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AGENDA

Committee	CORPORATE PARENTING ADVISORY COMMITTEE
Date and Time of Meeting	TUESDAY, 15 MARCH 2022, 2.00 PM
Venue	REMOTE MEETING VIA MS TEAMS
Membership	Councillor Merry (Chair) Councillors Ford, Hinchey, Jones-Pritchard, Jenkins, Lent, Lister, Naughton, Parkhill

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 3 - 8)*

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

4 **NYAS Cymru Advocacy Service Update** *(Pages 9 - 26)*

5 **Colum Road Assessment Centre Update** *(Pages 27 - 32)*

6 **Voices from Care Cymru Update** *(Pages 33 - 44)*

7 **CPAC Draft Annual Report** *(Pages 45 - 76)*

8 **Corporate Parenting - Look to the Year Ahead** *(Pages 77 - 88)*

9 **Performance Dashboard Quarter 3** *(Pages 89 - 94)*

10 **Complaints & Compliments Report Quarter 3** *(Pages 95 - 100)*

11 **Urgent Items (if any)**

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This document is available in Welsh / Mae'r ddogfen hon ar gael yn Gymraeg

12 Date of next meeting

The date of the next meeting will be confirmed after the Annual Meeting of Council.

Davina Fiore

Director Governance & Legal Services

Date: Wednesday, 9 March 2022

Contact: Mandy Farnham,

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

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CORPORATE PARENTING ADVISORY COMMITTEE

18 JANUARY 2022

Present: Councillor Merry(Chairperson)
Councillors Hinchey, Jones-Pritchard, Jenkins, Lent, Naughton
and Parkhill

189 : APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies were received from Councillors Lister and Ford and from Committee Advisor Rose Whittle.

190 : DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

No declarations of interest were received.

191 : MINUTES

The Committee approved as a correct record the minutes of the meeting on 19 October 2021, as proposed by Councillor Hinchey and seconded by Councillor Lent.

192 : YOUTH JUSTICE SERVICE UPDATE

The Chair invited Angharad Thomas from the Youth Justice Service to present the report, which aims to inform the Committee of the current structure of the YJS along with data on outcomes and information on Children Looked After who come to the attention of the service.

Members were asked to comment or raise questions on the information received. Those discussions are summarised as follows:

- Members enquired as to the nature of work undertaken with children aged 8-9 to help prevent them entering on a pathway into the YJS. Officers advised that while some areas did conduct prevention work among 8-9 year olds HMIP had advised that this was not appropriate for YJS. There might be scope for targeted work within primary schools which YJS could contribute to.
- Members enquired as to whether a breakdown of the data could provide further information about the greater number of boys than girls entering the YJS. Officers indicated that they would seek to provide the information.
- Members were advised that education was a major partner of YJS. The importance of working with children before and after they enter YJS was discussed, in order to prevent both entry and re-entry into the service.
- Members were advised that the name of the service had been changed along with its counterparts in other LA areas in recognition of a change in focus away from solely on offenders to encompass victims as well, and in response to requests from young people.

- Members discussed examples of decriminalisation within the care setting. Officers advised that a case study could be provided if desired.
- Members sought clarification on whether the substance misuse workshops had started and how they were targeted. Officers advised that the workshops would commence once an additional staff member had been recruited. The workshops are targeted according to the needs of the different residential establishments. Members were advised that the work of the substance misuse workers was about providing information and support to children in reducing harmful behaviours and making positive choices.

RESOLVED:

To note the report.

193 : PARTICIPATION - BRIGHT SPARKS

The Chair invited Samantha Anderson (Participation Officer, NYAS Cymru) to present the report, which provided an update on the Bright Sparks Club and the activities that Bright Sparks has undertaken in relation to the fourth of the 5 Priorities outlined in the Corporate Parenting Strategy – Educational achievement, Employment and Training, as well as other activities in which the group has participated.

Ms Anderson and Leigh Vella, Corporate Parenting Officer, reported on the joint meeting between Bright Sparks participants and members of the Committee on 29 October 2021, which included a discussion of the Corporate Parenting Strategy.

Members were asked to comment or raise questions on the information received. Those discussions are summarised as follows:

- Members enquired as to a review of the costs for children in hostels and attempts to reduce them. Officers advised that they would seek information on the matter.
- Members expressed the importance of peer support for the aspirations of Children Looked After, both from other Children Looked After and from non-CLA peers, as well as from adult professionals. Officers advised that the Care Experienced young people that they worked with were proud of their experience as CLA and working with others who fall into that category is important to them. They expect a degree of discrimination and prejudice from other children, but it is particularly damaging when it comes from adult professionals.
- Members enquired as to the success of Stable Homes Goal 5 Keeping people out of homelessness and hostels. Officers advised they had no information on that.
- Members discussed the length of time for which the Council could provide a safety net for Care Experienced young people as they progressed into adult life.

RESOLVED:

To note the report.

194 : INTO WORK ADVICE SERVICE

The Chair invited Kate Elias (Assistant Into Work Coordinator for Youth) and Cherie Macquis (Bright Start Youth Employment Mentor) to present the report, which provided information in relation to the Bright Futures Project and Bright Start Traineeship Scheme.

Members were asked to comment or raise questions on the information received. Those discussions are summarised as follows:

- Members requested a breakdown of the support the Council is able to provide in relation to housing costs for the next meeting. Officers advised that young people had been encouraged to apply for Discretionary Housing Payment to cover the initial period when they start work. However, a successful application is not guaranteed and many young people would rather not work than risk getting into debt.
- Members enquired about placements with private partners. Officers advised that there had been a pause on external placements due to concerns around Covid. The Employer Liaison Team had been working on setting up placements for when the pause is lifted.
- Members expressed disappointment that it had only been possible to make internal placements. The importance of widening placement opportunities when Covid restrictions allow was discussed.
- Members discussed the benefits of face-to-face meetings with young people on placements and commended the work of officers in supporting young people.
- Members sought clarification on whether there would be funding available to continue operations next year. Officers advised that confirmation of continued funding was still awaited. There was funding available for 4 mentors until June 2023. Funding for an additional mentor is anticipated but not confirmed.

RESOLVED:

To note the report.

195 : SUPPORT FOR CARE LEAVERS

The Chair invited Sharlaine Bird (Team Manager, Personal Adviser Service) and Gareth Gronow (Participation and Wellbeing Coordinator) to present the report, which provided an update on the work being undertaken by the service to support young people leaving care, including provisions that have been put in place to support

young people leaving care during the past 12 month, as well as future plans for the service.

Members were asked to comment or raise questions on the information received. Those discussions are summarised as follows:

- Members enquired as to whether Officers worked with other bodies such as Scout groups which offer a range of activities to young people. Members were advised that so far there had not been joint working with Scout groups as young people in or leaving care had not expressed any interest in joining them.
- The view was expressed that it was the activities that young people wished to do that mattered. Life skills such as cooking and DIY and financial awareness are important to enable young people to live independently. Officers advised that young people learnt life skills during their training with Wates Construction. Sessions given by the team are intended to give young people more independence and confidence that will enable them to join outside groups such as Scouts.
- The additional team post has allowed the team to develop a cohort of young people who are able to feedback on their views of the service and their activities, as well as creating new opportunities for the service.

RESOLVED:

To note the report.

196 : CHILDREN LOOKED AFTER IN EDUCATION - ANNUAL REVIEW BRIEFING

The Chair invited Gill James, (Achievement Leader, Key Groups) and Libby Jones (Looked After Children Education Team) to present the briefing, which provided an overview of the results of tracking and monitoring the performance of Looked After Children as well as focusing on sharing the strengths of current practice in terms of supporting Looked After Children.

Members were asked to comment or raise questions on the information received. Those discussions are summarised as follows:

- Members sought clarification on the distances travelled by Looked After Children educated in out of county settings. Officers advised that even where the settings were just over the border they still presented difficulties.
- Officers confirmed that the CPAC Dashboard was part of the report and explained acronyms used in the report.
- Members discussed whether it would be appropriate to incorporate targets for exclusion rates, transition to GCSE, and progression to employment, education or training. Officers advised that the aspiration was for no children to be excluded and all children to progress to employment, education or training.

It is important to consider what success means for an individual. Any targets would not be distinct from those for the Education Directorate as a whole.

RESOLVED:

To note the briefing provided.

197 : ADDITIONAL LEARNING NEEDS AND EDUCATION TRIBUNAL WALES
ACT 2018 UPDATE BRIEFING

The Chair invited Gill James (Achievement Leader (Key Groups) and Libby Jones (Looked After Children Education Team) to present the briefing, which provided an overview of the implications of the ALN system for Looked After Children. A presentation was also provided.

Members were asked to comment or raise questions on the information received. Those discussions are summarised as follows:

- Members sought clarification on where responsibility for a child's IDP would lie. Officers advised that the LA would be responsible for the IDP and it would rest upon colleagues in Children's Services and Education to ensure a joined-up approach. The sole focus of the inclusion teacher is the IDPs.
- Members welcomed the inclusion of Looked After Children in the development of their IDPs and discussed how the experience of Children Looked After by the Local Authority and those who were not differed.

RESOLVED:

To note the briefing provided.

198 : PERFORMANCE REPORT

The Chair invited Deborah Driffield (Director, Children's Services) to present the Performance Dashboard.

RESOLVED:

To note the performance figures provided.

199 : WORK PROGRAMME 2021 - 2022

The Chair invited Leigh Vella to present the work programme and invited Members confirm whether there were any specific issues they would like covered at the next meeting of the Committee in March.

Members suggested the following for the next meeting:

- Information in relation to training for the Committee and new Members going forward, bearing in mind the local election which is took place in May;

- Information in relation to the costs of living of children looked after – with specific reference to housing costs; and
- The sort of services that the Corporate Parent could help to provide once a young person reaches 25.

RESOLVED:

To note the report and comments in relation to further items.

200 : URGENT ITEMS (IF ANY)

No urgent items were received.

201 : DATE OF NEXT MEETING

The next scheduled date of the Committee is on Tuesday 15 March 2022 at 2.00 pm via MS Teams

The meeting terminated at 4.30 pm

**CARDIFF COUNCIL
CYNGOR CAERDYDD**

CORPORATE PARENTING ADVISORY COMMITTEE

15th March 2022

NYAS Cardiff Advocacy Service Update

Reasons for the Report

1. The report aims to inform the Committee on the work undertaken by NYAS Cardiff Advocacy Service for the reporting period of 1st April 2021 – 31st December 2021.

Background to the Service

2. The National Youth Advocacy Service (NYAS) is a national charity providing information, advice, advocacy, and legal representation to some of the most vulnerable children, young people and adults across the UK. NYAS Cymru is a registered provider of advocacy services under RISCA 2016.
3. NYAS Cymru is commissioned by Cardiff and the Vale to provide a regional advocacy services to children and young people in receipt of support from Children's Services.
4. NYAS Cardiff Advocacy Service offers independent professional advocacy (IPA) to children and young people age 0-25 who are involved with Cardiff Children's Services. The overall remit of the project is to enable and empower children and young people to have a voice and to effectively participate within decision making processes.

5. The service ensures that the rights of children and young people involved with Cardiff Children's Services are upheld in accordance with legislative and policy framework within Wales.
6. The service provides both the active offer of advocacy and an issue-based advocacy service.

Active offer

7. The National Approach to Advocacy (NASA) places a duty on Children's Services to ensure all children and young people who become either looked after by or part of the child protection system are provided with the opportunity to meet with an advocate and receive timely information on how the advocacy service can support them. Following an active offer meeting, the child or young person can either decline or accept the offer of advocacy.

Issue based Advocacy

8. This service provides issue-based advocacy, whereby children and young people define the issues they want help with and decide how they wish to resolve these issues with the help of their advocate. Once their issue is resolved, or they decide they no longer want advocacy to support them the referral is closed. However, children and young people can return to the project in the future if they require support around other issues.

Overview of Referrals Received

9. For the financial year April 2021 and up to date till December 2021 the following breakdown of referrals were received - 286 Issue Based Referrals with a total of 333 interventions and 322 Active Offer Referrals.
10. Most service requests were to support children and young people within the Child Protection System, closely followed by requests from care-experienced children and young people. The service also received referrals from care leavers as well

as children and young people who were 'care and support' (outside of child protection) but these numbers were comparatively much lower in total.

11. The majority of referrals were made by social services (189) and by children and young people themselves (85). Where issue-based referrals resulted from the active offer of advocacy these were recorded as self-referrals as the young person had identified the issue, they wanted support with themselves.
12. Of the issues presented to date during this financial year the majority of requests were to support children and young people to have a voice and for them to participate within their children looked after and child protection meetings. The service has also so far received 57 contact issues, 41 placement issues, 23 school-based issues, 12 financial issues, 10 care leaver issues and 15 social services-based issues. A total of 7 complaints have been received to date which included issues around transport between placements, contact, mistreatment by foster carers, late EMA/LA payments and placement moves and a young person felt that social services had failed them.
13. The service has continued to provide an accessible and inclusive support for those referred in for support and have provided support to 21 UASC, 24 children with disabilities and 1 LGBTQ+ child and 27 were children or young people placed out of county.

Awareness Raising

14. The service attended a meeting with Ysgol-y- Deri staff to share both instructed advocacy and also non instructed advocacy and share how advocacy can support learners with additional learning and communication needs.
15. The service attended meetings with education settings and third sector agencies and parent support group to widen the referral pathway to ensure all children and young people could access Advocacy if they were entitled to the support.

16. Virtual drop ins with Children's Services staff that had previously set up were replaced with visits to Team meetings and one to one support for any new members of staff to inform them of advocacy and the Active offer.
17. A range of publicity information for children and young people was made available to Children's Services to disseminate to the workforce.
18. Age-appropriate letters were sent out to Children and young people to explain the service and the way that we could support them with advocacy.
19. The service has held meetings with St David's College and is hoping to develop links with the large number of care experienced children and young people who attend and support any advocacy needs they may have.

Key Achievements and Challenges

20. The Service responded quickly and adapted well to ensure advocacy was made available to children and young people during the pandemic, with the service being provided remotely via a range of virtual methods. As the COVID19 restrictions changed we were able to use this method to deliver a child led support service that could offer both Face to face (Following Welsh Government guidance for Safe Working) which was blended with virtual support which has proved effective in meeting large numbers of referrals into the service despite restrictions.
21. Despite operating around the challenges of a pandemic the service saw a steady referral for advocacy support.
22. The service implemented advocacy plans into practice, which is a requirement of the new advocacy regulations, and has contributed to ensuring the service is issue based, child led and better able to evidence outcomes.

23. The service has identified through the service improvement group that it wanted to further develop key skills for staff and create resources to improve some areas of the service we provide to the groups of children and young people we work with. The service has developed task and finish groups for UASC and ALN groups of children and young people to create a more inclusive range of support resources as well as staff training workshops to improve the overall service that can be offered in Wales.
24. Children and young people were routinely asked to provide feedback on the service, although this did prove challenging due to working virtually. Of the feedback we have been able to record children and young people were extremely positive about their experiences and felt that advocacy had helped them have their voice, wishes and feelings heard in all meetings about them and also have the issues they felt they were facing resolved.
25. Children and young people were regularly afforded the opportunity to participate in the running of the service and took part in recruitment of staff and helped devise their advocacy plans and develop the newly implemented service guide that is currently being disseminated.
26. The service continued to see an increase in active offer referrals, incomplete referral information sometimes led to delays in children and young people accessing the service. The service has continued to seek solutions by working with Children's Services for this issue and have implemented a variety of solution focused approaches that the service hopes will have a positive impact.
27. Due to the continuation of the pandemic and children and young people being out of school for significant periods of time, this sometimes impacted on both the service being able to gain access to children and young people (especially younger children within child protection) and it was often challenging to deliver a confidential advocacy service away from caregivers and their home environment. We have continued to be led by the wishes of the children and young people we support and have held meetings via Teams or face to face in line with their wishes as well as age appropriate methods following Welsh Government guidelines.

28. Whilst referrals continued to increase from care experienced children and young people and those within the child protection system, referrals remained low from children and young people subject to care and support outside of the child protection arena. The service has been raising awareness by meeting with teams from the relevant Children's Services departments to raise awareness and promote the service.

29. 2 referrals were received by the service to provide an appropriate adult to young people within the age assessment process.

Financial Implications

30. The absence of any financial context in the report limits the commentary on the report and the effectiveness of the spend commission. Consideration of additional indicators with a financial context should be considered for future reports in order to provide some level of insight on the effectiveness of the spend and its connection to outcomes sought. In preparation for the next procurement arrangements, serious consideration should be given to undertaking a dialogue with Cardiff & Vale on which appropriate financial / performance indicators can be included in the tender requirements.

Legal Implications

31. There are no legal implications arising from the report

RECOMMENDATION

32. The Committee are recommended to note the Advocacy Service update and to make any observations or comments.

DEBORAH DRIFFIELD
Director of Children's Services

23rd February 2022



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advocacy service

Our Presentation to You

A brief overview of our service

By Sylvia Lucano & Scott Giles

NYAS Cardiff



Who are



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national youth
advocacy service

NYAS Cymru are a leading rights-based charity who provide **independent advocacy services** for children and young people aged between 5-25 in Cardiff

We ensure their rights are upheld and their views, wishes and feelings are **respected** and their voices are **heard**.

Issue Based Advocacy services

Children and young people who are on the Child Protection Register, Looked After, receiving Care and Support (including children and young people with disabilities) or care leavers are eligible.

Active Offer Advocacy Services

Children and young people are eligible for the active offer when they are new to the Looked After or Child Protection system.

This covers children of compulsory school age 5 plus



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1 Placement

2 Contact and Family Time

3 Support at Meetings

4 Education

5 Leaving Care

6 Support to make a Complaint

7 Access to Legal representation

Types of Issues

Page 17

Annual figures : Apr – Dec 2021

608 referrals

286 Issue based

322 active offers

This includes:

Supporting 24 CYP with disabilities

and 21 Unaccompanied Asylum Seeking CYP



Advocacy helped us to see our Nan and Grampy. It was good to see our grandparents, aunty and cousin”.

QUOTE FROM YOUNG PERSON

Annual figures : Apr – Dec 2021

286 Issue based advocacy referrals

Page 19 We have worked with **333** issues
131 of these were for support at
CLA and CP Meetings.

27 Referrals were out of county



I understand that the Advocate is no longer with NYAS, but I would like to tell you that her input made a huge positive difference to my son".

QUOTE FROM PARENT

Annual figures : Apr – Dec 2021

322 Active Offer referrals

210 Meetings were held and

99 Accepted



“Advocacy helped quite a lot. It helped me to know what is going on. Thank you”.

QUOTE FROM YOUNG PERSON

Successfully engaged with children and young people using alternative contact methods to face to face meetings

Page 21

Quickly implemented necessary changes to work in partnership to deliver our services remotely.



Overcoming barriers/challenges with confidentiality

Reviewed Active Offer process to ensure we could engage effectively with cyp

Case study :

Asaf is 17 years of age and is an unaccompanied asylum-seeking child who was living in hostel accommodation. He has been in this country since December 2020 and has no family here. Asaf developed some health issues since his arrival and asked if I could support him at his Child Looked After Review to help him express his views, wishes and feelings and to ensure he understood everything that was said around his care.

- Asaf explained that his Education Maintenance Allowance payments were being made to him via Children's Services and that despite having a very high attendance at college, he had not received any payments.
- Asaf had also asked for psychological support since his first Child Looked After Review but this had not been actioned nor had his request for an eye test.

(Please note that the young persons name has been changed for this presentation)

Advocates actions & outcomes :

As agreed with Asaf, the Advocate contacted his Social Worker and raised these issues on his behalf. His Social Worker said that he would resolve these issues but again, this did not happen. The Advocate informed Asaf of his options and his rights, such as the right to make a complaint, contacting his Social Worker's Manager or his Independent Reviewing Officer.

After some time had elapsed, the Advocate contacted the Social Worker again for an update and progress had been made with his Education Maintenance Allowance payments which were finally received by Asaf.

Progress had also been made with an optician's appointment for him to be seen however no action had been taken around accessing psychological support.

The Advocate discussed this with Asaf and he decided to involve his Independent Reviewing Officer. The issue was then actioned soon after this.

The Advocate kept in contact with Asaf throughout with regular updates by phone and text.

Feedback received:

Asaf is very keen on pursuing his education and is deciding what to do next year to work towards his goal of going to University. The Advocate also contacted a local school on his behalf to help get more information and signposted him to Careers Wales for careers advice.

Asaf appreciates the advocacy support he has received and gave the following feedback: -

“thank you so, so much for all you do for me. You do so much for me all the time”.

Feedback From Young People, Parent, Carers and other Professionals:

YP "I'm happy with the support I've had from my Advocate. I definitely know if I need any support I can go to him. He had understanding and compassion towards helping me"

Head Teacher
"Thanks for your support X's attendance has improved a lot"

Social Worker
"You've been absolutely brilliant with these siblings and the statement at the Conference was really powerful, so thank you for all your help"

CAFCASS Officer
"Thanks for your fantastic work on this case, it has been a pleasure working with you. Looking forward to more opportunities to cooperate in the future"

Mum
"In all the meetings I've gone to where you've been there giving the voice of the children, the difference has been phenomenal"

Foster Carers
"Thankyou for all your help with this YP. Your help was greatly appreciated, and I hope I get the opportunity to work with you again in the future"

Parent
"My son's voice was listened to and heard. Such an excellent service. Thanks for your support"

YP "It's helpful. If you don't want to say anything in a meeting, they can say it for you. Thanks for helping me make sense of everything"



**Any final questions
or queries?**

Thank you very much for
joining us today.



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**CARDIFF COUNCIL
CYNGOR CAERDYDD****CORPORATE PARENTING ADVISORY COMMITTEE****15th March 2022**

Colum Road Assessment Centre update

Reasons for the Report

1. This report provides the Committee with information in relation to the newly refurbished Colum Road centre. The 6-bed property will be open in March 2022 and will be available for Unaccompanied Asylum-Seeking Children (UASC) aged 16 and above, arriving via the National Transfer Scheme (NTS) or spontaneously into the City accommodation for an initial period in order to receive wrap around support, robust assessment of needs and age assessment if required. Once ready the children will be moved on to appropriate longer term placements in line with their identified support needs.

Background – Colum Road Assessment Centre

2. It was identified that there was a lack of appropriate accommodation available to the Local Authority to be able to complete reliable age assessments of unaccompanied asylum-seeking young people. While age is being disputed, both during and following assessment, the person being assessed must be treated and suitably accommodated as a child. The inability to access appropriate accommodation resulted in the Local Authority placing young people a significant distance out of area which prolonged the length of the assessment having an impact on outcomes as well as increasing the costs and efficiency of completing the assessment.

3. In order to safeguard the Local Authority from the risk of legal challenge it was pertinent that a process and accommodation with assessment provision was made available to reassure the Local Authority on the reliability of the assessments being undertaken whilst also enabling a robust response to any challenge by way of Judicial Review.
4. In March 2021 Cardiff along with Newport became the lead for the National Transfer Scheme in Wales increasing the need for appropriate placements. The National Transfer Scheme intended to ensure that any participating local authority (LA) does not face a disproportionate responsibility in accommodating and looking after unaccompanied children, simply by virtue of being the point of arrival. In November 2021 this scheme was made mandatory across Wales.
5. The Colum Road Centre was established to ensure the best outcome for young people. It will ensure the Local Authority's compliance with legislation and case law and ensure that the needs of the young people are met in a timely manner.

The Colum Road Centre

6. There are 6 (en-suite) bedrooms inside the assessment centre provision. There is a downstairs sleeping office space for Salvation Army staff. There is an office space and an assessment room available for Childrens Services staff to undertake assessments.
7. Salvation Army have been commissioned to manage the building and provide day to day support for the young people living in the property.
8. The aim of the Centre is to provide an end-to-end pathway with supported accommodation and floating support provision to assist young people with their move-on to independence.
9. The centre follows a positive Pathway Model (accommodation) which has been recognised by the Local Authority and its Partners as a best practice framework that will ensure the best long-term outcome for the young people entering the assessment Centre.

10. The Colum Road Centre is near Cardiff City Centre, local shops, primary health care facilities (GPs, Dentists and Opticians) and High School where the young people can access education (ESOL classes). There are also Gyms and Leisure Centre close to the Centre which the young people can access to improve their physical and emotional wellbeing and reduce feeling loneliness as well as foster integration within the community. These facilities and services available around the Centre will enhance the ability of the Centre management and the Local Authority to meet the holistic needs of the young people placed at the Centre.
11. The Assessment Centre will be fully staffed and provide 24 hours wrap around support for the young people living in the accommodation. The staff Team will be provided by the Salvation Army and will be required throughout the day 7 days a week to provide support to the young people living in the accommodation.
12. Staff would be expected to support the young people within the living environment including where required supporting to teach them how to make meals, enabling them to perform basic life skills as well as meeting other needs highlighted above.
13. Night assistant support workers are on hand to create a safe, supportive environment for young people if they require help.

Needs of the young people accommodated

14. A range of needs will be met at the Colum Road Centre and includes (but not exclusive to)
 - **Emergency Accommodation:** The Centre will provide an emergency accommodation for a spontaneous arrival UASC at one of the rooms available at the centre.
 - **Initial accommodation provision.** The initial accommodation provided by the Centre will be for an initial period of six weeks when the wellbeing assessment and/or age assessment is undertaken, and a suitable long-term placement is

found for the young people. Young people may continue to live in this accommodation after the initial six weeks until another UASC young person requires the accommodation. This is to ensure consistency for the young people and prevents the holding of void bedroom at the Centre

- **Health Needs:** Supporting young people to attend initial health screening appointment at the Cardiff and Vale Inclusion Service (CAVHIS) and registration with the primary health care services (GP, Dentist and Optician). Also accessing emotional and mental health support
- **Educational Needs:** Supporting young people to access educational provision, especially ESOL support to improve their English Language proficiency.
- **Linguistic Needs.** The Centre will provide interpretation service for young people to be able to express their views and wishes in their preferred language.
- **Cultural Needs:** The Centre will supporting young people in a culturally sensitive way and to practice their religion in a safety environment.
- **Immigration Solicitors:** Support young people to identify Immigration Solicitors for their asylum claim and to attend appointments at the Home Office.
- **Independent living skills-** The Centre will also provide the initial opportunity for the assessment of young people's independent living skills as part of the wellbeing assessment to determine the long-term accommodation for a young person.
- **Activities and community integration:** To minimise the feeling of isolation/loneliness and improve emotional wellbeing, USAC young people will be supported at the Centre to participate in activities of their interest, such as gym and sporting activities.
- **Advocacy Support:** Liaising with NYAS advocacy service for Active Offer Advocacy provision.
- **Move on Accommodation:** The Centre will support young people's transition to move on accommodation.

Issues

15. There have been some unavoidable delays in the completion of the renovation work on the Colum Road centre. Young people arriving in Cardiff have been placed in suitable alternative accommodation.

Financial Implications

16. A financial feasibility study was completed as part of the business case for the development of the Colum Road Centre. Home office funding received for placating UASC covers a proportion of the associated costs. It is important that the remainder of the costs are found from within existing budget allocation or other external funding sources.

Legal Implications

17. There are no legal implications arising from this report

RECOMMENDATION

The Committee is recommended to:

- a) Consider the report and identify how the committee would like to monitor progress of the Colum Road Centre.

- b) Note the information provided regarding the development of the Colum Road Centre

DEBORAH DRIFFIELD
Director of Children's Services
25th February 2022

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**CARDIFF COUNCIL
CYNGOR CAERDYDD****CORPORATE PARENTING ADVISORY COMMITTEE****15th March 2022**

Voices From Care Cymru (VFCC): Update report

Reasons for the Report:

1. The report aims to provide the Committee with an update on Voices From Care Cymru's involvement in governmental programmes by supporting care experienced young people to shape policy in Wales.
2. To provide an overview of the work of Voices from Care Cymru over the last 6 months and work planned with Cardiff as a Local Authority.

Background

3. Voices From Care Cymru's journey on corporate parenting has been ongoing for the last 10 years. This includes working with Local Authorities to develop Corporate Parenting pledges and supporting care experienced young people to attend and present to their corporate parenting panels. Alongside young people Voices from Care deliver training to corporate parents and also facilitate participation and social action groups. Voices from care Cymru also deliver a diverse range of engagement activities and events to facilitate a care community for care experienced children and young people on a national basis.
4. Since 2019 Voices From Care Cymru have been working with the Welsh Government on extending the duties of corporate parenting to all public bodies in Wales and for this to be enshrined in legislation.

5. In October 2021 Voices From Care Cymru were asked to join the Welsh Government Operational group to explore the methodology and implementation of the Basic Income Pilot for Care Leavers in Wales.
6. 2020 saw Voices from Care Cymru awarded National Lottery funding to deliver a 3-year programme for care experienced young people. This national service provides a 3-tier approach to wellbeing and includes one to one structured support, referrals to professional counselling services and learning in sets for professionals from the lived experience, co-produced and delivered by young people.
7. Influencing and innovation remains a legacy for Voices from Care Cymru and this work continues to be the golden thread in our delivery. Via social action, events and activities we consult and drive forward the voice of young people to shape the policy agenda in Wales.

Updates:

8. The Corporate Parenting charter is now in draft format and will be shared with stakeholders at a series of national conversation events taking place in the forthcoming months. It is anticipated a new refreshed approach to Corporate Parenting will be in place by end of 2023 and set within statutory guidance. It is expected a series of awareness raising sessions will take place to strengthen and increase knowledge on organisations roles and responsibilities. Voices From Care Cymru will continue to support Welsh Government ensuring the Voice of care experienced young people is central to its progress.
9. Welsh Government have committed to the delivery of a Basic Income Pilot for care leavers turning 18th on or after the 1st of July 2022. It is proposed this will support care leavers in Wales to thrive, be financially independent and overall raise life aspirations. Current work is ongoing within the operational group where wider engagement has now been made to ensure a collaborative holistic approach to the pilot delivery, with Voices from Care Cymru being central in the young people's engagement, its impact and monitoring

10. Over the last 6 months Voices from Care Cymru's national wellbeing and mental health service has supported 172 care experienced young people. This engagement has resulted 352 structured support sessions and 116 group wellbeing sessions. Themes of these sessions include isolation, healthy relationships, emotional wellbeing, self-care, and bereavement. The counselling element of the service is currently being implemented alongside the training modules and these will be delivered to professionals from 2023.
11. influencing work has continued over the last 6 months with young people driving forward the need to remove the stigma related to the care experience community, challenge the language used and call for ministers to listen to 1000 voices of the care experienced community. This call will support and influence the government commitment to radically reform the social care system in Wales within the next term.
12. Our young people have met with ministers to discuss the changes needed, launched our care community "kindred knot" pin badge and are currently working on a time capsule to measure and make accountable Welsh Government in the progress of their promises.
13. All forementioned work has been supported by the delivery of events and activities listed below where Voices from Care continues to build a holistic care community in which care experienced children and young people can thrive, access support and build positive peer relationships.
- Halloween event
 - Local groups (commissioned care experienced forums in 4 local authority areas)
 - Celebrating the UNCRC
 - 12days of Christmas
 - Parents peer café
 - Launched the peer café model to extend to 5 key areas, LGBTQI+, mental health and wellbeing, students, care leavers and criminal justice.
 - Launch "kindred Knot" on a national basis

- International Care day

Strengthening Legislation

14. Welsh Government are looking to use their existing legislative powers to strengthen statutory guidance; clarifying roles and responsibilities and extending duties across the public sector.

This will be achieved by:

- Developing a new 'corporate parenting' chapter within Part 6 Code under the Social Services and Wellbeing (Wales) Act 2014, providing clear statutory guidance to all departments within local authorities about their responsibilities and duties towards care experienced children.
- Updating Part 9 Code under the Social Services and Wellbeing (Wales) Act 2014, providing statutory guidance to Regional Partnership Boards on the issue of corporate parenting and enabling improved partnership working between local authorities and Local Health Boards.
- Seek to embed the concept of corporate parenting beyond that of local authorities. Existing powers are available to Welsh Government under the Children Act 2004 and Education Act 2002 to develop statutory guidance to embed corporate parenting beyond local authorities. It is anticipated by Welsh Government that this element will take up to 2 years.

Partnership Working: Cardiff & Voices From Care Cymru

15. Voices From Care Cymru's Wellbeing, Participation and Influencing project would welcome any referrals from care experienced young people in Cardiff. Opportunities include 'Sing Proud Cymru' our choir, Peer Support Café's, Social Action work and VFCC's Advisory Group. Any care experienced young people are welcome to become a member of Voices From Care Cymru and receive regular updates on events and activities.

16. Voices From Care would find it beneficial to link more robustly with leaving care teams to ensure the voices of care experienced young people are at the centre of the Basic Income Pilot delivery and monitoring.

Financial Implications

17. Voices from Care Cymru is funded by external funding partners, there is no financial costs for services or engagement of the care experience community within Cardiff.

Legal Implications

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

RECOMMENDATION

19. The Committee are recommended to note the Voices from Care Cymru update and to make any observations or comments.

DEBORAH DRIFFIELD
Director of Children's Services
2nd March 2022

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Voices From Care Cymru

Emma Phipps-Magill
Operational Director

The here and now

Page 40



- ▶ Monthly meetings (INFORMATION EXCHANGE)
- ▶ Attendance at CP operational group
- ▶ Children's festival planning group
- ▶ Information dissemination
- ▶ Minimal involvement of YPs

Opportunities

- ▶ Corporate Parenting Charter
- ▶ BIP advisory group
- ▶ Cross party group
- ▶ Stigma
- ▶ Language
- ▶ Art exhibition
- ▶ Time capsule events
- ▶ Transformation Board
- ▶ Impact of Act
- ▶ Care Guides
- ▶ Cascade Voices
- ▶ Care experienced Choir
- ▶ Summer celebration events



Further partnership working

- ▶ Continuation of monthly meetings
- ▶ Team meeting presentations
- ▶ Links with Foster carers
- ▶ Invite to events and activities
- ▶ Wider information dissemination
- ▶ Drop ins
- ▶ Wider involvement of care experienced children and young people from Cardiff



Thankyou

Any questions?

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**CARDIFF COUNCIL
CYNGOR CAERDYDD**

CORPORATE PARENTING ADVISORY COMMITTEE

15th March 2022

CORPORATE PARENTING ADVISORY COMMITTEE ANNUAL REPORT 2021-2022

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 2021/22 is attached at Appendix A.
This report outlines the Committee's activities from November 2020 – January 2022

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 from this report

RECOMMENDATIONS

The Committee is recommended to:

- 1) Provide comments on the contents of the Committee's Annual Report 2020/21.
- 2) Delegate authority to the Director of Children's Services in consultation with the Chair, to finalise the Annual Report, having regard to comments provided by Members of the Committee and Members of the Children & Young People Scrutiny Committee; and
- 3) Ask the Chair to present the Annual Report to full Council in June 2022.

DEBORAH DRIFFIELD

Director of Children's Services

2nd March 2022

Corporate Parenting Advisory Committee

Annual Report
2021/22

Chair's Foreword

I am pleased to introduce the 2021/2022 Annual Report of the Corporate Parenting Advisory Committee. The introduction of the reinvigorated Corporate Parenting Strategy in 2021 has set out an exciting and ambitious plan to help improve the lives of our Care experienced young people in Cardiff and formed the yearly work programme for the Committee.

As you can see from the report the Committee have received a variety of updates from a wide range of organisations, services and teams that have all played a role in supporting our children and young people. It has been inspiring to see all the exciting work and developments.

The introduction of a key performance dashboard has helped Committee Members gain a wider understanding of services that support our children and young people. New Terms of Reference reaffirm our commitment to hear the voices of care experienced young people in Cardiff.

A particular highlight for me was taking part in an engagement session with some members of the Bright Sparks group. It was great to directly hear their views, aspirations, and experiences in order to help the Committee to gain an understanding of the issues impacting them. These views will help to guide the agenda for the Committee and help to plan and develop projects and support for the future.

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

Director's Overview

The Annual report for 2020/2021 highlights a number of key pieces of work that the Corporate Parenting Advisory Committee has been involved in over the past year. The report focuses on the exciting refreshed Corporate Parenting Strategy and sets out Cardiff Councils and partners vision for care experienced young people in Cardiff and includes the systems that have been put in place to ensure that everyone has a part to play in supporting our children and young people.

It is important and positive to note that although the Covid 19 pandemic has raised significant challenges over the last 2 years, the Committee has continued in its work.

It is particularly encouraging to see the link between the Committee and our young people strengthen with the participation of our young people being a standing item agenda on the Committee and an engagement session being held to hear first-hand the experiences and thoughts members of the Bright Sparks group. As well as helping the Committee gain an understanding the issues impacting young people, feedback from our young people will help to develop and improve services for the future.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank members of the Committee for their contributions and active involvement throughout the year.

Introduction

It is the collective responsibility of members, partners, and the council to ensure that children who are looked after are provided the best possible care and safeguarding. Every member and employee have the statutory responsibility to act for those children in the same way that a good parent would act for their own child. Cardiff Council's Corporate Parenting Advisory Committee are collectively responsible for achieving this and ensuring children and young people receive the best possible care and support, that they are appropriately safeguarded and achieve the best possible chances in life. The Committee actively works to promote the life chances of looked after children in the care of Cardiff Council and those young people who

are care leavers. The voice of those children and young people in care help to drive and shape the Committee agenda and priorities, this also includes monitoring services that are delivered across all statutory and voluntary sector organisations.

This report presents the Committee’s main activities during 2020/21. It begins with background information that is helpful in understanding the Committee’s function, purpose, and the scale of its responsibilities. This includes:

- A record of meetings and attendance
- Terms of reference and Corporate Parenting protocol
- Young Person Participation
- Activity of the Committee
- The Corporate Parenting Strategy
- Monitoring Performance

What does it mean to be a Corporate Parent?

“When a child or young person enters the care of the Council, the role of being a parent is taken on by the local authority. This is known as Corporate Parenting. The term describes how Cardiff Council collectively fulfil their parenting responsibilities, by seeking positive outcomes for children looked after and young adults who are care leavers in the same way we do for our own children. From early years into adulthood all our children, young people and young adults should be kept safe, are happy and have every opportunity to thrive. Leadership & influence Effective Corporate Parenting requires not only strong collective ownership and leadership but influence at the most senior level” **Cardiff Corporate Parenting Strategy 2021-2024**

Who are the Committee?

The Cardiff Corporate Parenting Advisory Committee brings together strategic partners to work with elected Councillors to improve outcomes for looked after children and young people and care leavers. The Committee’s values highlight the right results can only be achieved by all professionals working together and listening to children and young people to understand what matters to them.

Record of meetings and attendance

During the 2020/21 municipal year 6 Committee meetings were held. An additional meeting with the Chair of CPAC and Bright Sparks group was held on the October 29th

The scheduled meetings were held on:

- 17th November 2020
- 9th March 2021
- 18th May 2021
- 20th July 2021
- 19th October 2021
- 18th January 2022

Membership

Membership of the Committee is approved by Council at its Annual Meeting each year. Seats are allocated on a politically proportionate basis. The Committee is chaired by the Deputy Leader of the Council. There were three changes of individual membership during the 2021/22 term. During 2021/22 members of the Committee were as follows:

COUNCILLOR REPRESENTATIVE		ATTENDANCE	
		Meetings: Possible	Meetings: Actual
Sarah Merry Chair	Labour (Deputy Leader, Cabinet Member for Education, Employment and Skills)	6	6
Cllr Sue Lent	Labour	6	6
Cllr Thomas Parkhill	Conservative	6	2
Cllr Shaun Jenkins	Conservative	6	4

Cllr Mike Jones – Pritchard (from 25.11.21)	Conservative	1	1
Cllr Lisa Ford (from 25.11.21)	Propel	1	0
Cllr Fenella Bowden (until 29.09.21)	Independent	4	2
Cllr Graham Hinchey	Labour (Cabinet Member for Children & Families)	6	5
Cllr Dan Naughton	Liberal Democrats	6	6
Cllr Ashley Lister	Labour	6	1

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

Due to a change in operating model to focus on the challenges raised by the global pandemic 2 Committee meetings were cancelled in the municipal period in 2020. The further 2 Committee meetings that took place in November 2020 and March 2021 are included in the report.

Young people Participation

The National Youth Advocacy Service (NYAS) are commissioned by Cardiff Children’s Services to deliver a participation service called the Bright Sparks group to children and young people aged 11-25 needing care and support. The principal objective is to ensure children and young people are afforded a voice, becoming active participants in shaping policy and service provision within the council and within a wider external context.

In addition, Bright Sparks is a peer support forum for care experienced children and young people, providing them with opportunities to take part in social activities, other participation opportunities and avenues of support.

At each Committee meeting the Participation Officer from NYAS Cymru attends to inform the Committee of work undertaken by members of the Bright Sparks group in line with the Priorities in the Corporate Parenting Strategy. The updates also provide feedback from young people in order to strengthen the voice of young people and inform the Committee of the challenges, achievements and views of care experienced young people in Cardiff.

Engagement Session with Bright Sparks Group

The Chair of the Corporate Parenting Advisory Committee met with members of the Bright Sparks group via an engagement session at a local venue. The purpose of the session was for members of the Bright Sparks group to find out more about the role of the Committee and role of the Chair. The session also helped the Chair of the Committee understand the issues directly impacting young people.

A series of ice breaker activities were held which included a question-and-answer session and an exhibition of a photography project that members of the Bright Sparks group took part in. The session also provided an opportunity for young people and the chair to have an open discussion about their experiences and provide feedback on the Corporate Parenting Strategy.

Feedback from young people who took part in the engagement session:

“I’m glad that I came today – I got my point across and got to explain what it is like for us. I would like to do that again; it is important that they listen”

“It was very interesting and good to speak directly instead of through a Social Worker or Advocate”

The themes identified in the engagement session were presented to the January 2022 Committee meeting. This included:

- Access to mental health services
- Stigma

- Cost of living

This feedback will inform projects developed with partners, young people and the Corporate Parenting Operational group.

Corporate Parenting Advisory Committee New Terms of Reference

In May 2021 the revised Terms of Reference of the Corporate Parenting Advisory Committee and Corporate Parenting Protocol were agreed by the Committee, and approved by Council at its Annual Meeting in May 2021

Terms of reference for the Corporate Parenting Advisory Committee:

The terms of reference for the Committee can be found [here](#)

Corporate Parenting Protocol

An independent expert facilitated a series of discussions with Cabinet Members, Group Leaders, Scrutiny Committee Chairs and offered workshops for all Elected Members to enable them to have their views considered as part of the development of a Corporate Parenting Protocol. In May 2021 the Head of Democratic Services presented the Corporate Parenting Protocol to obtain feedback and views from the Committee.

The link to the Corporate Parenting Protocol can be found [here](#)

The Protocol was agreed by the Committee and approved by Council at its Annual meeting in May 2021.

Corporate Parenting Strategy

The Corporate Parenting Strategy is a three-year multi agency strategy that sets out what Cardiff Council and other organisations need to do as corporate parents to enable Children Looked After and Care Leavers to thrive. The Corporate Parenting strategy outlines five key priorities based on the views and experiences of Looked After Children in Cardiff.

The five priorities identified by our young people were:

Priority 1: Improving emotional well-being and physical health

Priority 2: Better connections, improved relationships

Priority 3: A comfortable safe stable home whilst in care and after

Priority 4: Educational achievement, employment, and training

Priority 5: Celebrating our children and young people

The Cardiff Corporate Parenting Strategy 2021- 2024 can be found [here](#):

Committee members were involved from the outset in the development of strategy, providing useful and valuable insight and feedback.

The Corporate Parenting Advisory Committee considered the draft Strategy at its meeting on 9th March 2021 and recommended the draft Strategy should be submitted to Cabinet for approval. The Corporate Parenting Strategy was agreed by Cabinet in March 2021

November 2020

In November 2020 the Committee approved the previous Committee Annual report and approved the work programme of activity for the year. Members of the Committee also received the following updates:

Member Protocol on Safeguarding Vulnerable Children and Adults

In November 2020 members of the Committee considered a revised draft of a Member Protocol which provided guidance and advice to Elected Members on their roles and responsibilities in relation to safeguarding vulnerable children and adults.

The Director of Governance and Legal Services and an independent consultant informed the Committee of the work that had been undertaken to develop the protocol. This included incorporating flowcharts to clarify the process for members to make a safeguarding referral or to raise other safeguarding concerns and extensive discussion with members to ensure it remained fit for purpose.

The Committee were advised that the document had been considered by the Standards and Ethics Committee and also the Children and Young people Scrutiny Committee. Members of

the Committee were informed that the protocol would go to Cabinet and then the Council for adoption, considering any views received.

A discussion was held with Committee members about the content of the protocol with particular reference to wording. Members of the Committee were encouraged by the work that had taken place and were felt that Cardiff was setting a bar that others will follow. Committee members considered it was helpful to have clarity on their role as advocates; bringing issues to Officers who are professionals, to deal with them.

Young Person Participation

In November 2020 the Committee were updated about the mechanisms used to seek the views, concerns and issues facing looked after children throughout Cardiff. Committee members were also informed of the development and progression of projects across the service area to help enhance the voice of young people which included a new digital app and building on the Bright Sparks Participation forum.

A discussion took place about how young people were able to engage with the Committee in the future. The Committee were intrigued about the mutual participation between young people, their forum and CPAC, but sought advice on the format in which the young people would like this to take place. Members of the Committee suggested that when meeting face to face they could meet somewhere familiar to the young people.

Committee members wished to stress to young people that that they were keen to hear from them and it would be an opportunity for them to raise any issues and would be positive all around. They were keen that this experience was not intimidating for the young people.

March 2021

Family Thrive project

In March 2021 the Project Manager for the Family Thrive Team presented to Committee courses for parents and carers being piloted by the Looked After Children in Education (LACE) Team. The purpose of the course was to support parents and carers to meet the wellbeing and social emotional development needs of their children. Topics included brain development, activities to develop our stress-regulation system, the importance of creativity

and play, understanding behaviour as communication and ideas on how to calm ourselves and our children. Members of the Committee were also informed of the schools who displayed an interest in running the course and feedback obtained once the course was completed.

Personal Adviser Service Update

In March 2021 the Team Manager for the Personal Adviser Service updated the Committee on the work that had been undertaken to support young people leaving care, including during the Covid 19 pandemic.

The Committee were informed of the key functions of the Personal Adviser service which included:

- Providing advice and guidance for young people aged 16- 25 leaving care.
- 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.
- 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

The Committee were advised of the issues that had impacted the service during the Covid 19 pandemic and how it had adapted in line with government restrictions at the time. This included maintaining contact with all young people open to the Personal Adviser service and providing advice via telephone, skype and text. Members of the Committee heard how staff were working flexibly to ensure the needs of young people were prioritised to support them at times when they may feel more vulnerable and isolated.

A discussion was held on the emotional drain the pandemic and restrictions had on young people and officers were questioned if they felt they provided the supportive role that parents would. The Committee were advised that young people often have many different support workers throughout their lives and building relationships was vital. The nature of working relationships varied also with some young people having aspirations and ideas for

their future, some young people coming from the Youth Justice Service, others in crisis. Each young person needs different levels and types of support at different times. Members of the Committee commended the work by Officers.

Bright Sparks Participation Update

The Participation Officer for National Youth Advocacy Service (NYAS) attended the Committee to provide an update of the annual Bright Sparks event which celebrates the achievements of care experienced young people in Cardiff.

The Committee were informed that the event celebrates the numerous achievements of care experienced children and young people in Cardiff, whilst also acknowledging the commitment and dedication of others such as social workers, foster carers and supported lodgings providers. The event is the annual highlight of the Bright Sparks group, with young people playing a fundamental role in its planning and organising. The event has been an excellent example of good practice in participation. Due to the Covid 19 restrictions the event last year was held online.

A discussion was held in regard to planning for future Bright Sparks event including suggestions from Committee members about a change in categories, the best time in the year for the event to take place and where would be best to hold the event. Members of the Committee were advised that the suggestions would be fed back to the young people for consideration.

Forward Work Plan

Following agreement from members of the Committee the Forward Work programme and meetings held from May 2021 to January 2022 were based around the priorities outlined in the Corporate Parenting Strategy.

[Priority 1: Improving emotional well-being and physical health](#)

In May 2021 the Committee received a number of updates from organisations and services that help to support and improve the emotional well-being and physical health of care experienced young people in Cardiff in line with priority 1.

Resilience project

The Resilience Project Practitioner presented an update to the Committee on the work that had been undertaken by the Resilience project over an 18-month period. The Committee were advised that the aims of the project focused on building greater capacity, expertise and mental health resilience for children and young people in educational settings across Cardiff and the Vale.

Members of the Committee were advised of the close partnership work of the project with partners such as CAMHS, third sector services and youth services. Committee members noted the importance of smooth and timely transition between different interventions. Members of the Committee were informed that direct intervention work is led by Developmental Psychotherapists with the involvement of teachers, with a focus on supporting parents with practices including therapeutic parenting, particularly if there has been a trauma in the child's early life that might impact on their development.

The Committee were informed of different models and strategies that are used to support young people such as:

- PACE- Playfulness, Acceptance, Curiosity, Empathy
- Regulation strategies
- Anxiety management
- Cognitive Behaviour Therapy
- Dialectical Behaviour Therapy

The Committee were advised that the project is expanding into 3-4 schools every half term and that staff have been identified for training. The project facilitates the 1st round, and it is then expected that the staff will continue with further rounds to build resilience in that school.

Regional Health and Social Care Partnership

In May members of the Committee were provided with a detailed presentation from the Director of Health and Social Care Integration on the newly established Starting Well Partnership and the revised governance arrangements of the Regional Partnership Board.

The Committee were informed how the partnership brings together two major programmes, together with previous work and projects. Members of the Committee were informed of the goal to improve the impact of the Regional Partnership Board and joining up of services to wrap around the needs of both children and their families. Committee members discussed the work of the Regional Partnership Board and noted that the work was considered was very complex and discussed the need for it to be finessed.

Bright Sparks Participation update

The Participation Officer from NYAS Cymru updated the Committee of the work that had been undertaken by members of the Bright Sparks group addressing priority 1 of the Corporate Parenting Strategy.

The Committee were informed of how the Bright Sparks group developed resources that explored the lives of care experienced young people, what wellbeing means to them and how their dreams and aspirations have been shaped through their experiences over time. These resources were used as part of the Fostering Network well-being classes delivered to foster carers and professionals . Other work updates provided to the Committee included:

- Development of resources for care experienced young people working with Cardiff University.
- Participation in consultation on young peoples' views and thoughts on statutory school and community counselling services.
- Bright Sparks group attendance to mental health and wellbeing workshops on Resilience.

Children and young people reported that they were being overly consulted due to a duplication in surveys from different partners. The Committee considered how this could be addressed by increased partnership between organisations. Young people also need to feel the information they supply is important and the benefit and impact of surveys explained.

Assessment and Therapy Pilot

The Commissioning Manager for Children Services provided members with an overview of progress on an Assessment and Therapy Pilot. The Committee were informed that the pilot focused on conducting gap analysis, quality assurance and market engagement to identify commissioning needs and possibilities.

Members of the Committee were provided with a Therapy Pathway which was developed to reduce duplication for Social Work teams and provide an efficient process where therapy is identified as a requirement for a child or young person. The Pathway had been enhanced to align with the ENFYS service to ensure that the provision of therapy was consistently considered and consulted on in conjunction with Health Board colleagues and expertise.

Committee members were advised in relation to outcomes of the pilot that within 6 months the pilot would have a handle on the data and the process would be fully embedded and aligned with the Health Board and that within 18 months it would be possible to report back on the themes coming through from the data.

Priority 2: Better connections, improved relationships

In July 2021, in line with Priority 2 of the Corporate Parenting Strategy, the Committee received a number of updates about services and developments that are aimed to improve the working relationships between young people and professionals, as well as an update on the impact Covid 19 pandemic has had on services. Updates provided in July also focused on the work that had been undertaken by services as part of a -COVID recovery plan.

Enfys Service

Enfys is an NHS-based service for children and young people looked after, adopted or on the edge of care in Cardiff and the Vale. In July Consultant practitioners from Enfys provided the Committee with an update on their work. Members of the Committee were informed that the number of children becoming looked after has increased during the pandemic. In addition, many of the children and families supported by Enfys are in crisis. Increasingly the service is seeing a need to support children still residing with their birth families.

A discussion was held about the behaviours presented to the team which included aggression, withdrawing, self-harming, depression, and anxiety. The Committee were informed how Enfys works closely with CAMHS to provide wraparound support in order to upskill adults to

better understand young people's behaviour. The Committee were advised how the service was funded and a discussion took place around funding contributions and the including sustainability of the service.

Voices from Care Cymru – Welsh Government review of Corporate Parenting

Voices from Care Cymru is a third sector organisation which aims to improve the lives of care experienced children and young people in Wales by being an independent voice for the care community. In July the Programme Manager provided an update to the Committee on the organisation's involvement in the Welsh Government's Review of Corporate Parenting.

Committee members were advised that the Welsh Government would be embarking on an extensive programme of work and engagement activity to take forward a new 'refreshed' approach to corporate parenting. The Programme Manager informed the Committee that the new approach would look at doing things differently whilst other elements would focus on strengthening what is already in place by raising awareness and increasing knowledge about organisations' roles and responsibilities.

The Committee were reminded of the forthcoming operational group looking at Corporate Parenting Strategy and investigations were underway to see how the efforts of different bodies could be linked to avoid duplication. Members of the Committee were advised of how Voices from Care Cymru will produce a Corporate Parenting Charter to enable stakeholders to sign up to a common statement of improved support and action when working with care experienced children.

Committee members enquired as to the responses from local authorities across Wales to the Corporate Parenting Charter and were informed that responses were similar and there was a widespread recognition that an extension of duties were needed.

Mind of my Own Project

The Mind of My Own digital app help children and young people express themselves freely and communicate with their social worker and other professionals. The app has been designed and co-produced with young people for young people and unlike traditional surveys, the apps allow staff to receive organic and authentic feedback from the children and young people using services.

The Account Manager from Mind of My Own and the Corporate Parenting Officer attended the Committee to share information to Committee members of how the Mind of My Own app had been implemented across Children's Services in Cardiff. The Committee were informed of the two features of the app; the 'One App' which allows young people to create their own account on any device and communicate in ways which suit them, and the 'Express App' for young children and those with communication needs, this can only be accessed through a workers account.

The Committee were informed that when a child or young person has used either of the apps to share their views a clear statement is created which is automatically sent via a service portal. This is monitored and sent to the social worker.

The Committee were informed that training to staff had been adapted to be delivered online rather than face to face due to Covid restrictions. Members of the Committee were advised that around 100 languages are available on the app and that the data collated was only visible to the local authority client and not the company.

Vale, Valleys and Cardiff Adoption Collaborative performance report 2020- 21

An Operational Manager for Children's Services attended the Committee in July 2021 to inform Committee members of the progress made under the Vale, Valleys and Cardiff (VVC) Regional Adoption Collaboration. The Committee were informed that adoption services had performed well given the adaptations that had been necessary during the Covid-19 pandemic and were provided figures for the number of children referred to services, orders made, children successfully placed, children adopted, and children matched who had significant complex needs. Members of the Committee were informed that 45% were able to secure orders within 6 months of a court order and that there had been a year on-year increase in the number of adopter enquiries and adoption approvals. Adoption support services had significantly increased along with complex care packages.

Bright Sparks Participation Update

The Participation Officer from NYAS Cymru attended to inform the Committee of activities of the Bright Sparks Club in relation to priority 2 of the Corporate Parenting Strategy. The 'What's Your Story' project was shared, it aims to challenge media stereotypes and

stigmatisation of children and young people in care and will be on the NYAS website later in the year.

Committee members were informed that of a number of other projects and work members of the Bright Sparks group have been involved in which included:

- A review into the recruitment of volunteers to the Independent Visitor Project
- Involvement in new developments regarding Advocacy work in Cardiff and ensuring that NYAS complies with RISCA (The Regulation and Inspection of Social Care (Wales) Act 2016)
- Providing feedback on the draft Cardiff Anti-Bullying Guidance has been provided to the Child Friendly Cardiff Team

Members of the Committee stated that they were pleased to hear that young people were becoming more interested and involved in politics and noted that there is a forthcoming public event during Democracy Week in October which will examine the role and responsibilities of Councillors.

Members of the Committee noted that Julie Morgan MS was being invited to talk to young people about their experience of elections and asked if, in the interest of political balance, members of opposition parties could be invited too. Participation Officer advised Committee members that members of opposition parties were intended to be invited also.

Delivering a Child Friendly Recovery

The Operational Manager for Partnerships and Performance along with the Achievement leader attended the Committee in July 2021 to provide an update on a recent Cabinet report entitled 'Recovery & Renewal: Delivering a Child Friendly Recovery' of 20th May 2021.

Discussions were held about attempts to engage with Children Looked After regarding summer activities. Children who were looked after and other vulnerable children were given priority access to these events and there was extensive engagement through the Youth Service website and social media. The Summer of Smiles festival, the Youth Service summer programme through Youth Centres, Roadshow events and a pop-up youth provision were provided. Youth mentors supported Year 11s at risk of disengagement. The Committee were advised that capacity was added into the pre-16 Children Looked After education team to

ensure additional mentoring capacity. Teams were being joined up across Education, Children's Services and People and Communities to engage in a life coaching programme entitled Compass for Life.

Priority 3: A comfortable safe stable home whilst in care and after

In October 2021 members of the Committee received a number of updates from a wide variety of services that helped to achieve Priority 3 of the Corporate Parenting Strategy: helping to provide a comfortable, safe, and stable home for young people in care and after.

Young Person Gateway

The Housing Accommodation Manager attended the Committee to provide information of the Young Person Gateway (YPG); an Accommodation provision for young people aged 16-21. This included information in regard to the current structure of the service, data on outcomes and information around the expansion plans for the Gateway.

The Committee were informed what happens when a young person presents as homeless and the support that is provided in supported accommodation for example developing independent living skills. Members of the Committee were also advised that when a young person has been identified as being ready to live independently, they will be required to attend a training session which covers all the necessary information around managing a tenancy, such as; connecting utilities, how to pay rent, applying for any benefits, how to register with a GP and managing relationships with neighbour. Information was provided on the development of the service and plans in place to strengthen support for young people.

Foster Wales Launch

In October 2021 the Regional Marketing Officer from Foster Wales presented to the Committee on the launch of a national partnership of local authority fostering services. Members of the Committee were informed of the challenge in recruiting foster carers across Wales via a presentation which also included the national campaign to promote the work of Foster Wales and support recruitment.

Discussions were held amongst the Committee and members of the Committee sought clarification on whether there had been any specific targeting in the social media campaign and if there were plans to produce publicity material in other community languages besides English and Welsh. The Committee were informed that the campaign had been generic, on a national level and marketing had been aimed at raising awareness on a broad level. Committee members were advised that as the campaign progresses more work will be undertaken on identifying specific opportunities for targeting. The Committee sought information on the percentage of foster carers from BAME backgrounds. Members of the Committee were advised that the precise figures were not available, but the percentage was understood to be low.

Bright Sparks Participation Update

The Participation Worker from NYAS Cymru updated the Committee on the Bright Sparks Club and the activities the group had undertaken in relation to the third of the 5 Priorities.

The All-Wales National Steering Group were undertaking work on a children's rights approach to policing and the Bright Sparks members provided initial thoughts on this. Members of the group had provided feedback to the use of language used regarding "Return interview or Debriefs" and had informed the steering group that the language used was too formal and not young person friendly.

The Committee were also informed that NYAS had been successful in their application to be a partner organisation at Welsh Youth Parliament. Members of the group were consulted on how they feel the NYAS representative in the parliament should be elected and that children and young people will be supported to apply for the role.

A discussion was held on whether Children and Young People were provided with information on local elections. The Committee were advised that there had been sessions on the Senedd earlier in the year and young people were supported in registering to vote. Information has also been shared about the Youth Parliament.

Members of the Committee enquired on links with higher and further education. They were informed discussions were planned about opportunities for care experienced young people

to attend university. Links were being made with First Campus; a collaboration between Cardiff Met, Cardiff University and University of South Wales. A First Campus outreach manager has recently been appointed and is looking at developing pathways for care experienced young people to enter university.

National Transfer Scheme

In October 2021 the Operational Manager and Project Manager presented a report informing the Committee of the National Transfer Scheme along with an update on the developments of its implementation. Committee members were informed of the long-term objective of the voluntary transfer scheme which was to ensure that children can access the services they need by achieving a fairer distribution of unaccompanied children across all local authorities and parts of the UK, through a scheme which is equitable and transparent.

The Committee were informed that each region or nation involved in the scheme takes its turn on the rota in sequence with the expectation being for that region or nation to fulfil the allocated number of placements at which point responsibility will move on to the next region. A discussion was held on the frequency and duration of periods on the rota and the Committee were informed that the pressures on the service meant that the rota cycle had gone round more quickly than initially anticipated. It had been said that there would be a pause for reflection when the regional commitment of 20 young people in Cardiff and 30 across the region had been reached.

Committee members queried whether the National Youth Advocacy Service (NYAS) could support. Officers advised that there had been contact with National Youth Advocacy Service and that Advocacy can be involved in 2 ways; supporting young people on arrival including those needing an age assessment, and those entitled to the active offer. Members of the Committee noted the update of the scheme

Independent Reviewing Officer Monitoring Report

In October 2021 the Service Manager for Children Services IRO team provided an update to the Committee on key updates and trends on Children Looked After during the last period. Members of the Committee were informed of the role of the Independent Reviewing Officer and legal requirements. Service information was provided including how Looked After

Children reviews have been adapted in line with Covid 19 restrictions. Key information was provided on the demographics of Children Looked After in Cardiff as well education arrangements.

A discussion was held as to whether there was evidence of more children coming into care due to the lockdown and the consequent pressure on families. Committee members were advised that there had been a large increase in the number of children on the Child Protection Register during the lockdown and that there were a number of reasons for the rise. Committee members were informed that work was being undertaken to ensure children were receiving the right services and there was the right level of scrutiny, it was noted that reviewing will be extended to children on the Care and Support plan.

Priority 4: Educational achievement, employment and training

In January 2022 members of the Committee received a number of updates from a wide variety of services that helped to achieve Priority 4 of the Corporate Parenting Strategy: Educational achievement, employment, and training.

Into work Advice Service

The Bright Futures Project provides support for Care Experienced young people (16-24) who are identified as Not in Education, Employment or Training (NEET) and needing intensive help to access training and the workplace. A team of five Youth Mentors liaise with partners in Children's Services and Youth Services to ensure that all Care Experienced young people are given the opportunity to reach their potential and be supported into education and work. The Assistant Into Work Coordinator for Youth and Bright Start Youth Employment Mentor presented an update to the Committee on the Bright Futures Project and Bright Start Traineeship Scheme.

A discussion took place in regard to placements offered by external agencies. The Committee were informed that due to concerns around covid 19, external placements were put on hold and that placements have been taking place internally within Council departments. Members of the Committee expressed disappointment that it had only been possible to make internal placements and noted the importance of widening placement opportunities when Covid restrictions allow. Committee members discussed the benefits of face-to-face meetings with

young people on placements and commended the work of officers in supporting young people.

Bright Sparks Participation Update

In January 2022 the Committee were informed of the activities that the Bright Sparks group had undertaken in relation to the fourth of the five Priorities in the Corporate Parenting Strategy, as well as details of an engagement session held with members of the Bright Sparks group and Chair of the Committee.

The Committee were informed of the themes following the discussions that took place with young people and the next steps services and partners would take to deliver change as a result of what members of the group had said. This included an example of tackling stigma faced by care experienced young people. Officers advised that the care experienced young people that they worked with were proud of their experience as Children Looked After and working with others who fall into that category is important to them.

Members of the Committee expressed the importance of peer support for young people to achieve their aspirations.

Support for Care Leavers

The Personal Adviser service manager and well-being coordinator updated Committee members of the work undertaken to support young people leaving care, as well as future plans for the service. A presentation highlighted activities that had taken place as part of Care Leavers week including a residential trip and DIY sessions with a local construction company.

A discussion took place about further activities that could take place to support the well-being of Care Leavers. The view was expressed that it was the activities that young people wished to do that mattered. Life skills such as cooking, DIY and financial awareness are important to enable young people to live independently. Sessions given by the team are intended to give young people more independence and confidence that will enable them to join outside groups such as Scouts building on their social skills and other opportunities.

Youth Justice Service update

In January 2022 the Operational manager from the Youth Justice Service presented to the Committee on data and information on Children Looked After who are supported by the service. Information was provided on the background to the service which included legislation, structure of the service and the support provided to young people. A breakdown of data was provided in reference to the number of young people known to the service who Children Looked After.

Members of the Committee enquired as to the nature of preventative work undertaken with children aged 8-9. Officers advised that while some areas did conduct prevention work among 8–9-year-olds HMIP had advised that this was not appropriate for Youth Justice Service. There might be scope for targeted work within primary schools which the service could contribute to.

Committee members were informed of substance misuse workshops; the Committee were informed that the workshops were targeted according to the needs of the different residential establishments and that substance misuse workers provide information and support to children in reducing harmful behaviours and making positive choices.

Members of the Committee enquired on whether if substance misuse workshops and were informed that the workshops would commence following recruitment.

Children Looked After in Education Annual Review Briefing

The Achievement Leader for Key Groups and Project manager from the Looked After Children Education Team attended the Committee and provided an overview of the results of tracking and monitoring the performance of Looked After Children in Education. Members of the Committee were informed of the positive feedback provided by Estyn following the work that taken place to support Looked After Children during the pandemic. The Committee were informed about the key performance of young people in education in Cardiff, what was working well within the team and the further actions needed for improvements to be made.

Committee members discussed whether it would be appropriate to incorporate targets for exclusion rates, transition to GCSE, and progression to employment, education, or training. Officers advised that the aspiration was for no children to be excluded and all children to

progress to employment, education, or training and that it is important to consider what success means for an individual.

Further discussion took place in regard to the distances travelled by Looked After Children educated in out of county settings. Officers advised that even where the settings were just over the border, they still presented difficulties.

Additional learning Needs and Education Tribunal Wales Act 2018 Update

Briefing

Officers from the Looked After Children Education team provided a presentation on the Additional Learning Needs and Education Tribunal (Wales) Act 2018 and the new responsibilities outlined in the act. The Committee were informed of the main principles as well as information that all Children Looked After with Additional Learning Needs would have a Local Authority maintained Individual Development Plans and information about what the Individual Development plan would contain.

Members of the Committee sought clarification on where responsibility for a child's IDP would lie. Officers advised that the Local Authority would be responsible for the IDP, and it would rest upon colleagues in Children's Services and Education to ensure a joined-up approach. The sole focus of the inclusion teacher is the IDPs. Committee members welcomed the inclusion of Looked After Children in the development of their IDPs and discussed how the experience of Children Looked After by the Local Authority and those who were not differed.

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. A number of developments have been made to help capture data and inform the Committee of key services that help to achieve deliverable outcomes to improve the lives of Children Looked After and Care leavers.

Key Performance Indicator dashboard

A Key Performance Indicator Dashboard was agreed by the Committee to help monitor and understand the services that support Children Looked After and Care Leavers. Previously the Committee had received a number of Key Performance Indicators from predominately Children Services and the Education Directorate, however Children Looked After and Care Leavers have support and involvement from a range of services and agencies and therefore the dashboard was developed to help capture data more widely.

The Key Performance Indicator Dashboard is now a standing performance management item on the Committees agenda and shows a range of key data from internal departments and outside agencies that have an impact on the lives of Children Looked After and Care Leavers in Cardiff.

Partners who contribute and provide key performance indicators include:

- Cardiff and Vale Health Board
- Children Services
- Bright Futures
- Housing Directorate
- Education Directorate
- Criminal Justice System
- Adolescent/ leaving care services

The dashboard continues to be developed to help include relevant data will help members of the Committee in their role. Performance information training will be added to the Member Development programme to help Committee members to learn and to develop their ability to analyse performance information.

Corporate Parenting Strategy Progress Report

The Corporate Parenting Officer for Children Services presented an update to members of the Committee on the implementation of the new Corporate Parenting Strategy. Committee Members were informed of the progress made and outcomes and developments in the first 6 months of the strategy being implemented.

The report provided a number of projects from a range of partners that had taken place to improve the lives of care experienced young people over the first 6 months in line with each of the 5 priorities of the strategy and the plans for the future

Progress that had been reported to the Committee included:

- **Private Sector Opportunities** – DIY sessions to support those leaving Care were held to help young people learn skills such as decorating and basic home repair helping to prepare with independent living.
- **Summer of Smiles Festival** – Care experienced young people were provided with exclusive access to book onto activities as part of the 6-week summer programme
- **Independence planning workshops** – pilot of Children’s Services and housing to improve independence planning. The workshop took place to inform staff and stakeholders about how to plan for independence for young people leaving care. Care leavers shared their experiences and informed staff of the challenges they faced moving to live independently.

Information was shared on the development of the strategy and the systems put in place to galvanise internal and external agencies to have a role to play in extending Corporate Parenting duties. This included the establishment of an operational group and development of a shared multi agency action plan.

Committee members noted the report and advised that there had been significant progress in the work over recent months.

The Corporate Parenting Strategy action plan

The Corporate Parenting Strategy action plan outlines key deliverable outcomes that aim to improve the lives of care experienced young people in Cardiff.

The Committee were informed of the development of the action plan and the establishment of a multi-agency Operational group and membership of the group which included representation from:

- Children Services
- Housing

- DWP
- Child Friendly City Team
- Education
- Youth Service
- Police
- Cardiff Commitment
- HR
- Tourism & Leisure
- Voices from Care Cymru
- NYAS Cymru

Members of the Committee were informed that the action plan for the Operational group outlined a set of key clear deliverable outcomes that help to improve the lives of care experienced young people in Cardiff. Members of the group provide updates to the progress made against the actions.

Complaints and Compliments – Performance report

The Committee's terms of reference state that it will receive Children's Services Complaints reports and Compliments performance report. A report is produced and provided to the Committee at each reporting quarter period.

It is a statutory requirement for Local Authorities to have in place a Representations and Complaints Procedure for Social Services. Statutory complaints relate to the provision of social care and are handled in line with the national regulations. 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 considered (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.

At each quarterly report update the Committee were informed of the methods of how citizens can make a complaint, the themes of the complaints with analysis, as well as compliments received about Children Services, thus helping the Committee to gain an understanding of common issues facing citizens.

Quality of Care Review

The Regulated Services (Service Providers and Responsible Individuals) (Wales) Regulations 2017, (amended 2019) provides the requirement of a Quality-of-Care Review. In October the Committee received the Annual Quality Assurance Report for Ty Storrie Short Break Service and Crossland's Childrens home covering the period Oct 2020 – March 2021. The aim of producing the reports was to inform and drive improvements in the quality of care provided to the young at the home and short break service.

The reports outlined the results and feedback from a number of surveys conducted which included young people's feedback, staff, social workers and parents. The Operational Manager for Performance, Strategy and Resource presented to the Committee key findings and a summary of both Quality-of-Care reviews which included examples of good practice, outstanding actions from previous reviews and how young people are supported to have their voice heard.

Conclusion

During 2020/2021 Committee members received a wide range of updates and information from a variety of organisations and teams helping the Committee gain an understanding of the issues impacting Care experienced young people and the organisations, projects and initiatives that support them.

These updates helped to notify the Committee of how services and organisations adapted to the Covid 19 pandemic and the future plans and developments for services

Areas of particular interest from Committee members for 2020/2021 were:

- Participation of Children and young people updates
- Voices from Care presentation
- Launch of Foster Wales

Key systems were put in place to support Committee members in their role including a refreshed Terms of Reference, Corporate Parenting protocol and the development of a Key Performance Indicator dashboard.

The forward work programme for the Committee had been shaped to link with the new Corporate Parenting Strategy and connections between young people, external and internal partners were strengthened.

DRAFT

**CARDIFF COUNCIL
CYNGOR CAERDYDD**

CORPORATE PARENTING ADVISORY COMMITTEE

15th March 2022

Corporate Parenting: Look to the year ahead

Reasons for the Report

1. This report provides the Committee with a background to the development of the refreshed Corporate Parenting Strategy 2021- 2024, the progress made in its implementation and future plans.

Background

2. In May 2021 the refreshed Corporate Parenting Strategy 2021- 2024 was agreed by Cabinet. The Corporate Parenting Strategy sets out 5 key priorities that have been developed by the views, experiences and aspirations of care experienced young people in Cardiff.

These are:

- **Priority 1:** Improving emotional well-being and physical health
 - **Priority 2:** Better connections, improved relationships
 - **Priority 3:** A comfortable safe stable home whilst in care and after
 - **Priority 4:** Educational achievement, employment, and training
 - **Priority 5:** Celebrating our children and young people
3. The development of the strategy included engagement and feedback from over 250 care experienced children and young people. 70 professionals and members of the Corporate Parenting Advisory Committee also provided contributions.

Operational group

4. In order to extend Corporate Parenting responsibilities and to monitor progress of the strategy, an Operational Group was established. The group has representation from a wide range of external and internal partners at a senior level.

Membership to the Operational group includes:

- Looked After Children in Education
 - Housing
 - Third Sector
 - Police
 - NHS
 - Children Services
 - Child Friendly Cities
 - Tourism & Leisure
 - Human Resources
 - Department for Works and Pensions
 - Cardiff University
5. The group has met 3 times since May 2021 with a further meeting to take place at the end of March. The main purpose of the group is for senior officers to work together to develop projects and services that would help and support Children Looked After and Care Leavers in Cardiff. It is also to share good practice.
 6. A shared action plan has been developed which outlines key delegated tasks to officers with set timelines used to help galvanise staff and monitor progress. Each action outlined in the plan has set realistic timelines for completion with a red, amber and green status attached to each, helping to maintain momentum.

7. Members of the Operational group have provided suggestions of how they would be able to deliver real improvement outcomes to care experienced young people for the future and the support they would need from other members of the group. Details of these suggestions are provided in the presentation

Next Steps

8. The suggestions from the group will be worked through at the next operational group meeting and plans will be put in place to help measure the impact projects will have on our young people.

Financial Implications

9. Where additional costs are to be incurred as a result of any actions agreed then the source of funding needs to be identified prior to implementation. The two sources of funding to be explored are existing budget allocation and any external funding such as grants. Where Grant funding is identified then consideration should be given to both the terms and conditions of the grant and the duration of the financial support

Legal Implications

10. There are no legal obligations arising from this report.

RECOMMENDATION

The Committee is recommended to:

- a) Note the report
- b) To make any recommendations they would like to see to help progress with extend Corporate Parenting responsibilities

DEBORAH DRIFFIELD
Director of Children's Services
2nd March 2022



Corporate Parenting Strategy : Looking to the year ahead

Page 81



Gweithio dros Gaerdydd, gweithio gyda'n gilydd
Working for Cardiff, working together



Corporate Parenting Strategy – 5 priorities

A Co produced Strategy :

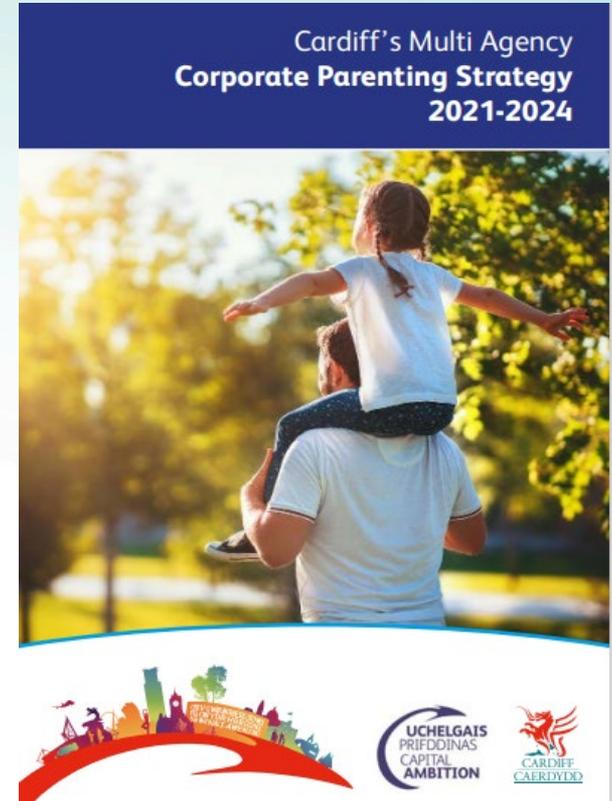
Priority 1: Improving emotional well-being and physical health

Priority 2: Better connections, improved relationships

Priority 3: A comfortable safe stable home whilst in care and after

Priority 4: Educational achievement, employment and training

Priority 5: Celebrating our children and young people



Reflecting from last year:

Corporate Parenting Strategy was launched in May 2021:

- Summer of Smiles
- DIY sessions with Care Leavers
- Promotion of the strategy across teams
- Operational group established
- Action Plan has been developed
- Engagement session held with members of Corporate Parenting Advisory Committee and members of the Bright Sparks Group
- Mind of My Own app launched
- Youth Mentors in Education recruited



Priority 1 : Improving emotional well-being and physical health

Delivering nutritional skills for life workshops

- Support young people to prepare healthy meals
- Budgeting skill to help the young people cook meals on a limited budget – especially lunches for work.

Page 84

Social opportunities

- Opportunities to attend cultural and sporting events and attractions.
- Work with event owners etc to identify opportunities to access free or discounted tickets to events and attractions



Priority 2: Better connections, improved relationships

Listen to our children, young people and care leavers to understand what they want to stay connected to the people and places important to them

- Ensuring that the 'voice of the child is captured during our interactions with young people, by embedding the key headings within the PPN completion.
- This process will ensure that young people have a voice and that they are part of the process rather than having processes actioned on them.



Priority 3: A comfortable safe stable home whilst in care and after

Enhanced tenancy training programme to include how to pay bills/budget finances:

- Equip Young People with tools to enable them to become financially independent
- This will in turn will allow for a successful tenancy

Page 86

My things Matter Campaign:

- Support the National NYAS My Things Matter Campaign by signing up to 5 point pledge to support our young people with placement moves.
- The 5 pledges focuses on ensuring that young peoples belongings are kept safe when they move.



Priority 4: Educational achievement, employment and training

Cardiff university (HE) awareness pilot –

- Programme for young people in KS4/5, who are care experienced .
- Develop opportunities to discuss young peoples' aspirations, develop confidence and highlight the support that is available to young people.

Page 87

Social Value

- Work with Cardiff Commitment to find and develop social value opportunities



Priority 5: Celebrating our young people – enhancing voice of our young people

Photovoice Care Leavers Photography Exhibition

- Display photography work of Care Leavers that provide an understanding to members of the public of being care experienced

Page 88

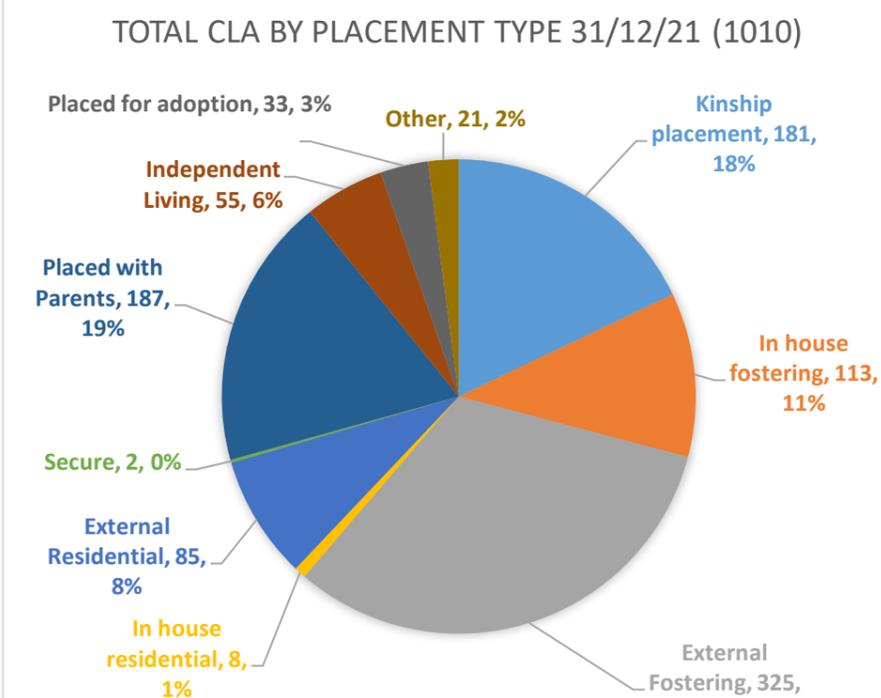
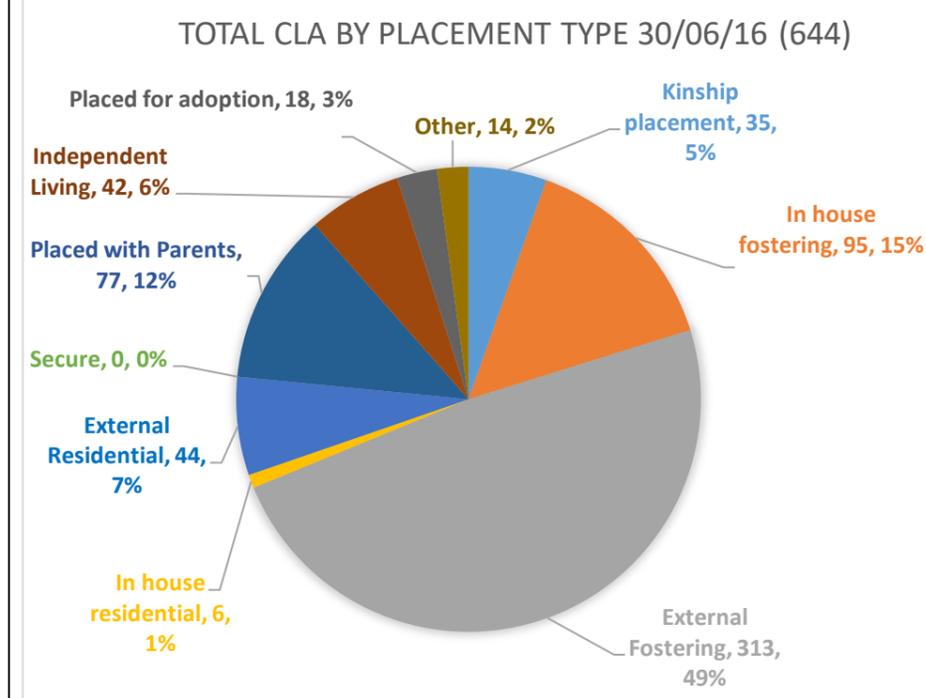
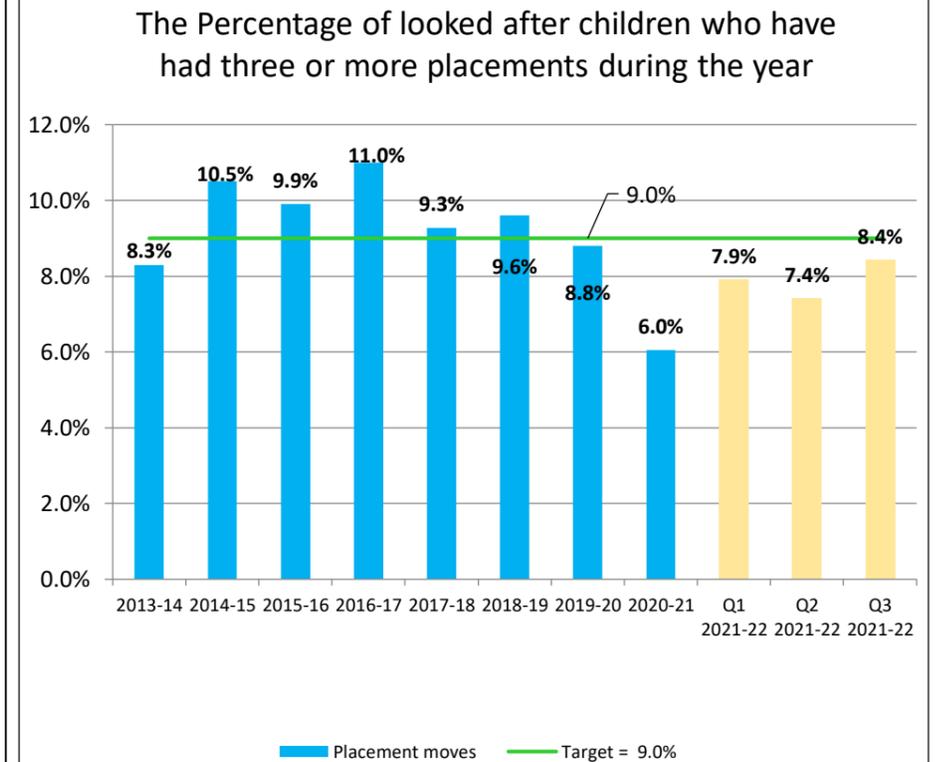
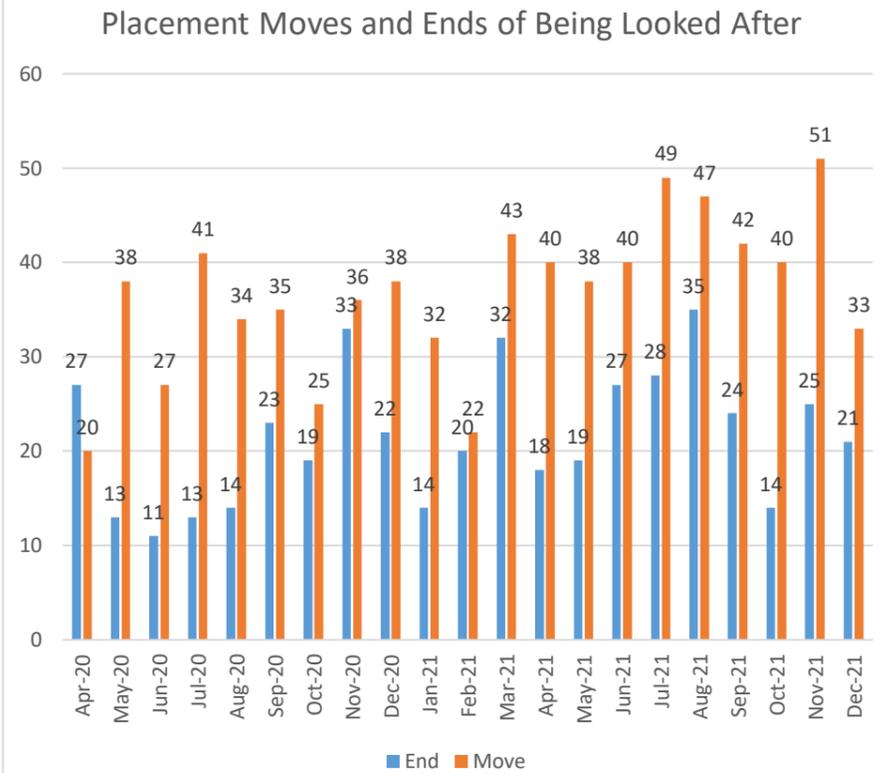
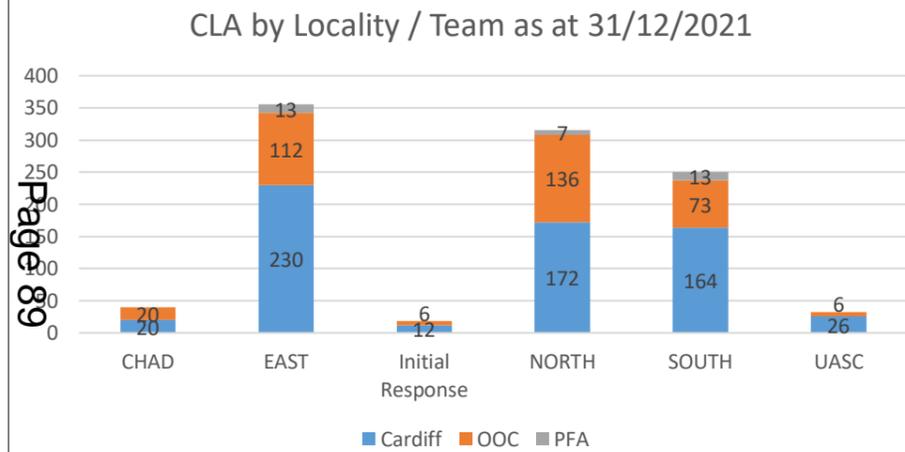
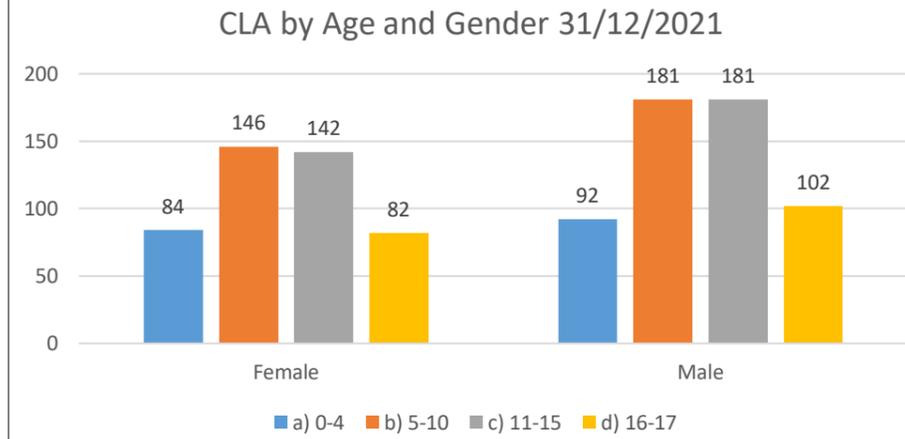
Young Persons festival

- Hold an Young Person festival to celebrate the achievements of our young people ,
- Support well being and provide fun activities



CPAC Dashboard Quarter 3 2021-22

CHILDREN'S SERVICES

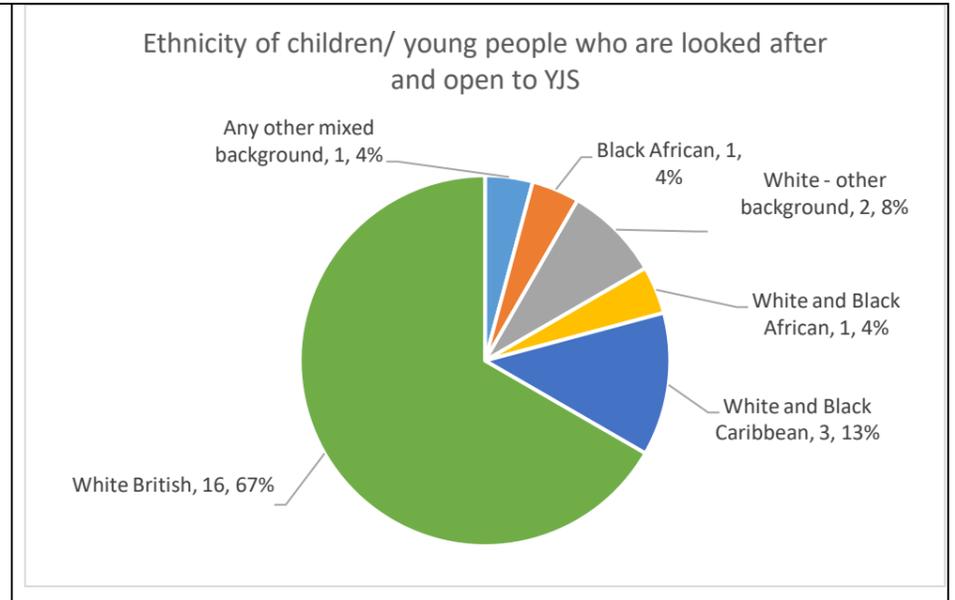
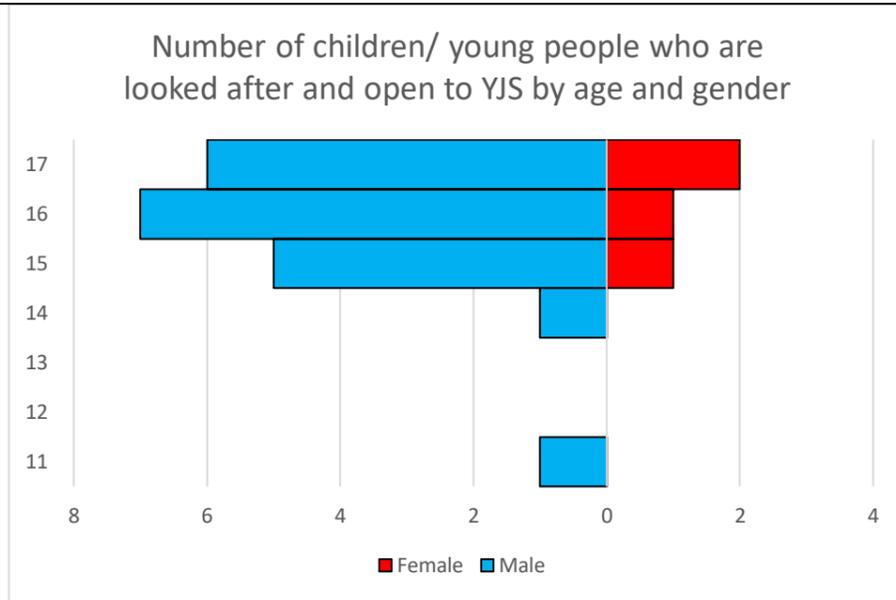
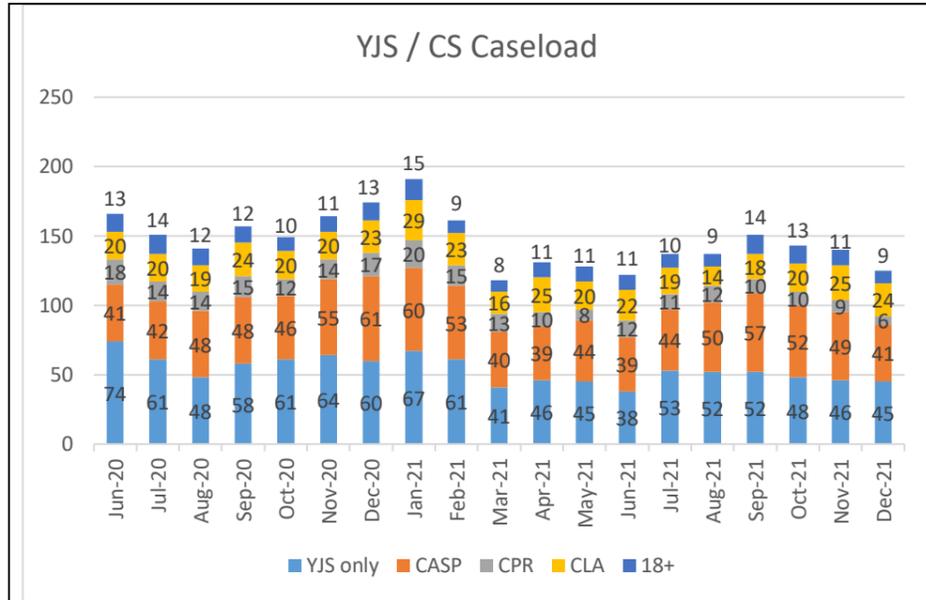


After a decrease in the number of children looked after in the early days of lockdown, a subsequent increase in new admissions led to a gradual increase from 939 at 27th April 2020 to 1,010 at 31st December 2021. The number of children looked after has been relatively stable since October 2020 and is being closely monitored. 22 of the 79 children (28%) who started being looked after during Quarter 3 2021/22 were placed with parents on a Care Order, with family / friends or in parent and baby placements.

The graph above shows the percentage of looked after children who have had 3 or more placements during the year = 8.4% (85 / 1010.) This is a rolling result for quarter 3, based on the children who were looked after as at 31st December 2021 and the number of placements they had during the preceding year. 85 of our children looked after as at the 31st December had 3 or more placements during the year. This is in comparison to 6% (60 / 992) for the 2020/21 result as at 31st March 2021.

The pie charts show the shift in the balance of care we have achieved in recent years. The percentage of children being looked after and placed with parents on a Care Order or in kinship arrangements with family members has increased from 17% (112 / 644) to 36.4% (368 / 1010), while the percentage of children looked after in regulated placements minus kinship placements has reduced from 71% (458 / 644) to 53.3% (538 / 1010).

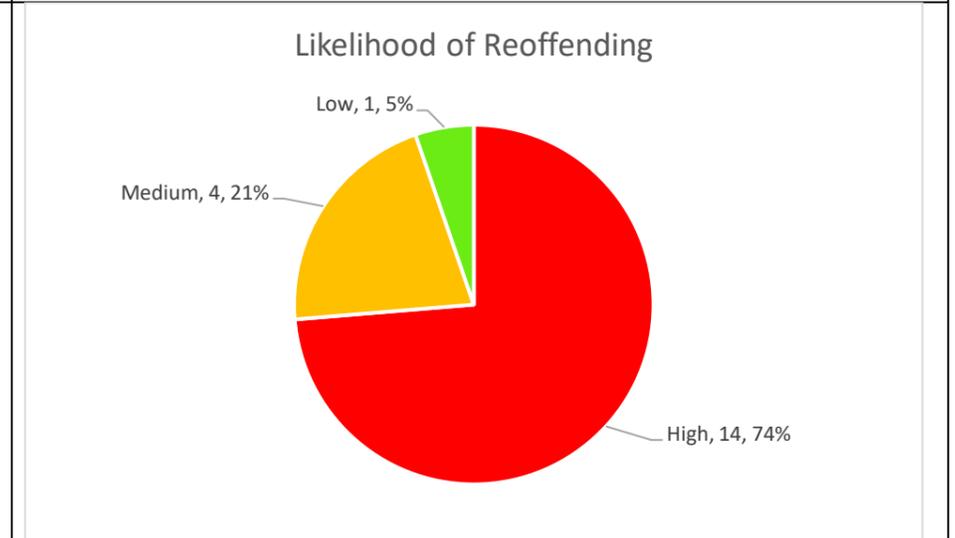
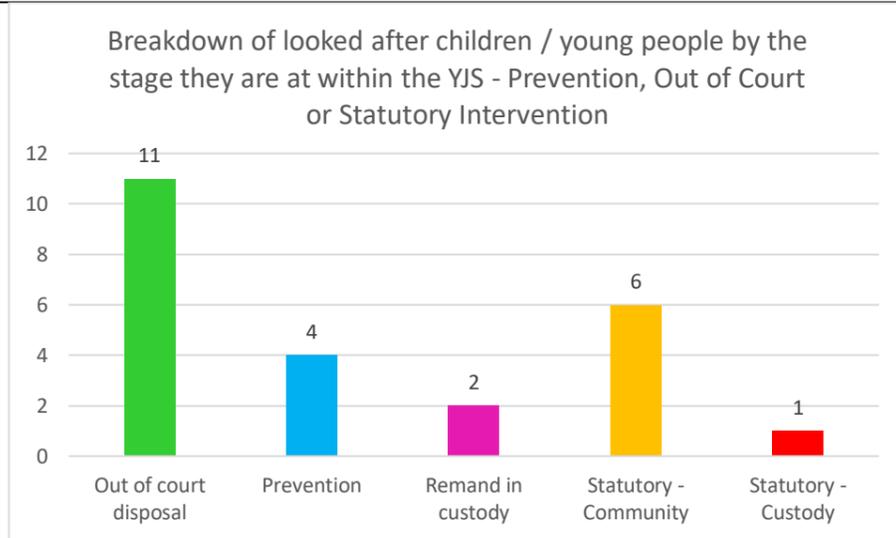
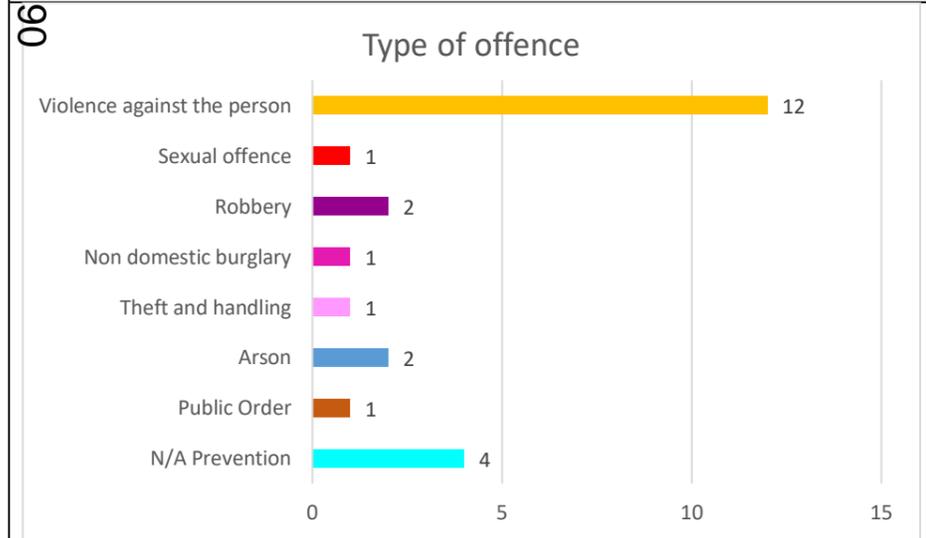
CPAC Dashboard Quarter 3 2021-22



The chart above shows the open YJS caseload as at the end of each month, which identifies all young people open to Children's Services. Following an opposite trend to last quarter there has been a decrease in caseload numbers over Q2, from 151 to 125, whilst there has been an increase in terms of the CLA population which has increased from 18 at the end of Q2 to 24 young people at the end of Q3.

20 of the 24 young people identify as male. 46% of all young people are above statutory school age with 2 of the 4 females being above school age.

The latest published information from the Youth Justice Board (mid 2011) shows 80% of the 10-17 year old population were white and 5% were mixed. The chart shows 67% are White British and the remaining 33% are other ethnic minorities.



There are 24 young people currently known to YJS who are also looked after. The most prevalent main offence types, 12/20 (60%), are violence against the person with which is reflective of all young people convicted of an offence. 20% of main offences were of an acquisitive nature. Please note that 4 of the young people currently known to YJS are engaged with Prevention and have not been charged with any offences but are engaging in an effort to divert them from entering the criminal justice system.

YJS engages young people across a wide range of interventions from Prevention prior to offending to those in Custody and on licence in the community. Those young people remanded into custody automatically have CLA status. The chart shows the highest percentage of CLA were engaged on Out of Court Disposals, this includes both statutory and diversionary disposals.

Of the 24 looked after young people 19 have recently been assessed, 74% were assessed as high risk of reoffending. Of the 14 young people at high risk of reoffending 70% are being reviewed at either risk management or high risk panels.

CPAC Dashboard Quarter 3 2021-22

EDUCATION

	As at 31 st March 2021
1 The number of looked after children:	687
In a Cardiff school or setting	424
In an out of county school or setting	223
EOTAS (not on roll at a school)	37
Not in provision	3

	As at 31 st March 2021
The number and percentage of looked after children with SEN / ALN:	
School Action	95
%	14%
School Action Plus	91
%	13%
Statement	132
%	19%
With Individual Development Plans (once IDPs are statutory for all looked after children)	N/A
%	

Exclusions:

	September 2020 - August 2021
2 Schools Exclusions: Cardiff schools only	
Number of LACE with one or more fixed term exclusion (Sept to date)	27
%	3%
Number of LACE permanently excluded this year (Sept to date)	0
%	0%

Attendance:

	September 2020 - August 2021
3 Attendance: Cardiff schools only	
Attendance cannot be reported as data would be skewed and not an accurate representation because of the isolating of year groups/classes. There wasn't a code for 'not required to attend' before November so all children were marked as absent.	

No update received this quarter from Education.

Education figures are the same as figures shared at previous meeting as we have come to the end of the academic year that we are currently reporting on.

Please note there is no attainment data currently available as Exams were cancelled 2020 & 2021. New measures will be established as part of curriculum reform.

CPAC Dashboard Quarter 3 2021-22

LACE Not in Provision (NIP):

		September 2020 – August 2021
4	Time spent Not in Provision (NIP) academic year to date:	
	Number of LACE NIP this academic year living in Cardiff	2
	Av Weeks NIP (Cardiff)	7.4
	Number of LACE NIP this academic year living in OOC	7
	Av Weeks NIP (OOO)	20.39

Personal Education Plans:

		September 2020 – August 2021
5	Personal Education Plans:	
	Total number of LACE with a PEP this academic year	667
	%	97%
	Total number of LACE with a PEP this academic year (Cardiff Schools)	416
	%	98%
	Total number of LACE with a PEP this academic year (OOO Schools)	217
	%	98%
	Total number of LACE with a PEP this academic year (EOTAS / No School)	34
	%	85%

Successful transition:

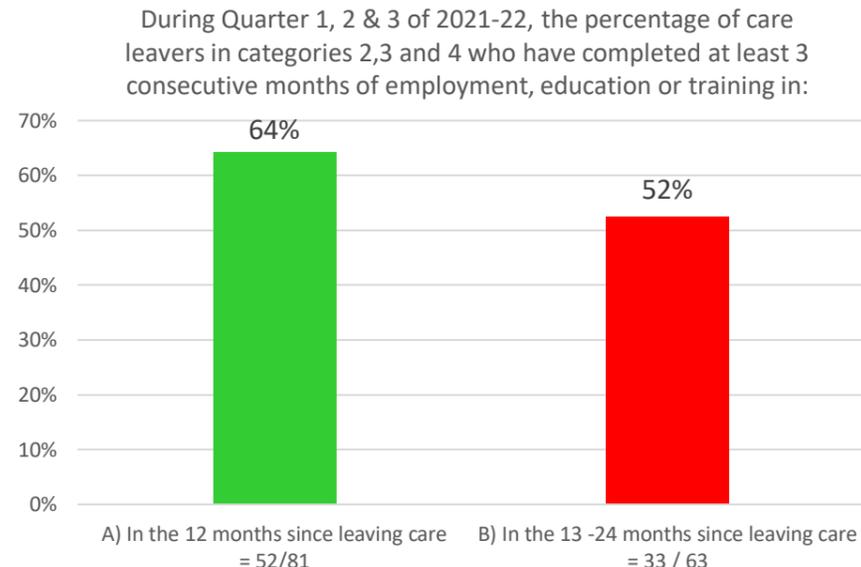
		As at 31 st October 2021	
6	Successful Transition to Employment Education or Training:	# Y11	Y11s with intended EET destination*
	Total number of LACE in EET on October 31 st	81	67
	%		83%
	Total number of LACE in EET on October 31 st (Cardiff)	51	44
	%		86%
	Total number of LACE in EET on October 31 st (OOO)	19	17
	%		89%
	Total number of LACE in EET on October 31 st (EOTAS)	11	6
	%		55%

As previously noted, weeks 'Not in Provision' is significantly longer for children placed out of Cardiff. This confirms the need to improve joint planning for education when planning placement moves. Some children with additional educational needs / requirements are placed in Local Authorities with insufficient specialist provision and as a result are spending too long not in provision. As a team we are working with Children's Services to improve this joint planning.

The figure for PEPs is exceptional. Particularly in comparison to historic lows of 20%

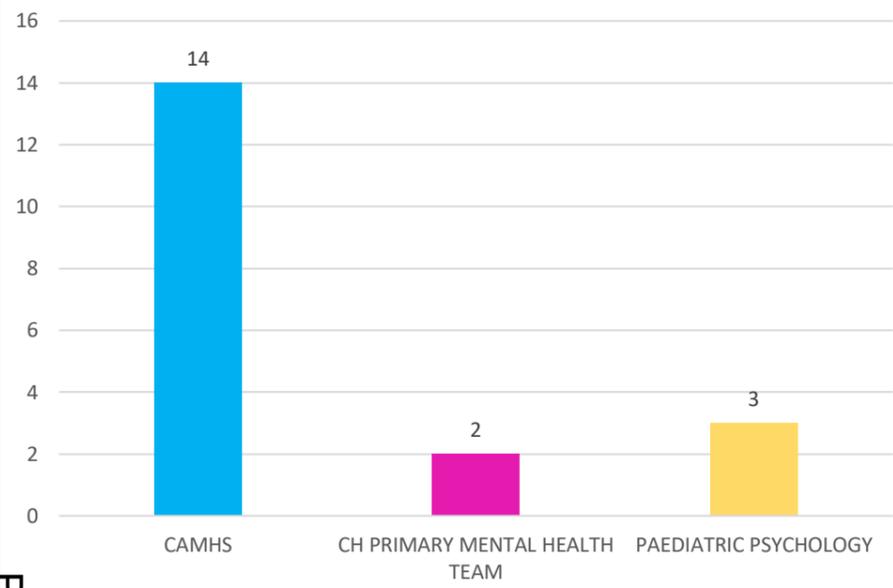
31st October is the date that is used to measure number of young people that are NEET. The figures included gives an indication of those who we expect to be in education, employment and training on this date, based on the information we have about their plans and their current enrolment. We should have the official figures later in the year.

CPAC Dashboard Quarter 3 2021-22

ADOLESCENTS																
<p>Into Work Service</p> <table border="1" style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <tr> <td style="padding: 2px;">MONTHLY CASELOAD – (February 2022)</td> <td style="text-align: center; padding: 2px;">78</td> </tr> <tr> <td style="padding: 2px;">TRAINING OUTCOMES (Project Cumulative)</td> <td style="text-align: center; padding: 2px;">92</td> </tr> <tr> <td style="padding: 2px;">WORK EXPERIENCE/ VOLUNTEERING (Project Cumulative)</td> <td style="text-align: center; padding: 2px;">39</td> </tr> <tr> <td style="padding: 2px;">FULL TIME EDUCATION (Project Cumulative)</td> <td style="text-align: center; padding: 2px;">59</td> </tr> <tr> <td style="padding: 2px;">JOB OUTCOME (Cumulative)</td> <td style="text-align: center; padding: 2px;">94</td> </tr> <tr> <td style="padding: 2px;">JOB OUTCOME (Oct - Dec)</td> <td style="text-align: center; padding: 2px;">8</td> </tr> <tr> <td style="padding: 2px;">EARLY LEAVER (Oct - Dec)</td> <td style="text-align: center; padding: 2px;">6</td> </tr> </table>	MONTHLY CASELOAD – (February 2022)	78	TRAINING OUTCOMES (Project Cumulative)	92	WORK EXPERIENCE/ VOLUNTEERING (Project Cumulative)	39	FULL TIME EDUCATION (Project Cumulative)	59	JOB OUTCOME (Cumulative)	94	JOB OUTCOME (Oct - Dec)	8	EARLY LEAVER (Oct - Dec)	6	<p style="text-align: center;">During Quarter 1, 2 & 3 of 2021-22, the percentage of care leavers in categories 2,3 and 4 who have completed at least 3 consecutive months of employment, education or training in:</p>  <p style="text-align: center;">A) In the 12 months since leaving care = 52/81 B) In the 13 -24 months since leaving care = 33 / 63</p> <p>Source: CareFirst – Quarter 1, 2 & 3 result for 2021-22</p>	<p>Housing / Young person Gateway</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 100% of care leavers prevented from becoming homeless (target is 90%) - 6 care leavers housed in supported accommodation in the Young Person’s Accommodation & Support Gateway - 4 care leavers housed permanently in social housing through the Training Tenancy scheme - 115 (99%) care leavers successfully maintaining their social housing tenancy through the Training Tenancy scheme (target 95%) - 11 additional units of supported accommodation in the Young Person’s Accommodation & Support Gateway (target was 16 units by Autumn 2021; this has been extended to March 2022 due to COVID-19). – note on this – last 4 bed as part of the extension is due to be available by end of March 2022.
MONTHLY CASELOAD – (February 2022)	78															
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EARLY LEAVER (Oct - Dec)	6															
<p>Bright Futures</p> <p>Bright Futures mentors have been continuing to support their young people to prepare and enter employment throughout the last few months. One young person has been successful obtaining his CSCS card and is being helped by his mentor to prepare for upcoming job interviews. Another young person has been helped into a position in County Hall, the project is assisting with her transport costs until she is paid. Other young people on caseloads have been making positive progress in smaller, but no less significant, steps – one mentor has been trying to engage with a young man who has significant mental health problems for several months. After many (many!) missed appointments, the young person is finally coming to weekly mentoring sessions and is building trust and rapport with his mentor.</p> <p>Bright Start</p> <p>4 young people finished their 6 month Bright Start placements in December and were presented their end of placement certificates (and chocolates!) by their placement managers on their last days. One young person has since started his Corporate Apprenticeship in Fitness, another young person has been helped into ACT to study hospitality, one young person has entered the Construction Academy to obtain his CSCS card and has moved from hostel accommodation into his own flat, and the final young person has started work with the Into Work Butetown Project as a Trainee Mentor.</p>	<p>During quarter 1, 2 and 3: The percentage of care leavers in categories 2,3 and 4 who have completed at least 3 consecutive months of employment, education or training in: A) the 12 months since leaving care = 64% just below the target of 65%.</p> <p>The percentage of care leavers in categories 2,3 and 4 who have completed at least 3 consecutive months of employment, education or training in: B) the 13-24 months since leaving care = 52% which is below the target of 57%.</p>															

HEALTH

Children looked after open to Emotional Wellbeing Services during Quarter 3 2021-22



Source: Health

18 children and young people who were looked after were open to Emotional Wellbeing Services during Quarter 3. 14 children / young people were open to CAMHS, 4 of these were receiving urgent intervention. 10 were open to the Generic Team 1 was receiving support from the Community Intensive Treatment Team, who operate frequent home visits for psychological interventions to provide support and aid recovery by seeing the child in their home/family environment. This in turn reduces/actively prevents hospital admissions and allays further issues that could worsen mental health that could otherwise occur if the child were hospitalised, such as missing out seeing friends and family, disruption to family life and missing school. 3 of those open to Paediatric Psychology were receiving consultations to assess the impact of becoming looked after on their behaviour, outlook and mental health. Two were open to the Primary Mental Health Team, where service delivery involves a consultation to complete an assessment before commencing a care and treatment plan which could include referral into CAMHS or the provision of other support services either via the NHS, Local Authority, 3rd Sector or via Digital Platforms. Please note children and young people can be open to more than one team at once.

All Health data is in Development.

Please note data provided is in relation to those identified as looked after on the Cardiff and the Vale Health’s database and open to Emotional Wellbeing Services during quarter 3.

Children’s Services are working with Cardiff and the Vale Health board to help improve data integrity and capture further data in relation specifically to Children Looked After.

Health are anticipating data for the Paediatric Weight Management service (aka AFAL – Active Families Active Lives) to be available in the Q4 reports.

Additionally, Health are hoping to have Looked After Children’s Health Assessment data available for reporting by Q1 2022-23.

OTHER

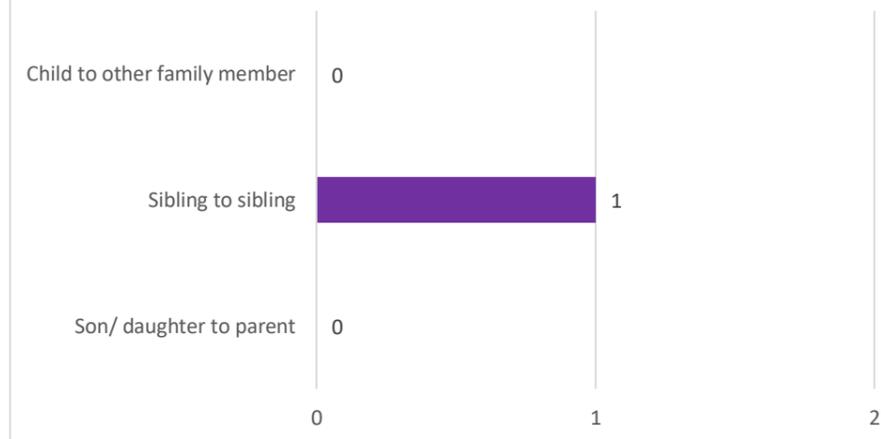
Mind of My Own

- 94 children and young people had set up an account since going live
- 204 members of staff had set up a worker account since going live
- 109 statements had been submitted by children and young people either via the one app or express app

Mind of My Own is a set of accessible apps that allow our children and young people to express and share their views in a way that suits them. Young people can use the app alone or with their worker to say how they are feeling, what support they need and tell their worker about things that are important to them. We are encouraging staff in Children’s Services to sign up for a worker account and when the stats below were published 204 members of staff had an account.

When a child or young person uses the app a statement of their views and feelings gets sent to us and our team of portal administrators ensure that the child’s worker receives a copy. The statement is also saved to the child’s record on Carefirst. When these stats were taken 94 children had set up the app and had an account and 109 statements had been submitted to us.

Reported incidents of domestic abuse/violence involving children who are looked after in Cardiff between 01/10/2021 and 31/12/2021



Source: Police

Cardiff Council

Children's Services

CLA Complaints and Compliments

Quarter 3 - 2021/22



1. Introduction - Social Services Quarter 2 Feedback Report

This report focuses on Children's Services complaints & compliments concerning looked after children for the period 1st October 2021 – 31st December 2021.

It is a statutory requirement under the following items of legislation for Local Authorities to have in place a Representations and Complaints Procedure for Social Services.

- ✓ Representation Procedure (Children) (Wales) Regulations 2014
- ✓ Social Services Complaint's Procedure (Wales) Regulations 2014

Statutory complaints relate to the provision of social care and are handled in line with the national regulations referred to above.

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.

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 child looked after or a care leaver the local authority has a duty to provide an advocate as required.

How were complaints received during Quarter 3?

During Quarter 3, 16 complaints were received by Children's Services concerning a looked after child. The five methods by which these complaints were received are detailed below.

Contact Method	2021/22 Q3
Email	5
Letter / Complaints Form	0
Online Form	5
Telephone	5
Via Advocate	1



Total	16
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2. Quarter 3 Feedback Summary

During Quarter 3, there have been 17 cases of feedback recorded by Children’s Services for CLA. These 17 cases consist of:

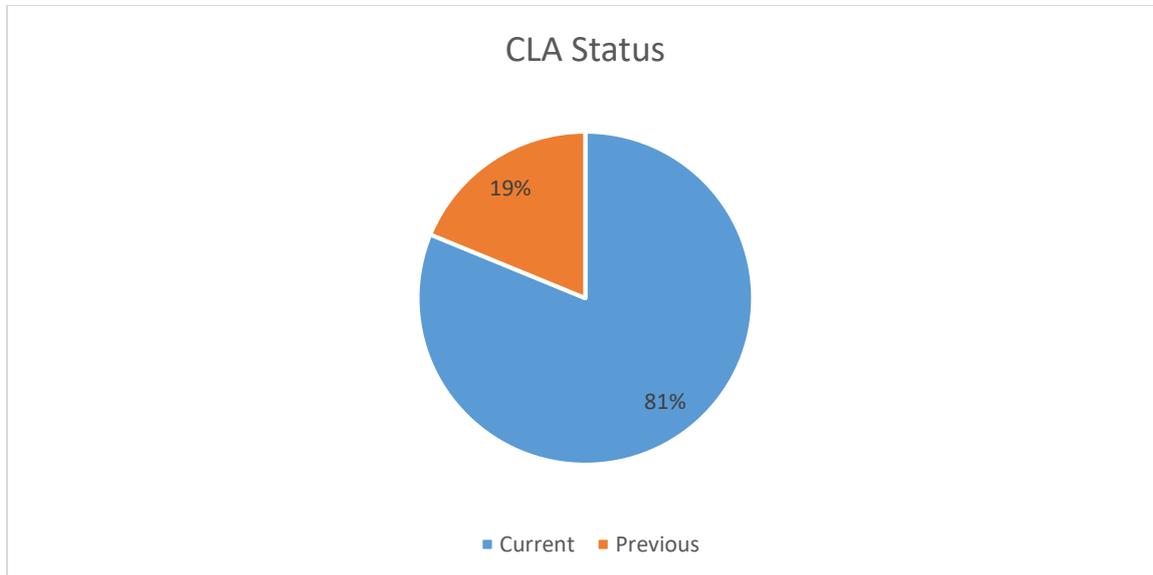
- ✓ **16 complaints**
- ✓ **1 compliment**

Of the complaints received by Children’s Services as a whole in quarter 3 (49), the number concerning looked after children represents 32.6%.

The number of complaints received (16) represents 1.6% of the cases open to Children’s Services involving CLA as at 31/12/21 (1010).

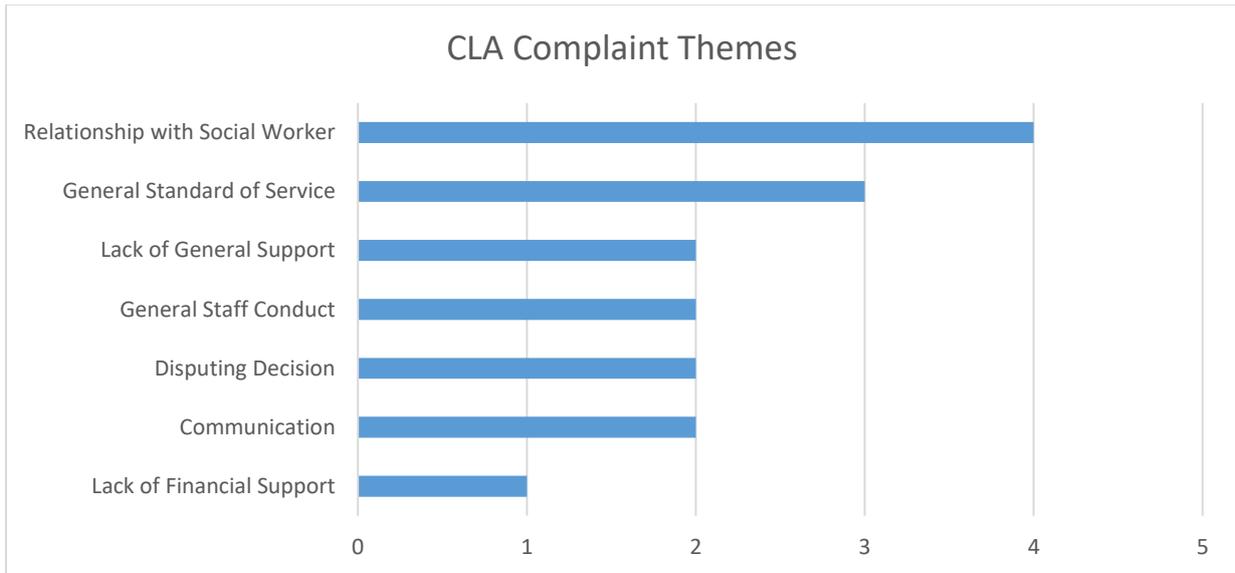
3. Complaint analysis

Of the 16 complaints, 13 concerned a child currently looked after and 3 had been previously.



Complaint Themes

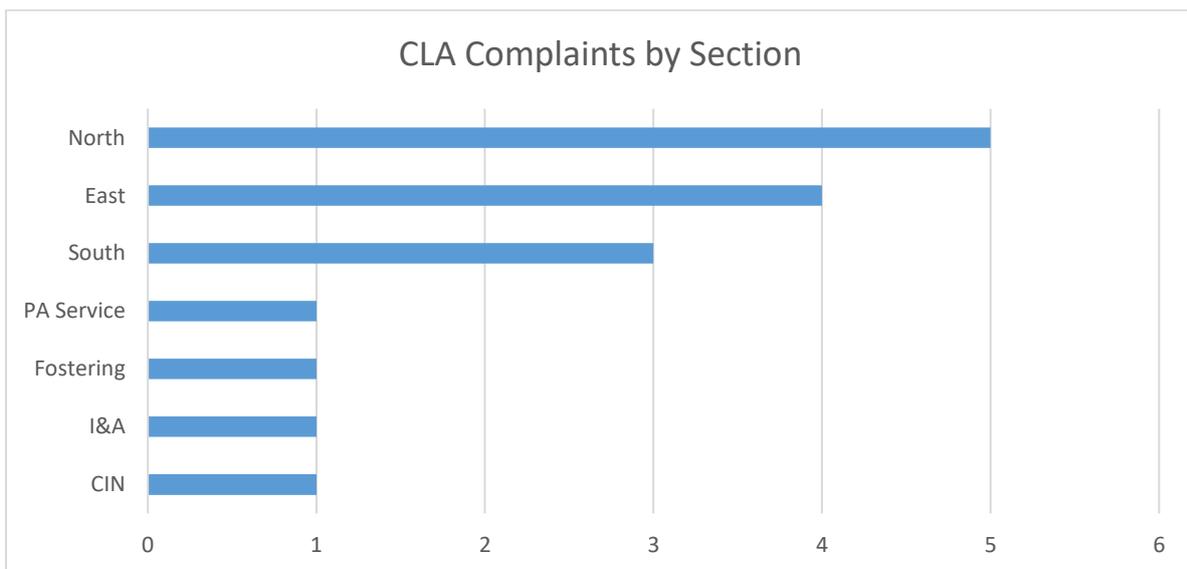




‘Relationship with social worker’ has been the most dominant theme within CLA complaints during quarter 3 (25%), closely followed by **‘General standard of service’**, accounting for 18.7% of complaints made during the quarter.

Complaints by section

When comparing complaints by section, we see that North Locality accounted for 31% of complaints made during Quarter 3. They were followed by East Locality (25%) and South, accounting for 18.7%.



Complainants

Complaints can be made by a variety of people including young people, parents, foster carers, family members, friends, neighbours. Some complaints are made through agencies/advocates/councillors on behalf of others. Of the 16 complaints, 9 (56%) complaints were made by parents, 4 (25%) were made by wider family members such as grandparents or aunts/uncles, 1 (6%) complaint was made through an advocate, with the remaining made by others, such as school staff and foster carers.

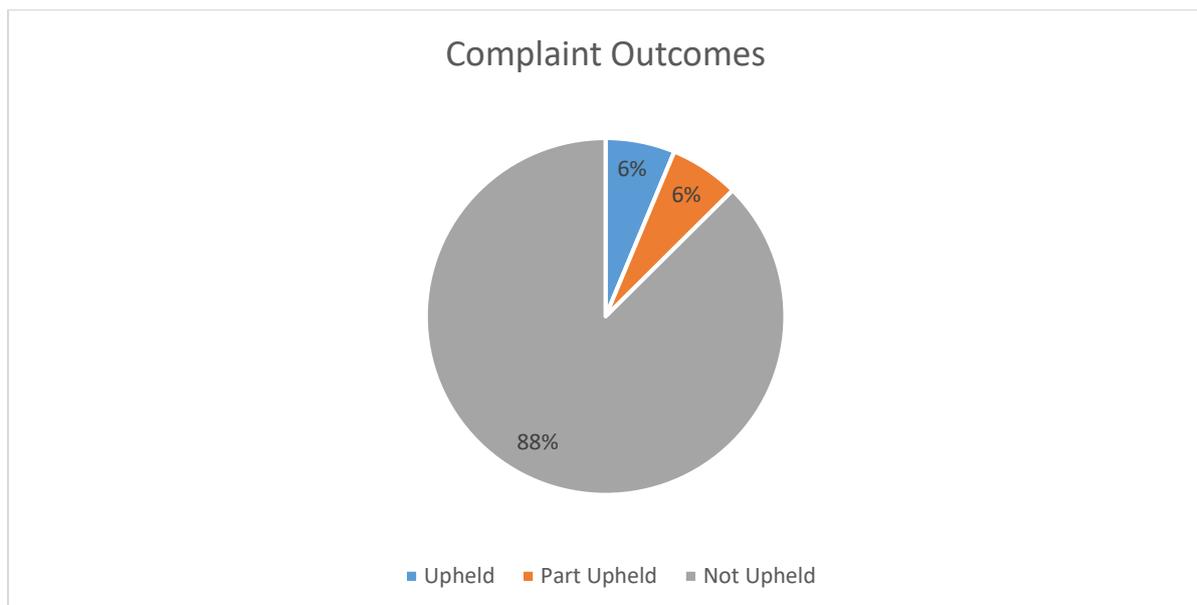
Complaint timeframes

The COVID-19 pandemic continues to have an impact on the service’s ability to respond to complaints within statutory timescales as all Council officers have been concentrating on making sure that vital services are available to those residents who need them the most. Complainants receive regular updates on the status of their complaint if, for any reason, we are unable to respond to a complaint within our statutory timescales.

At the time of publication, all of the 16 complaints received during Quarter 3 have been closed. Of these complaints, 7 (44%) were responded to on time and the remaining 9 (56%) within 3 months.

Complaint outcomes

Of those 16 complaints that were completed, just 1 was upheld and 1 partly upheld. The remaining 14 were not upheld.



Stage 2 Complaints

In addition to understanding the outcome of stage 1 complaints, it is important to consider how many complaints progress beyond stage 1. During Quarter 3 of 2021/22 so far, 2 complaint cases have progressed to stage 2.

4. Compliment analysis

Children's Services received 1 compliment relating to CLA during Quarter 3 –

- While on a complaint call, (mother) took the time to praise SW and how delighted she is with him as her son's social worker. Really happy with SW's communication and how he keeps her up to date, a breath of fresh air. Also took the time to praise TM and how she has gone the extra mile in the past, particularly when she stepped up to the mark and helped to facilitate her housing move.

