Physical – including having a well-balanced diet, suitable accommodation, good health and recreation.
- 3- Emotional – including a positive self-image, managing of stress, the giving and receiving of love being free from abuse
- 4- Cultural – including having a sense of identity and belonging and understanding cultural norms and behaviours
- 5- Learning - access to formal and informal learning

Members confirmed their support of the programme but expressed concern about the financial pressures on schools who have a number of children who are looked after; The Committee were informed that there would be investment in the programme.

Members were keen to ensure that that knowledge in the masterclass will be widely shared. Foster Carers will be recruited as programme pioneers, as well as the skills and experience they have, they will receive training and support to help them cascade learning. This will aid sharing resources and understanding local issues. Concerns were raised by the Committee that Foster Carers are still not feeling valued and queried whether involvement in this programme could lead to some form of recognised qualification. Members were advised that Foster Carer Pioneers would receive some payment.

<b>Presentations / Reports</b>	<b>Dates presented</b>	<b>Guest speaker</b>
1. Care and Support plans	July 2019	Operational manager – Specialist Services
2. Cardiff and the Vale UHB emotional and mental health development work	September 2019	Clinical Psychologist
3. Fostering Well – being programme	November 2019	Fostering Well-being network- manager

## **Education**

### **Pupil Development Grant**

The Pupil Development Grant is a grant available to schools to support looked after and formerly looked after children. In September 2019 the regional lead for the Pupil Development Grant presented to the committee an outline on how the grant is allocated, the national model and the outcomes and objectives of the grant.

Members were informed that the Pupil Development Grant is allocated:

1. For The Salary for regional lead
2. To Support for Children placed outside of Wales
3. Strategically Delivered Support

Funding is allocated to clusters of schools and settings to build capacity and to provide bespoke interventions, both of which need to be based on evidence and impact. All activity in relation to the grant should consider sustainability beyond the lifetime of the grant.

The Committee were informed of the vision, values and objectives of the consortium and were given detail of the how the impact will be monitored. Information was given Projects must aim to enhance curriculum opportunities to support social and emotional development, which impacts on the following areas: Raising attainment/achievement, Improve attendance, Reduce exclusions.

Discussions were held amongst the Committee in regards to funding going to clusters of schools in order to provide bespoke interventions and build capacity. It was noted that funding will be based on evidence and impact. The clusters will have a CLA lead who will work across both primary and secondary schools. Members were advised that although a presentation had been provided outlining the new reporting arrangements as yet the figures cannot be reported.

### **Educational outcomes for Looked after Children 2018- 2019**

In January 2020 members were provided with the annual Briefing report in respect of the Performance of Cardiff Looked After Children which provided analysis of the educational outcomes for the academic years of Children Looked After in years 2, 6 9 and 11. Members were advised that it was important to note, with particular reference to the Key Stage 4 information, the reporting mechanism has changed; the information provided is from a specific point in time, namely the end of March 2019 which shows that 79 young people were looked after in year 11, 27 of which were out of County.

The report provided an analysis of educational outcomes for the academic year 2018/19 for children in the care of Cardiff Local Authority and identified the main strengths and shortcomings in performance. It also sets out future key actions.

Educational outcomes for children and young people in Cardiff have improved over the past five years, reflecting the focus on education as a key priority for Cardiff at the heart of the Council's Capital Ambition:

*"A good education provides the best start in life and remains the surest route out of poverty. We will continue to improve and invest in our schools and to make sure that every child has the best possible start in life."*

In October 2019, the council launched 'Cardiff 2030: a ten year vision for a capital city of learning and opportunity', building on progress made since the launch of 'Cardiff 2020' in 2016. Against this overall improving picture, 'Cardiff 2030' highlights the continuing importance of focused action in a number of areas, including the continuing need to improve educational outcomes for looked after children.

Officers noted that the attendance of looked after children educated in Cardiff schools in the primary phase is very good with an overall primary attendance figure of 94.76%. attendance of looked after children educated in the secondary phase is significantly below that of all pupils. The overall secondary attendance figure 93.8%. The drop in attendance through the key stages links directly to the drop in overall attainment. Officers will analyse in greater depth the reasons behind KS4 lack of achievement and identify changes that can be made and additional support that can be given. Additional staffing to support looked after children within the Education Directorate will be explored and the work on improving and monitoring the PEPs to identify underachievement will be central to improving performance

Members noted the report and queried the difference in performance of those in care and school locally as opposed to those out of county. Officers advised that emphasis is placed on bringing young people back to Cardiff as soon as possible and that the best chance for those young people is that they are attending school locally so that they have access to all the support services that can be provided. Concern was expressed amongst the Committee as to whether schools could do all that they could not to exclude children in care in secondary schools. Officers advised that schools are always challenged by the team about any proposed exclusion but if children are in school out of county it is far more difficult to challenge.

### **Extract from the report**

We have focussed on increasing the transparency of data and a central robust tracking system. Our central Virtual tracker is being used effectively to track Looked After children. This was highlighted by Estyn as excellent practice.

- We have stronger working relationship between the local authority and the Challenge Advisors in the Consortium ensuring that schools receive the appropriate degree of challenge.

They are updated on a regular basis to the number and year group of looked after children in their schools. Any particular concerns are raised in termly meetings.



- Stronger, effective partnerships with Children’s Services have meant quicker responses to concerns and removal of barriers impeding pupil progress.
- Education teams have all committed pledges to support looked after children in their joint role as corporate parents.
- A new PEP format and a new system of responsibility for completing PEPs by designated teachers in schools was initiated in September 2019. This will be an ongoing development priority but already there are improvements to note.

<b>Presentations / Reports</b>	<b>Dates presented</b>	<b>Guest speaker</b>
6. Pupil Development Grant	September 2019	Operational Manager
7. Education performance report	January 2020	Achievement Leader

## **The role of the Corporate Parenting Advisory Committee within the Council**

### **Cardiff Children’s Services Strategy 2019 – 2022**

In July 2019 Assistant Director for Children’s Services provided the Committee with information of the need and development of a new Cardiff Children’s Services Strategy 2019 -2022.

The Committee were provided with an outline for the need for the strategy focusing on key areas of significant pressures:

1. External demands and complexities
2. Placements
3. Legislation and work with the Courts
4. Workforce

The presentation outlined key performance indicators and future improvements that would be made to meet the challenges and pressures. Key priorities were set out including how Children’s Services would develop a strength based approach and how outcomes and improvements would be measured. A staff structure was provided to the Committee which provided a new locality focus model.

A discussion was held noting that the development and implementation of the strategy was a huge piece of work, Members noted that the task would prove disruptive and wanted to be reassured that it was transformative and that the service would be better. Members were advised that a lot of consideration has gone into the strategy and officers accepted that it was indeed a huge piece of work but was necessary to ensure that a difference is made to the lives of our young people and their families.

## **Corporate Parenting Strategy**

The terms of reference required the Committee to develop, monitor and review a corporate parenting strategy, and ensure its effective implementation through work plans.

In January 2020 the Committee were presented with an update from officers on the new Corporate Parenting Strategy. Officers informed the Committee of the vision of the strategy and legislation applicable to looked after children and children in care to provide context to the document. The Committee were informed how the strategy will be co-produced with young people. Details were given on the work undertaken so far to engage looked after children including a timeline and details of engagement with young people and future engagement with stakeholders were outlined to the committee.

## **Member visits**

Councillor Bowden advised Members that she and Councillor Merry had attended a local High School in January. The purpose of the visit was to see the work undertaken to support looked after children and their carers. At the time of the visit there were 26 looked after children, it was noted to the Committee that only a few needed academic intervention. Although this is a positive it was noted that the biggest need for support was to support the emotional well-being and managing traumatised looked after children, there is a strong team at the school and staff are trained using Trauma Informed practice. The staff at the school are proactive in identifying the emotional and educational needs of young people and the well-being of staff was supported. There are 330 pupils on the SEN register, 34% of the school. They have been successful in obtaining 25 statements in 4 years

The Committee were advised that support is available to years 7 and years 8 via the ELPC to adjust to high school and that a permanent counsellor is employed via the Pupil Development Grant. Councillor Bowden and Councillor Merry were given a tour of the school and were able to meet a number of staff including the Deputy Head teacher and Safeguarding officer.

The key messages gained from the visit were:

- School does not use pupil exclusion but find different ways to tackle problems.

- Kinship carers – their need for support from CS together with funding for the carers to enable them to provide for the child; In many Kinship arrangements there is no one objectively organising contact with birth family & siblings; & there are no respite provisions;
- The lack of provision in Cardiff for an emotional trauma centre for young people who need it; the need for stronger advocacy. To support the family and the young person in care.

<b>Presentations / Reports</b>	<b>Dates presented</b>	<b>Guest speaker</b>
1. Children's Services strategy	July 2019	Assistant Director of Children's Social Services
2 Corporate Parenting Strategy	January 2020	Operational Manager

<b>Themes</b>	<b>Dates</b>	<b>Detail</b>
1. Young person Participation	July 2019	Presentation on UNICEF Child Friendly City Strategy
	November 2019	Mind of my own app presentation
	November 2019	Bright Sparks Awards
2. Experience of Looked After Children and Outcomes	July 2019	Good practice leaving care
	September 2019	Fostering update
	November 2019	Locality Review
	November 2019	NYAS residential review
3. Specialist Services	January 2020	Out of area placements
	July 2019	Care and support plans
	September 2019	Cardiff and Vale UHB emotional and mental health development work
4. Education	November 2019	Fostering Well- being programme
	September 2019	Pupil Development Grant
5. Role of Corporate Parenting Advisory Committee within the Council	January 2020	Education Performance Report
	July 2019	Children services strategy
	January 2020	Corporate Parenting Strategy

# Monitoring Performance

The terms of reference for the Committee require the Committee to regularly review performance data and ensure performance monitoring systems are in place to achieve sustained improvements. The following table lists the reports presented during 2019-20

Performance reports	Dates presented
1. Children's Homes Quality of Care report	September 2019
2. Children's Services report	November 2019
3. Complaints and representation report	January 2020
4. Independent Reviewing Officer Report	January 2020

## 1. Children's Services performance report

During November 2019, Quarter 1 of 2019/2020 were reported to the Committee. The purpose of the report was to help the Committee to understand the factors that impact on outcomes for children in need, looked after children and consider opportunities for improving outcomes.

### **Extracts from the report**

*At Quarter 1 2019/2020 Children's*

*934 children looked after.*

*71 starts of being looked after this quarter*

*39 ends of being looked after this quarter*

*385/ 676 (57.0%) children looked after in regulated placements are placed within Cardiff, increasing to 78.1% when taking neighbouring authorities into consideration.*

*97.7% of children looked after allocated to a social worker. Permanence secured for 7 children through adoption since 1 st April 2019.*

*In Quarter 1 it was reported that the following were working well:*

*Soft launch of Early Help Gateway in April - recruitment process for Family Support element of the Cardiff Family Advice Service completed and staff training and development is in progress. Staff morale is good and positive feedback has been received from families. Care Inspectorate Wales (CIW) visited the Family Support Service in April 2019*

- Children's Services Strategy "Delivering Excellent Outcomes" developed with engagement with children and young people from the Bright Start Forum, 11 Plus Team and the Adolescent Resource Centre*
- Fostering Fortnight was held during Quarter 1 to raise awareness of the in house fostering service and recruit new foster carers to Cardiff. At present, the number of children in in house fostering remains relatively stable, although the number of enquiries has increased - there were 15 full assessments ongoing at 30th June 2019.*

*But managers were worried about:*

*The interface and relationship between MASH / Support4Families and Family Help / Gateway needs strengthening to ensure consistent and correct step up and step down mechanisms.*

- More work to do fully embed rights and participation in everything we do from practice to strategy and to communicate effectively.*
- Supply of the right type of services for our most vulnerable children, including the lack of appropriate placement provision, scarcity of residential and foster care provision in a timely way to meet the needs of children and young people with more complex needs*
- Social Worker vacancies in Children's Services - for Quarter 1 stand at 31.6% and result in an over reliance on agency social workers.*
- Capacity within the Independent Reviewing Officer Service to complete timely children looked after review reports is challenging.*
- Challenges in the Children Looked After Service as the service prepares to move into a locality model.*
- Management of demand and complexity of caseloads.*
- Numbers of children waiting for adoption 12 months after Placement Order made (51, 31 of whom are not yet placed).*

*Plans in place:*

*Continue to work with the Institute of Public Care to explore best practice procedures and embed these into the service.*

- *Implement the Mind Of My Own app which will give young people an instant and convenient way to express their views, wishes and feelings, and social workers a smart way to record them.*
- *Implement the priorities in the Commissioning Strategy, including development of emergency placement options.*
- *A post to drive forward recruitment and retention was recruited to during Quarter 1 and a second post that will focus on workforce planning activities was also appointed to in the same recruitment process.*

Members noted that the Corporate Parenting Advisory Committee's Terms of Reference require the Committee 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 subject if Care and Support plans and care leavers.

The reports in respect of this item were considered exempt from publication as they contained exempt information of the description contained in Paragraph 12 of Part 4 and Paragraph 21 of Part 5 of Schedule 12A Local Government Act 1972.

## **2. Complaints & representations report**

The Committee's terms of reference state that it will receive Children's Services Complaints reports. 2. The current Welsh Government guidance and regulations in relation to social services complaints and representations came into being on 1st August 2014.

Citizens making complaints have a right to be listened to properly and have their concerns resolved quickly and effectively. Children's Services emphasis is on listening to concerns and using this learning to improve services for everyone who uses them. Complaints should be handled in such a way that the complainant is the focus, not the process, and that the particular circumstances of the complainant are taken into account (including their age or disability).

Where the complaint relates to a looked after child, a child in need or a care leaver the local authority has a duty to provide an advocate as required. All children or young people who make complaints are offered a meeting and all children and families will receive a written response to the concerns they have raised.

In January 2020 the Committee were presented with a Complaints and representation report covering the period from 1 st July to 30th September 2019

## **Extracts from the reports**

*During this quarter, the number of complaints received by Children's Services was 37, a decrease of 2 from Q1. a. Of the 37 complaints received, 12 of the complaints received were in relation to the Social Worker or the service received, a decrease from 20 recorded in Q1. A further 12 were disputing decision-making, a slight increase from Q1 were 11 were recorded. 3 complaints were received alleging a delay in providing service and 2 alleging inaccurate information being recorded. b. 13 complaints were received regarding the Child in Need Service, a slight decrease from Q1 (14). 13 complaints were received regarding the Looked after Children Service compared with 15 in Q1. Complaints regarding the Intake & Assessment Service remained static as 7 complaints were recorded in both Q1 and Q2. There were 2 complaints recorded under the Council's Corporate Complaints procedure.*

*Summary for Quarter 2 19. As at the 30th September 2019, the service were working with 2,877 children and young people and of these, we received: a. 37 complaints, a slight decrease from Quarter 1. 5 were directly from the young person, the same as Quarter 1 b. 19 compliments. Responses to AM / MP / Councillor Enquiry Letters 20. 18 AM / MP / Councillor Enquiry letters were received by Children's Services during the quarter, a decrease of 3 from Q1. 21. Requests for Information from statutory agencies: a. 150 requests were received and responded to on time, this compares to 177 received in Q1. b. 0 were completed outside of the statutory time frame. c. 0 requests were withdrawn d. There are no new requests in process at the time of writing. 22. The turnover has to be rapid due to the nature of the enquiries. Of these: a. 67 requests were from the Probation Service asking if there are children living in a household with individuals who have been bailed or will be etc. and wanting background information b. There were 20 requests from other Local Authorities' Children's Services Departments c. 63 requests were received directly from other services such as HMRC, Education and Health Services.*

The Committee noted the content of the reports.

## **Children's homes quality of care reports (Regulations 73 visits)**

Under Regulation and Inspection of Social Care Act (2016), Regulation 73 requires that the Responsible Individual undertakes visits to the care home every 3 months Under Regulation 80, the Responsible Individual must undertake a quality of care review every 6 months

In September members received the Annual Quality Assurance Report for Ty Storie short break service and Crossland's Childrens home covering the period April 2018 – April 2019. The aim of producing the report was to inform and drive improvements in the quality of care provided to the young people living in the home.

The reports outlined visits which included interviews with residents, managers and staff, inspections of the premises, inspection of the daily log of events and inspection of the record of complaints.

The Operational Manager for resources in Social Services presented members to the Committee The presentation covered complaints and allegations, staffing, feedback from young people and parents and areas of development.

Ty Storrie short break centre is purpose built to accommodate a wide range of disabilities and needs of users and their families who require this specialist facility.

### **Extract from the report (Annual Quality Assurance Report)**

#### **Ty Storrie Report**

6 new children were offered overnight respite during the period and 2 children received tea visits prior to overnight stays being introduced.

Contracted to deliver 863 bed spaces per year and 881 nights were delivered and 22 tea visits. Reference to a positive inspection report which was received in March 2019. The report stated that children were looked after by a committed and caring staff team, individual needs were understood and good relationships exist with parents and partner agencies. Overall it determined that children received a good standard of care and support during their stays with evidence of positive outcomes being achieved

### **Extract from the report (Annual Quality Assurance Report)**

#### **Crosslands report**

An inspection took place in October 2018 – which found that young people were well cared for by consistent staff and management team. Staff were well trained using Signs of Safety as the underpinning model alongside RA, individual plans and risk assessments.

- Care is taken to involve young people in education, health social and leisure activities and to maintain positive family links in line with individual care plans. Young people were making progress.
- There were no areas of non-compliance.

Members noted the significant staffing challenges during the period with two changes of interim managers, and that, amongst other things, future focus is on ensuring a more consistent and settled period for staff which will in turn have a positive impact on the quality of care.



## Independent Reviewing Officer Service Monitoring Report

Local authorities are required by law to appoint an Independent Reviewing Officer (IRO) to every child who is looked after. They monitor care plans, convene and chair reviews for children subject to care orders or accommodated voluntarily in placements with foster carers, in residential, secure establishments, living with kinship carers or placed for adoption. Their role is to ensure that each care plan clearly sets out the help, care and support each child needs and takes full account of each child's wishes and feelings and to raise any issues with a care plan if they are identified.

In January 2020 the Committee were provided with a performance report from the Independent Reviewing Officer service.

The report outlined to the Committee the role, the function and activity of the Independent Reviewing Officer service.

Members discussed the increase in the Looked after Children population and noted the trends identified through case audits and population analysis in particular in reference to the Courts making greater use of a legal process to place children at home with a parent under Placement with Parent Regulations (PWP). Members noted that it can be difficult to evidence satisfactory progress to the Court that there has been sufficient change that would warrant changing the order. It was noted that a team has been reviewing all the PWP care orders. The Officer advised that whilst the rising number of children has placed additional pressure on staff workloads no local authority is meeting the 100% threshold. Reviews are very rarely more than a few days out of time and if that is the case IRO's make a concerted effort to ensure as much information is available to ensure the best for the child.

### Extract from the report

The IROs role is to monitor, both at formal Looked After Review meetings and in between as well. The purpose of the review meeting is to consider the plan for the child, monitor progress and enable decisions to be made. Part 6 of the Social Services & Well-Being Act (Wales) 2014 relates to Looked After Children and the role of the IRO.

Under this part of the Act it is a statutory requirement for each Looked After Child to have an effective Care and Support plan that meets their day to day long term needs and which identifies the outcomes for the child, and also demonstrates the multiagency plans to meet the child's needs.

The plan achieves this by setting objectives for work with the child, birth family and caregivers in relation to the child's developmental needs. These needs include health, education, emotional wellbeing and behavioural development, identity, family and social relationships, social presentation and self-care skills.

The Safeguarding and Reviewing Service is responsible for coordinating and chairing Child Protection Conferences as well as independently chairing and reviewing children who are Looked After. The staffing establishment includes 15.5 members of staff employed as Independent Reviewing Officers (IRO's) with an additional IRO post that exclusively reviews families open to the Integrated Family Support Service (IFSS).

All IRO and Child Protection (CP) chairs in the service are able to undertake dual functions chairing Looked After Children reviews and/or Child Protection Conferences. The Independent Reviewing Officers are mostly all experienced social workers, however there have been some new additions to the team. A combination of experienced staff and new recruits has meant that the team has remained knowledgeable and innovative

## Conclusion

During 2019/2020 Committee members were provided with a vast variety of information from a number of sources helping the Committee to get a broad range of issues for Looked after children and those leaving care. The Committee were able to evaluate from departments in the authority and external partners to help build on their knowledge and gain a greater understanding of the everyday challenges faced by looked after children across the city.

As well as gaining an understanding of the challenges faced, the Committee were able to work with teams and be informed of initiatives to help overcome these challenges and were provided with a series of projects and programmes aimed at helping to improve the life chances of those young people who are looked after and those who have left care. Of particular interest were those projects that strengthened the voice of young people and strengthened children's rights.

Areas of particular interest to members during 2019/20 were:

- Child Friendly City Programme
- Mind of my own app
- Educational performance for looked after children.

### Moving forward into 2020/21

The Committee will continue to place looked after children at the centre of what they do and further strengthen the voice of the child in their work programme for the upcoming year.

A Corporate Parenting Strategy will be launched with an exciting action plan which will be able to deliver tangible outcomes for looked after children and care leavers across Cardiff.

The terms of reference will be reviewed in order to reflect the vision of the Committee which will provide greater focus to specific areas of work.

### **Key areas of development for the year ahead**

Key areas of development to be taken forward during 2019/20 will be to realign activity to achieve the requirements of the new terms of reference. Specifically:

- Ensuring new **mechanisms are in place to promote the sustained improvements** and to promote greater involvement in young people in the work of the Committee
- **Benchmarking and learning from best practice**
- To develop and undertake a programme of **consultation, listening and engagement events**
- To develop, monitor and review the **corporate parenting strategy 2020- 2023**.

The Committee continues to receive a significant and large volume of information at its meetings. Further work to be undertaken is to streamline information linked to the new Corporate Parenting Strategy, action plan and participation of young people.

The forward work programme will be shaped by members and young people feedback, the programme will be flexible based on current issues and challenges at the time, connections between internal and external partners will be strengthened which will contribute to the ongoing work of the Committee.

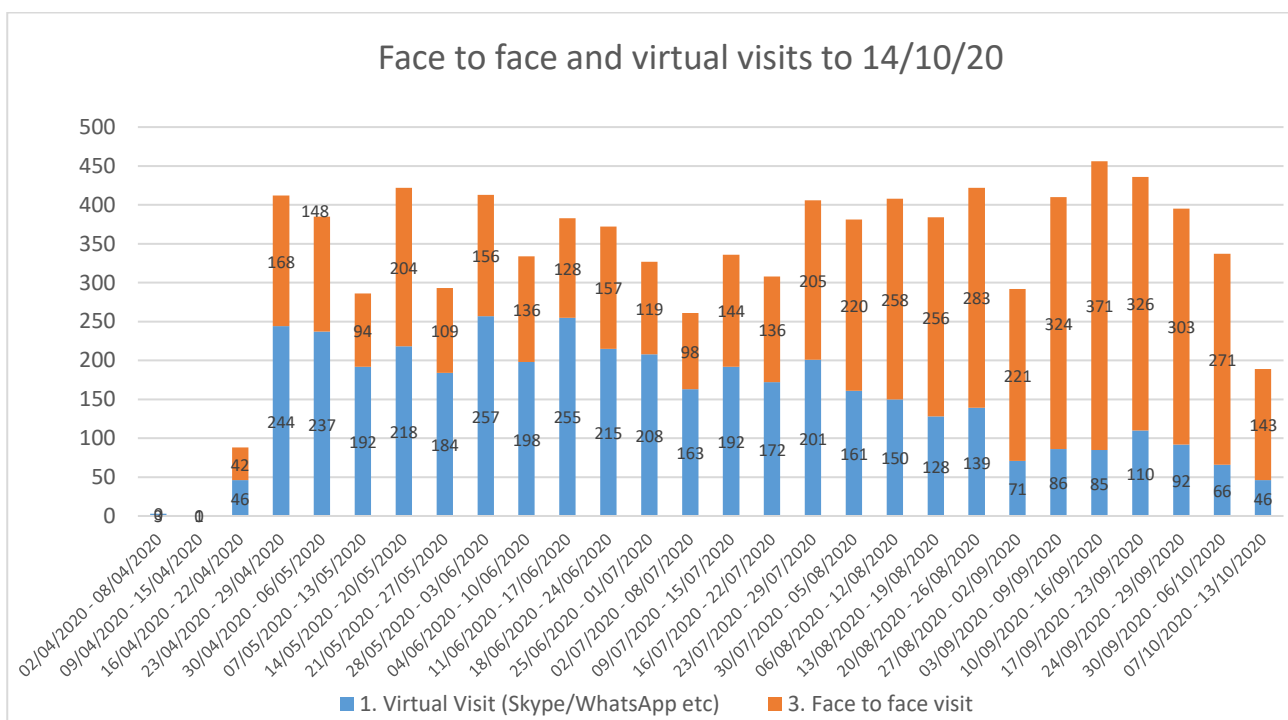
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**Cardiff Council  
Children's Services**

**Update for Corporate Parenting Advisory Committee November 2020**

**Updates to Children's Services Operating Model / structure**

- From 7<sup>th</sup> September 2020, statutory visits to children on the Child Protection Register and children looked after have been face to face as per business as usual requirements.
- Home visits continue to be undertaken remotely where it is practicable to do so. All staff are currently undertaking their own visits and prioritising them. Visits are prioritised and responded to on a case by case basis.
- Arrangements for covering required face to face visits for staff who are concerned about visiting due to underlying health conditions are considered on a case by case basis.
- The graph below demonstrates the increasing proportion of face to face visits over time.

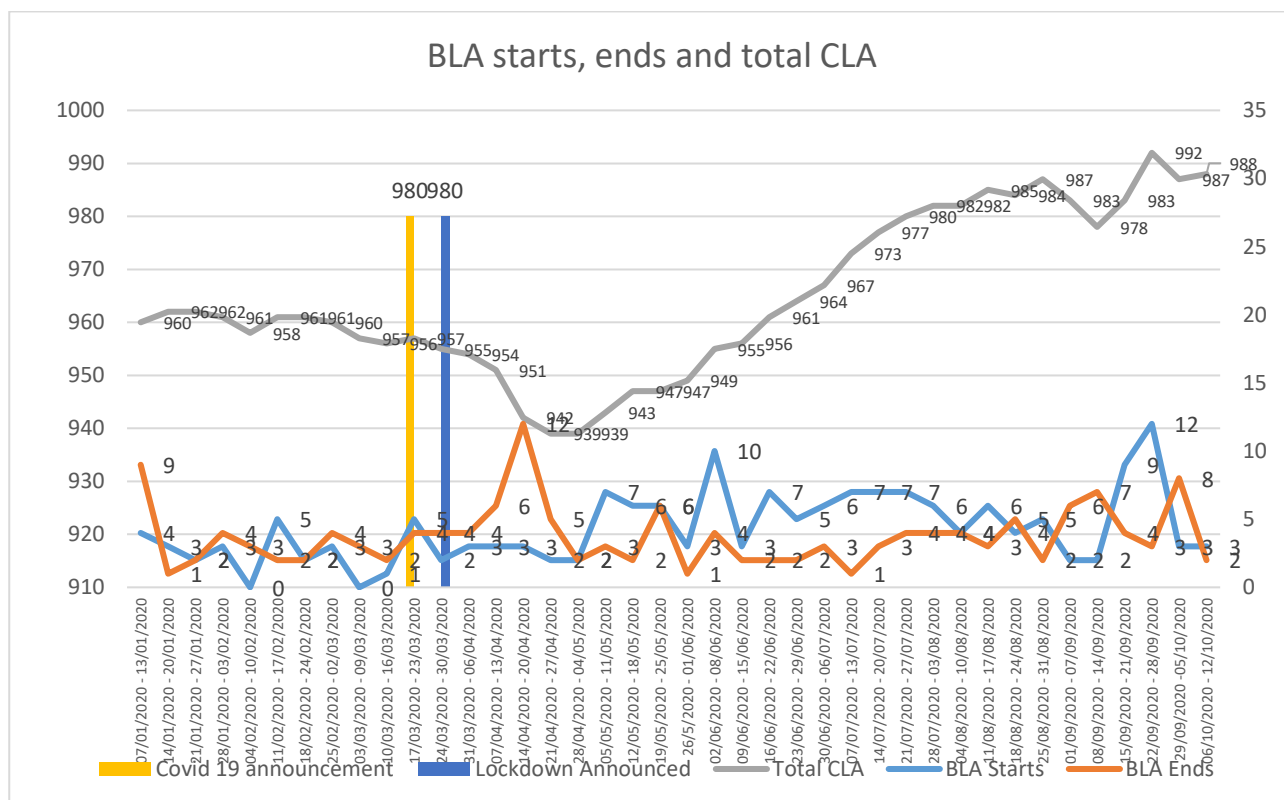


- The temporary arrangement for one OM is continuing during the COVID-19 and recovery period to provide support to localities.
- The temporary arrangement for a 4<sup>th</sup> Intake and Assessment Team has been made permanent and a Team Manager has been appointed.
- The phased exit of the Managed Team is ongoing. Gradual transfer of cases into the locality teams is being undertaken, alongside arrangements to transfer case holding workers from the 11+ team into the locality teams. Consultation in relation to the latter change is currently being undertaken. Consideration is also being given to establishing a 4<sup>th</sup> team in each of the localities.
- A Care and Support Team, staffed with temporary support workers has been set up to manage care and support cases. Consideration is being given to whether a Care and Support Team should be established on a permanent basis, and how this would best support service delivery.

- The restructure of the Fostering Service is underway – consultation with staff has been undertaken – and a proposal is being developed to separate kinship from Fostering.
- 2.5 posts specialising in supporting Unaccompanied Asylum Seeking Children have been and are due to be advertised shortly.
- Agreement to proceed with the restructure of the Youth Justice Service has been received.

### Children Being Looked After

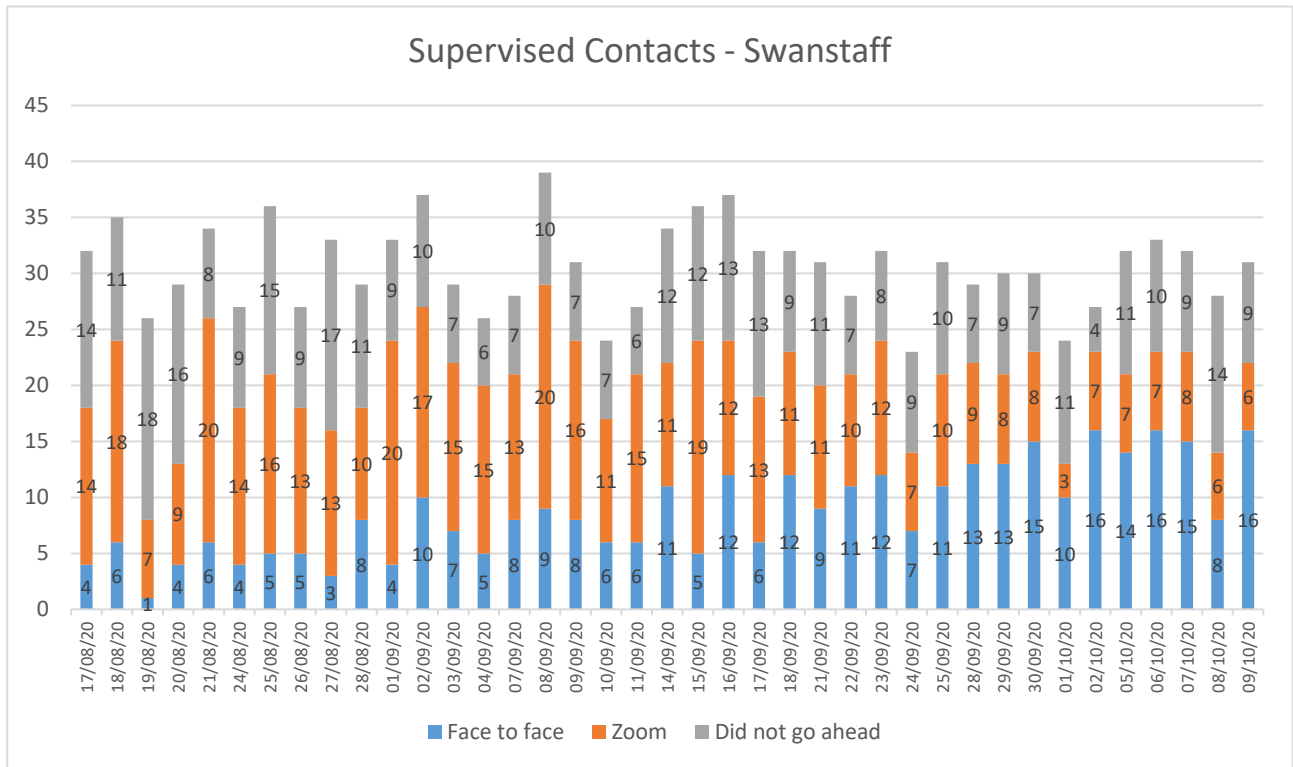
After a decrease in the number of children looked after in the early days of lockdown, a recent increase in new admissions has led to a gradual increase in recent weeks from 939 at 27<sup>th</sup> April 2020 to 988 at 12<sup>th</sup> October 2020. This recent increase appears to have slowed, but is being closely monitored. 60 of the 149 children who started being looked after during the year to date were placed with parents on a Care Order, with family / friends or in parent and baby placements.



### Contact

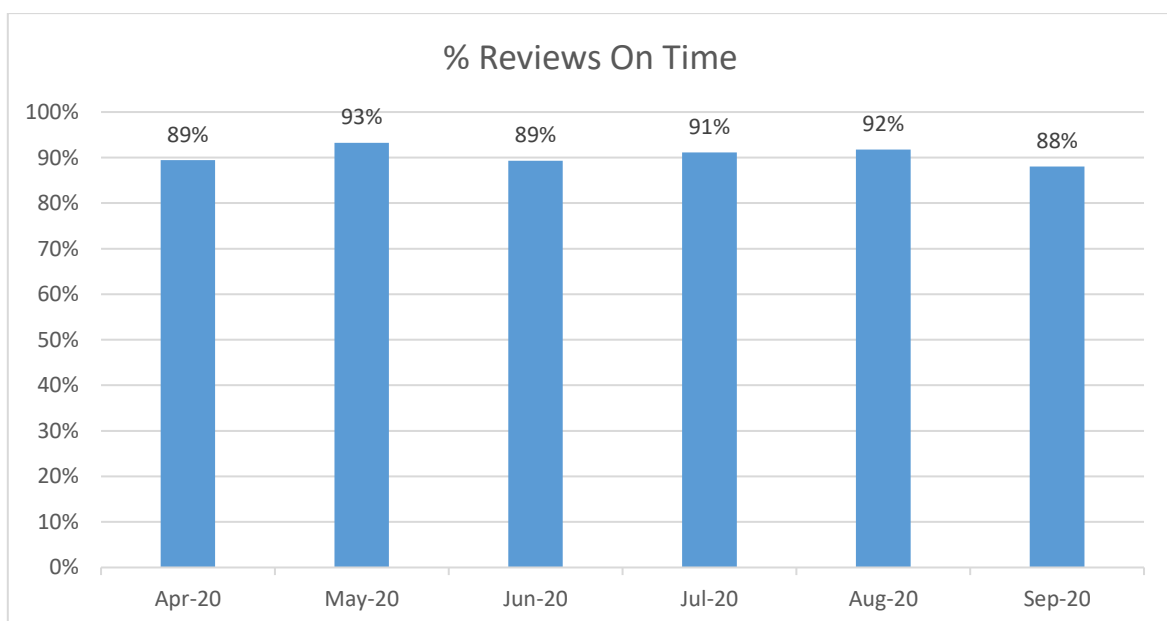
Our supervised contact provider commenced face to face services during w/c 10th August 2020. Risk assessments are required - without a risk assessment the contacts will remain virtual. All parents, professionals and children over the age of 11 have to wear face coverings when attending supervised contact. In response to the local lockdowns in South Wales and subsequent Fire Break, supervised contact is to be managed via family bubbles with no additional family members being added to bubbles for the time being. Guardians, Independent Social Workers and extended family members are asked to join direct contact virtually. Supervised contacts undertaken in the community are being reviewed to determine if any could safely and appropriately be supported by families – to reduce the demand on provider premises as we move into winter. Continuation of face to face contact will be reviewed weekly on an individual basis. The provider will offer weekend

contact sessions over the school holidays in order to respond to the increase in demand during this period. Foster carers are provided with PPE if required to facilitate contact. The graph below demonstrates the increasing number of face to face contacts over time.



### CLA Reviews

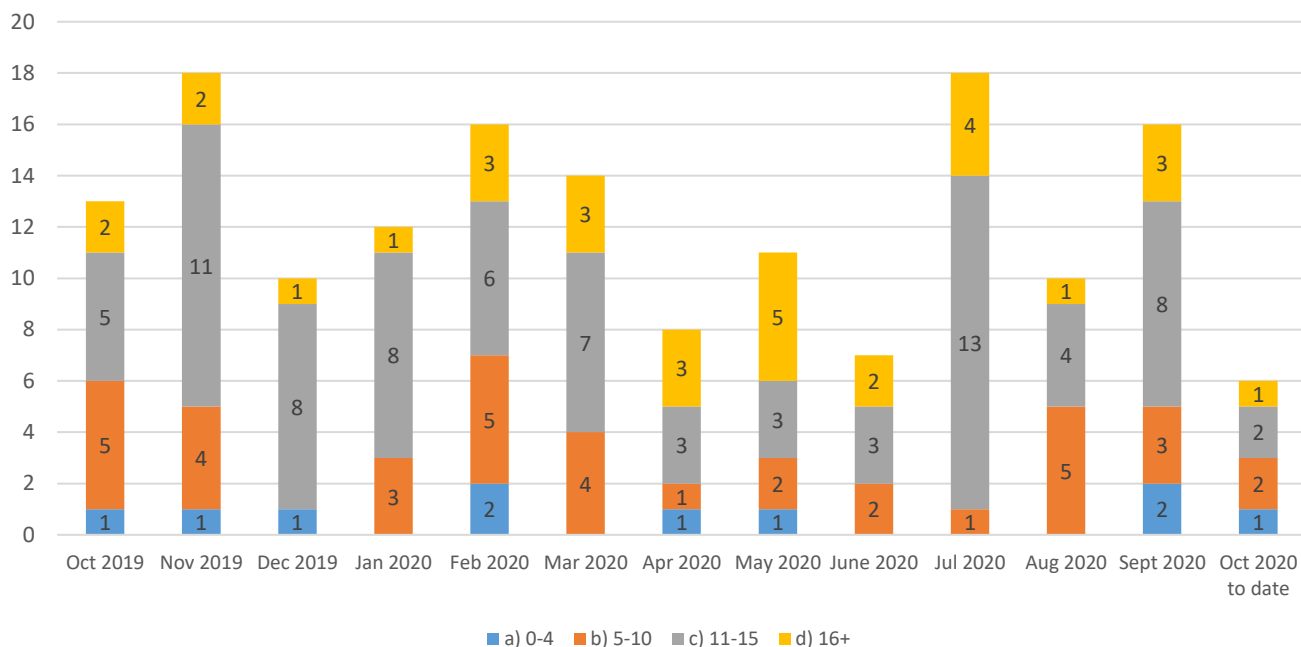
The process for children who are looked after continues as indicated in previous briefings, and a hybrid model is being developed going forward to build on the positive elements of virtual working identified during the COVID-19 crisis. Independent Reviewing Officers continue to actively speak to all parties, with children being spoken to separately before reviews to ascertain their views and wishes. Provisional figures on children looked after reviews show that the majority of reviews are taking place on time:



## Placements - Unplanned Placement Moves

After an increase in the number of unplanned placement move requests in the immediate aftermath of the COVID-19 announcement, the situation stabilised during Quarter 1. However, we saw an increase during Quarter 2 with the majority of unplanned placement move requests (57%) being for 11-15 year olds.

Unplanned Placement Move Requests by Age



## Providers

We are continuing to closely monitoring placements to ensure we are aware of those that are at risk of breaking down and we are working with the 4Cs to determine what support they might be able to provide to these placements. Decision making in relation to placements continues to be undertaken by the Children's Management Team so all OMs have oversight of placement arrangements and arising issues.

An emergency residential provision for 11-18 years "Oakway" is in the process of being set up and work is progressing for submission of a registration application, including the development of a Statement of Purpose. An Edge of Care task and finish group is being established to model work in this area going forward.

A further building has been identified for an Assessment Centre and the purchase of this property is currently being taken forward. The Deputy Manager is in post and recruitment to other posts is ongoing.

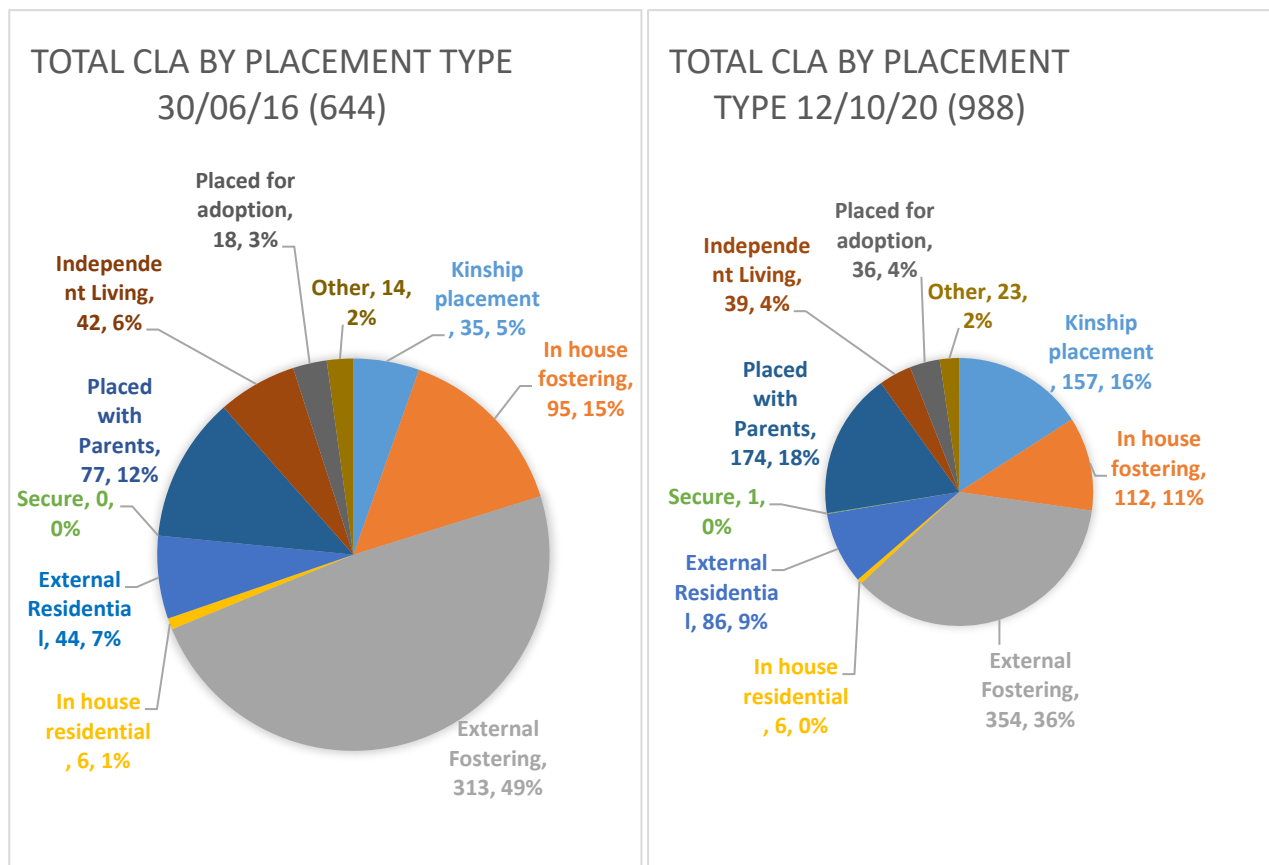
Mechanisms have been developed to track supply and demand of residential placements in Cardiff to support placement planning for young people, and also to identify children who are going through the PLO process who will potentially require placements.

A mechanism is in place to monitor future demand for Gateway provision / plans for young people aged 15.5+. We currently have 10 young people in agency fostering and residential placements who are waiting for a Gateway placement or tenancy, costing in excess of £19.5k per week. We are working with Housing to increase accommodation options for the young people via the Young People's Housing Gateway and a deep dive



exercise to better understand the needs of these young people to inform the development of provision is currently being undertaken.

The pie charts below show the growth in proportion of children placed with parents on a Care Order or in kinship arrangements with family members in recent years:



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**QUARTERLY COMPLAINTS AND REPRESENTATIONS REPORT  
QUARTER 2 2020-21**

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**Reason for the Report**

1. The Committee's terms of reference state that it will receive Children's Services Complaints reports.
2. This Quarter 2 report covers complaints and representations from 1<sup>st</sup> July 2020 to 30<sup>th</sup> September 2020.

**Introduction**

3. The current Welsh Government guidance and regulations in relation to social services complaints and representations came into being on 1<sup>st</sup> August 2014.
4. The procedure places 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) provides for independent investigation. If the outcome of Stage 2 does not satisfy the complainant s/he has recourse to the Public Services Ombudsman for Wales.
5. Citizens making complaints have a right to be listened to properly and have their concerns resolved quickly and effectively. Children's Services emphasis is on listening to concerns and using this learning to improve services for everyone who uses them.
6. Complaints should be handled in such a way that the complainant is the focus, not the process, and that the particular circumstances of the complainant are

taken into account (including their age or disability). Where the complaint relates to a looked after child, a child in need or a care leaver the local authority has a duty to provide an advocate as required. All children or young people who make complaints are offered a meeting and all children and families will receive a written response to the concerns they have raised.

7. The Social Services and Wellbeing (Wales) Act 2014 devotes Part 10 to complaints and this reflects Welsh Government guidance and regulations and Council procedures. The Council is mindful that the Act will further promote people's rights and collaborative working will be actively encouraged.

### Summary of Complaints Activity during the Period

8.

Item	Q2 2020-21
Number open at start of period (01/07/2020)	7
Number received (during quarter 2)	30
Number received directly from children and young people	3
Number closed during quarter 2	20
Number outstanding at end of period (30/09/2020)	17
% acknowledged within 2 working days	86.7%

9. During this quarter, the number of complaints received by Children's Services was 30, an increase of 17 from Q1 when 13 were recorded. However, it should be noted that Q1 (perhaps due to the COVID-19 pandemic) was a quieter period as far as complaints are concerned. As a comparison, Children's Services were recording an average of 36.5 complaints a quarter during 2019-20, compared to the 21.5 so far this year.
  - a. Of the 30 complaints that were received, 16 were regarding multiple factors. For example, a complainant may wish to complain about their relationship with a social worker *and* a delay in providing service. 9 complainants mentioned the relationship with their social worker as a key reason for making their complaint.

- b. Where it was possible to identify a team (i.e. where the complaint has been about a specific person or team rather than overall service) 7 complaints were received regarding officers in the East locality and 3 complaints each were received about officers in the North and South localities respectively. 8 complaints were regarding the Intake & Assessment Service and / or MASH and this has remained relatively static when compared to previous quarters.

### **Stage 2 Independent Investigations**

10. If complainants remain unsatisfied at the conclusion of the informal Stage 1, they are entitled to seek a formal Independent Investigation under Stage 2 of the procedure.

11.1 Stage 2 complaints was initiated during Quarter 2.

### **Ombudsman Investigations**

12. There were 0 Ombudsman investigations in relation to complaints during this quarter.

### **Learning from Complaints**

13. Action Plans are initiated after each Stage 2 investigation to ensure that the recommendations are implemented, lessons are learned and themes recognised.

### **Themes Emerging During the Quarter**

14. Going forward, quarterly complaints reports will be shared with senior management so any emerging themes can be considered and actions can be taken to improve practice. Outside of this avenue, the Complaints Manager can highlight issues to an Operational Manager.

15. There were no specific themes that emerged during this quarter, other than those mentioned at point 9.

## Summary of Compliments

16. Teams are more readily sharing the compliments they receive from a variety of sources, e.g. service users and professionals, although it is recognised that further work is required to ensure that all compliments are captured and reported.

17. 41 compliments were received in Quarter 2, an improvement on previous quarters and, by way of comparison, 101 compliments were received for the whole of 2019/20.

### Example of a compliment received during the quarter:

To a social worker from a mother of three children that the social worker had worked with

*“Thankyou for everything you have done for me and the kids I’d hate to think where we would be if you never came along and helped to make me realise and change our lives I am so grateful that u believed in me and never gave up at my lowest points”.*

## Summary for Quarter 2

18. During Quarter 2, we received:

- a. 30 complaints. Though this is an increase from Quarter 1, it is still a decrease when compared to the average number of complaints received per quarter during 2019/20 (36.5)
- b. 41 compliments, a noticeable increase on previous quarters. As mentioned previously, 101 compliments were recorded for 2019/20 as a whole.

## Responses to AM / MP / Councillor Enquiry Letters

19. 23 AM / MP / Councillor Enquiry letters were received by Children’s Services during the quarter.

## Financial Implications

20. There are no direct financial implications arising from the report.

### **Legal Implications**

21. There are no legal implications arising from this report.

### **RECOMMENDATION**

22. The Committee is recommended to:

- i. To endorse the report.

**Deborah Driffield**  
**Assistant Director Children's Services**  
**11 November 2020**

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**CYNGOR CAERDYDD  
CARDIFF COUNCIL**

**CORPORATE PARENTING ADVISORY COMMITTEE  
17 NOVEMBER 2020**

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**WORK PROGRAMME 2020-2021**

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**Purpose of the Report**

1. This report seeks the views of Members with regard to the approach they wish to take to discuss and agree priorities for the Committee's Work Programme for the remainder of 2020/2021.

**Background**

2. The Committee's current terms of reference include:
  - (a) To champion the life chances and rights of Children Looked After; Children in need; Care Leavers and children and young people in the criminal justice system across the Council, with Elected Members and partners.
  - (b) To actively promote real and sustained improvements by ensuring that there are mechanisms in place to:
    - ascertain and have regard to the child or young person's view, wishes and feelings, so far as reasonable practicable;
    - have regard to the importance of promoting and respecting the child or young person's dignity;
    - have regard to the characteristics, culture and beliefs of the child or young person;
    - have regard to the importance of providing appropriate support to enable the child or young person to participate in decisions that affect them;
    - have regard to the importance of promoting the upbringing of the child by the child's family, in so far as doing so is consistent with promoting the child's well-being;

- Where the child is under the age of 16, ascertain and have regard to the views, wishes and feelings of those with parental responsibility for the child, in so far as doing so is consistent with the well-being of the child, and reasonably practicable
  - That there is a follow on provision for young people leaving care that meets the need of young adults
- (c) To develop and undertake a programme of consultation, listening and engagement events with Children Looked After, Children in Need and Care Leavers as well as visits to services providing support and advice to those children and young people.
- (d) To recommend ways in which more integrated services can be developed across all Council directorates, schools and other stakeholders to lead towards
- Improved education attainment and achievement for Children Looked After, Children in need and Care Leavers;
  - Emotional and Mental Health and Well-being Support for Children Looked After, Children in Need, and Care Leavers;
  - Improvements in services for children with disabilities
  - To encourage Looked After Children, Children in need and Care Leavers to become active citizens.
- (e) To ensure performance monitoring systems are in place, and regularly review performance data to ensure sustained performance improvements in outcomes;
- (f) To benchmark and learn from best practice of other Local Authorities
- (g) To receive all relevant Children's Services inspection and annual reports, including: Children's Homes Quality of Care Report; Child Practice Review Themes, Fostering Annual Quality of Care Report; Adoption Fostering Annual Quality of Care Report; 4C's Commissioning; Out of Area Annual Report; Education Report; Children's Complaints reports; and Advocacy Annual Report;
- (h) To develop, monitor and review a corporate parenting strategy, and ensure its effective implementation through work plans and corporate parenting training programmes;
- (i) To submit an annual progress report to the Cabinet and make recommendations 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 submit an Annual Report on the work of the Committee to full Council.
3. During the Covid-19 lockdown, meetings of the Corporate Parenting Advisory Committee have been postponed; the last meeting of the Committee took place on 28 January 2020. At that meeting Members had been provided with an update in respect of the new Corporate Parenting Strategy, together with the timescales with the launch to have taken place in May 2020.
4. In January 2020, Council considered and approved an ordinary resolution which welcomed the independent review of the Member Safeguarding Protocol and also proposed the development of a protocol on the corporate parenting role of Councillors and a review of the existing terms of reference and operation of the committee. It is also resolved the any recommendations from the independent review would be considered by the Children & Young People Scrutiny Committee, Corporate Parenting and Advisory Committee and Cabinet prior to submission to full Council for approval.

### **Developing a work programme**

5. It is suggested Committee Members hold a remote forum meeting to discuss their work programme. A list of work programme topics will be shared with Committee Members prior to the forum meeting. Following discussions at the forum meeting, the proposed work programme will be brought to Committee for amendment and formal approval.
6. Members, at a recent forum to discuss the Corporate Parenting Strategy, will be aware that the Corporate Parenting Strategy together with the associated documents have be considered by the Children & Young People Scrutiny Committee, Corporate Parenting and Advisory Committee and Cabinet prior to submission to full Council for approval. The timescales for consideration of those documents is attached at **Appendix A**.

## **Recommendation**

The Committee is recommended to:

1. Discuss and agree the approach to developing the Committee's work programme for the remainder of 2020-2021 so that the final version of the programme can be brought back to Committee for the formal approval.
2. Note the timetable contained in **Appendix A**

**DEBORAH DRIFFIELD**  
**ASSISTANT DIRECTOR, CHILDREN'S SERVICES**  
**11 NOVEMBER 2020**

## Appendix A - Reports Timetable - CPAC

<b>Report</b>	<b>S&amp;E</b>	<b>CPAC</b>	<b>CYP</b>	<b>CABINET</b>	<b>COUNCIL</b>
Elected Member Safeguarding Protocol	30-Sep-20	17-Nov-20	6-Nov-20	19-Nov-20	26-Nov-20
Coporate Parenting Protocol	9-Dec-20	5-Jan-21	13-Jan-21	21-Jan-21	25-Mar-21
CPAC ToR		5-Jan-21	13-Jan-21	21-Jan-21	25-Mar-21
Corporate Parenting Strategy		5-Jan-21	13-Jan-21	21-Jan-21	25-Mar-21

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