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AGENDA

Committee CORPORATE PARENTING ADVISORY COMMITTEE

Date and Time of Meeting MONDAY, 27 MARCH 2023, 2.00 PM

Venue CR 4, COUNTY HALL - MULTI LOCATION MEETING

Membership Councillor Merry (Chair)
Councillors Ash-Edwards, Kaaba, Lay, Lewis, Lister, Littlechild, Molik, Naughton

Time approx.

1 Apologies for Absence

To receive apologies for absence.

2 Declarations of Interest

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

3 Minutes (Pages 3 - 8)

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

4 NYAS 'My Things Matter Campaign' (Pages 9 - 24) 2.05 pm

5 Young Person Gateway Update (Pages 25 - 32) 2.25 pm

6 Children's Services Accommodation Strategy (Pages 33 - 64) 2.45 pm

7 CPAC Draft Annual Report - 2022-2023 (Pages 65 - 90) 3.05 pm

8 Children Looked After & Care Leavers Case Studies (Pages 91 - 96) 3.15 pm

9 Member Visits 3.25 pm

10 Forward Work Programme (Pages 97 - 102) 3.35 pm

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

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11 Urgent Items (if any)

12 Date of next meeting

The date of the next meeting is to be confirmed.

Davina Fiore

Director Governance & Legal Services

Date: Tuesday, 21 March 2023

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

CORPORATE PARENTING ADVISORY COMMITTEE

9 JANUARY 2023

Present: Councillor Merry (Chairperson)
Councillors Ash-Edwards, Kaaba, Lay, Lewis, Lister, Littlechild,
Molik and Naughton

1 : APPOINTMENT OF CHAIR AND COMMITTEE

The Committee noted that Council, at its Annual Meeting on 27 May 2021, appointed Councillor Sarah Merry as the Chairperson and the following Members to the Committee for the municipal year 2022/2023:

Councillors Ferguson-Thorne, Kaaba, Lay, Littlechild, Lister, Molik, Naughton and Proctor.

Councillor Margaret Lewis was appointed by Council at its meeting on 30 June 2022.

2 : TERMS OF REFERENCE

The Committee noted that Council, at its Annual Meeting on 26 May 2022 agreed the Terms of Reference for the Committee.

3 : APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies were received from Deborah Driffield, Director of Children's Services, and Candice Lloyd, National Youth Advocacy Service.

4 : DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

No declarations of interest were received.

5 : MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting on 15th March 2022 were agreed as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

6 : ELECTED MEMBERS ENGAGEMENT SESSION

The Committee was provided with an overview of an engagement session that took place with some members of the Corporate Parenting Advisory Committee and Bright Sparks group in September 2022, including an outline of activities that were undertaken in the session and the key themes identified by care experienced young people.

Members expressed their satisfaction with how the session had gone and commented on the openness and candour of the young people present.

Members discussed a proposed pledge that finance issues should not be discussed in front of Children and Young People Looked After. The importance of such a pledge

was stressed, along with the view that children and young people must not feel that they are there to generate cash for carers and organisations. Officers advised that frontline practitioners would be trained in the importance of not having certain conversations in front of young people.

Members mentioned the importance of Care Experienced Young People being able to put a face to a name. It was urged that Councillors be reminded of their corporate parental responsibility should they come into contact with Care Experienced Young People. The importance of raising the profile of corporate parenting with Councillors was discussed.

Officers advised that the Children's Services Strategy offered an opportunity to look at some of the issues raised. Work was being done on a participation strategy, asking young people what they want from services.

Members discussed the number of Children Looked After in Cardiff and the value of Members visiting schools to engage with them. Members were advised that the subject of visits would be discussed in Item 9.

The Committee RESOLVED to note the update.

7 : CASCADE - GOOD PRACTICE CHARTER FOR SUPPORTING PARENTS IN AND LEAVING CARE

The Chair welcomed Rachael Vaughan, Engagement Officer at Cascade, to the meeting, and invited her to give a presentation on the development of a good practice charter designed to strengthen support for parents in and leaving care.

The development was the result of a 5-year study which included interviews with parents and professionals. Analysis of the data revealed stigmatised views of parents, systemic disadvantage, and disadvantaged access to support.

The Charter has been developed in consultation with Care Experienced parents. It has been shared with practitioners and organisations and has received positive feedback.

Members were advised that an Action Group would be put together with key stakeholders to consider the next steps in the implementation of the Charter, and that it would be necessary to request financial support should the Charter be adopted.

The Committee RESOLVED to note the development of the Good Practice Charter for Supporting Parents in and Leaving Care.

8 : VIRTUAL SCHOOL AND VIRTUAL SCHOOL HEAD TEACHER UPDATE

The Chair welcomed Deborah Williams, and Gillian James, Achievement Leader, Key Groups, to the meeting.

Deborah Williams provided the Committee with an update on the Virtual School (VS) and Virtual Head Teacher (VSH). Cardiff Council was successful in applying to Welsh Government for funding for a pilot which will run from April 2023 to August 2024,

before future evaluations are submitted to Welsh Government leading to establishing both the VS and VSH in Cardiff to further improve the educational outcomes of all children and young people who are looked after, and care experienced.

Gillian James, Achievement Leader, Key Groups, advised the Committee that the Welsh Government funding did not cover all of the post. A detailed job description and person specification is being prepared and it is hoped to recruit and appoint in time for the start of the pilot in April 2023.

Members observed that projects often fail due to a lack of communication between various departments and services and engagement with external bodies. Officers agreed that contact with the relevant people was vital.

Members sought clarification on whether the VS and VSH were only for school age children. Officers confirmed that this was currently the case but that it could be extended to cover pre-school and post-16 ages in the future.

Members sought further information on the role of the VSH in regard to children placed out of county. Officers advised that the role was for all children of Cardiff in or out of county. Once the VSH was in post, there would be a need for conversations in regard to expansion of the team, in relation to psychological support for example.

Members discussed the additional challenges relating to children out of county. Officers advised that placing children in Cardiff was preferred as it offered the best chance of meeting their needs. It is more challenging when children are placed out of county, as it can be difficult to secure the right ALN provision when the children are in different LA areas. It would be desirable for there to be a national approach and it is hoped that the VSH could drive forward conversations in relation to this.

Members discussed the need to build relationships with Children's Services at all levels, and to ensure that foster carers and children know who to contact in case of problems. There needs to be clear communication in this regard. Officers agreed that it was important that people had a good understanding of the role of the VSH.

Officers advised that there had been a post of VSH a few years ago.

Members were advised that there is a database with information on how many children from out of county are in Cardiff schools and that the Council is trying to support them. The data is in the hands of the Education Coordinator. Cardiff Council is further ahead in this regard than some other LA's; however, there is a need to progress to the next level. There are 62 LA's that need to be linked in.

The Committee RESOLVED to note the pilot of the Virtual School and Virtual School Headteacher Cardiff.

9 : MEMBERS VISIT PROGRAMME

Leigh Vella, Corporate Parenting Officer, explained that a programme of Members' visits was proposed for discussion, in the hope that the visits would help members of the Committee to find out about the services and organisations that support care experienced young people in Cardiff.

Gillian James, Achievement Leader, Key Groups, suggested that it would be beneficial for Members to have a timetable of visits to different schools in order to hear different perspectives and speak with a wide range and number of young people. There was a new Wellbeing Lead in Children's Services and it was appropriate that the work be done under that umbrella.

Members expressed the view that where there were restrictions on the number of Members who could attend, it was important that Members not accept the opportunity of a visit and then fail to attend. There should be a reserve list for Member attendees. Officers advised that this could be followed up, and that it was expected that Members attending would report back to the Committee.

Members sought clarification on why there so many children looked after at St Teilo's Church in Wales High School. Officers advised that there were a large number of foster carers in the Rumney area, and that consequently many children looked after attend Rumney Primary School and subsequently St Teilo's CIW High School. An increasing number are now attending Eastern High School. St Teilo's CIW High School has a good record in dealing with children looked after.

Members considered it desirable to have dates and times of visits in advance so that Members were able to commit to visits. It was suggested that the timetable be sent out to Members. Members suggested it was desirable that each Member should attend at least one visit. Members stressed the importance of feedback to the Committee after visits.

The view was expressed that it would be valuable to visit children looked after who are in custody.

Members expressed the hope that Members on the reserve list would receive at least 1 day's notice if asked to attend. The need for Members to inform Officers as soon as possible that they were unable to attend was stressed. It was stated that an Officer would be present at all visits.

It was suggested that fostering events would provide a good opportunity to meet children and young people looked after, there being a large number of unaccompanied asylum seeker children currently. Members discussed the importance of meeting frontline Social Workers in order to gain an insight into how the work was undertaken. It was noted that Social Workers often feel isolated in their work.

The Committee RESOLVED to agree the Members Visit programme.

10 : PERFORMANCE MONITORING

Leigh Vella Corporate Parenting Officer, and Matthew Osbourne, OM Safeguarding and Reviewing Hub, introduced the report which seeks approval from the Committee on the proposal for a draft Key Performance Indicator Dashboard showing 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, and Case studies to be a standing agenda item at future committee meetings.

The Dashboard would bring together key data regarding Children Looked After and would encompass different areas such as Children's Services and unaccompanied asylum seeker children, number of placement moves, different placement types and the change in placement types over time, information on key achievements and educational performance of Children looked After.

Members discussed the appropriate frequency for presenting Dashboard data to the Committee, and whether Members would prefer more case studies rather than data. It was suggested that data need not be presented to every meeting and that the progress over time was the most important information. Members expressed a preference for visual presentation of data and a combination of data and case studies. The importance of case studies was mentioned as being the voice of Children Looked After.

Members noted the diversity of Children Looked After and wished to know whether the Council was able to cater for their diverse dietary and cultural needs. Officers advised that the Council attempts to match care provision with need. There is currently a lack of diversity among care providers and there are plans to target growing diversity in care provision.

Members expressed the view that it was important for them to receive case studies of any negative experiences to highlight any difficulties and problems. Officers advised that legal advice would be sought regarding presentation of any case studies to the Committee to ensure the identify of any young person involved would remain confidential.

Members expressed concern about the lack of data sharing as it hinders the ability to track the experiences of different groups of children over time. Officers advised that schools gather data in different ways. Officers advised that it was difficult at present to report on educational outcomes, in part because of the new curriculum. It would be the task of the VSH to familiarise themselves with the new curriculum. It is currently difficult to gather information holistically, but that will hopefully improve over time.

The Committee RESOLVED to recommend that data be presented biannually.

11 : FORWARD WORK PROGRAMME

The Chair invited Leigh Vella, Corporate Parenting Officer, 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 noted that there were a large number of acronyms in reports and requested that explanations be provided.

12 : URGENT ITEMS (IF ANY)

No urgent items were received.

13 : DATE OF NEXT MEETING

The next meeting will be on the 27th of March 2023 at 2pm.

The meeting terminated at 3.55 pm

**CARDIFF COUNCIL
CYNGOR CAERDYDD****CORPORATE PARENTING ADVISORY COMMITTEE****27 March 2023**

NYAS 'My things matter campaign' update

Reasons for the Report

1. The report aims to inform the Committee on the NYAS 'My things matter' campaign and requests for the Committee to recommend the Campaign to be recognised and endorsed by Cabinet.

Background

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 the Regulation and Inspection of Social Care (Wales) Act 2016 (RISCA 2016)..
3. NYAS Cymru is commissioned by Cardiff and the Vale local authorities to provide a regional advocacy service and an independent visiting service 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 frameworks within Wales.
6. For more than 40 years, NYAS has provided independent advocacy support to care-experienced children and young people across England and Wales, empowering their wishes and feelings to be listened to and taken seriously by decision-makers. Every year, NYAS receives over 10,000 referrals to advocate for care-experienced children and young people, and we know that moving when in care can cause serious problems for many who contact NYAS. One in every three care-experienced children will move home this year. That is over 26,000 children in England and 2,200 children in Wales.
7. A national survey was undertaken to fully understand the impact of moving on those care experienced children and young people. When the move is in the best interest of the child, NYAS wants that experience to be as good as it can be. NYAS created the 'My Things Matter' campaign based on our research into what children and young people want to see improve when they move during their time in care.

Financial Implications

8. Prior to considering to sign up to My Things matter, consideration needs to be given to the funding source for any additional costs required to ensure that the commitments set out in the Campaign are achieved

Legal Implications

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

RECOMMENDATION

The Committee is recommended to:

- 1) Provide comments and make observations to the My Things Matter Campaign
- 2) Recommend to Cabinet that Cardiff Council endorse the My Things Matter Campaign.

DEBORAH DRIFFIELD
Director of Children's Services
21 March 2022

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My Things Matter

Data collection and results



Data collection

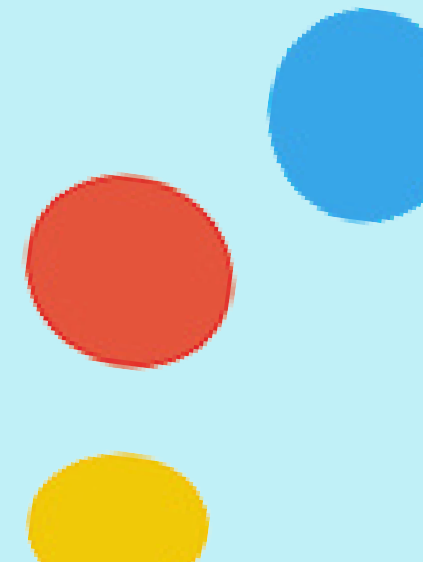
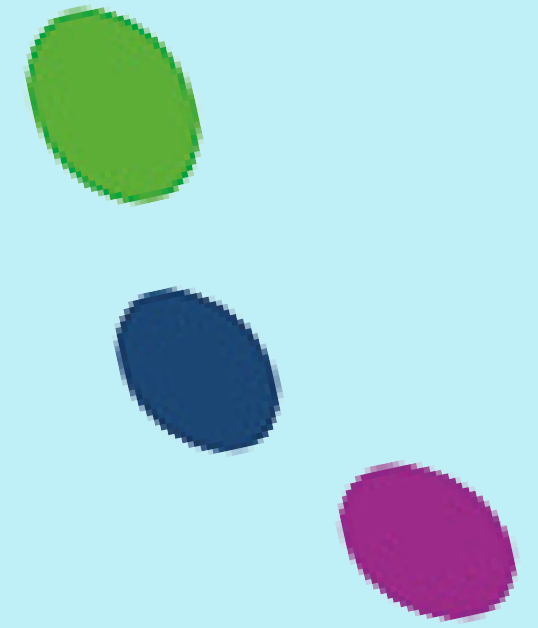
Freedom of Information requests



Professionals survey



Children and young people survey



How we collected data

**Campaigns
Advisory
Group**

**Children and
young
people's
survey**

**Professionals
Survey**

FoI requests

35

62

147

I was working with a young person who had her belongings picked up from a supported lodgings placement that had broken down.

This was done by someone who was 'available' and not by her worker which meant she had a stranger picking up and packing her belongings. It was also made to be a burden of their time.

When I went with her to collect her belongings they were bagged up in shopping bags, but they were stored in the toilets of one of the Local Authority buildings which everyone had access to.

I was **shocked** that the **life** of this **vulnerable care-experienced young person** was in **bags** in a **toilet** with little to no **care and respect.**

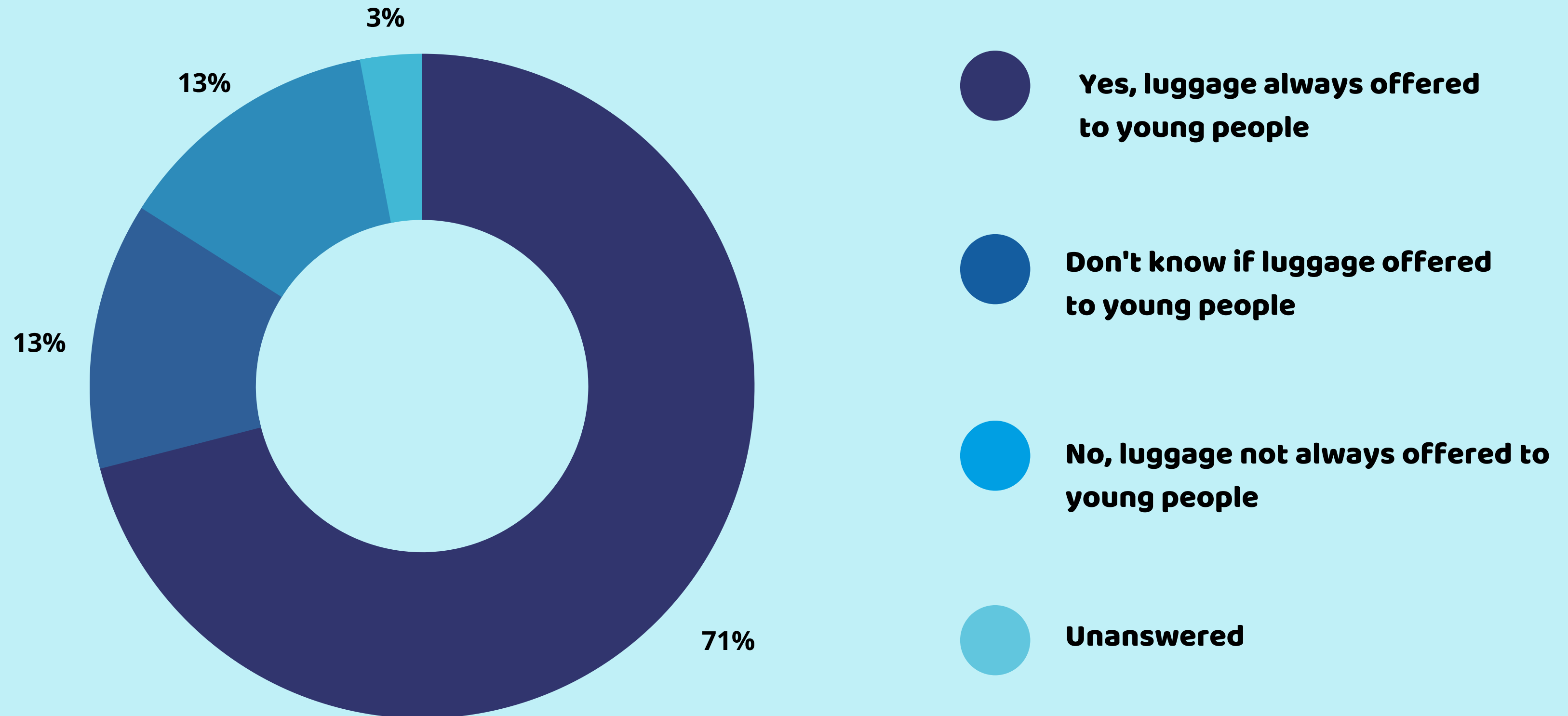
Every single time I moved in care, it was using **bin bags** or **plastic bags**... it's all I've known.

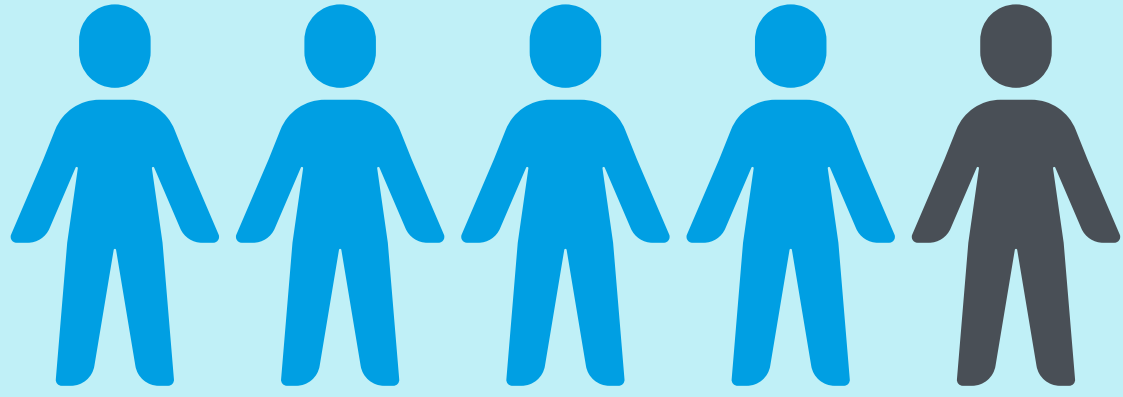
CHARLIE, 21 YEARS OLD

I felt like I had **no identity**, everything I owned was in a **bin bag**. I felt like **nobody cared**.

BETH, 20 YEARS OLD

Luggage always offered to young people by local authorities

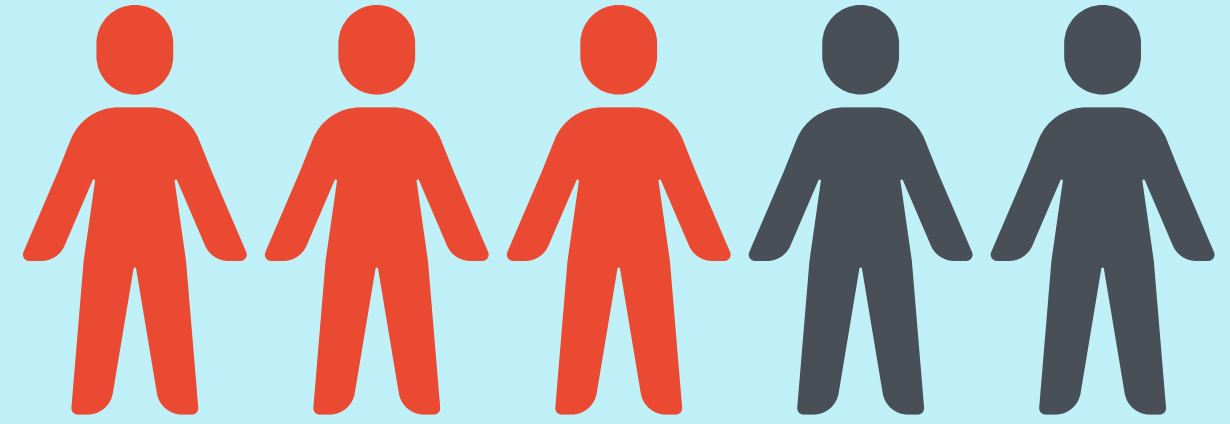




4 in 5

**CHILDREN AND
YOUNG PEOPLE**

**who responded to our
survey said their
belongings were moved
in binbags during their
time in care.**

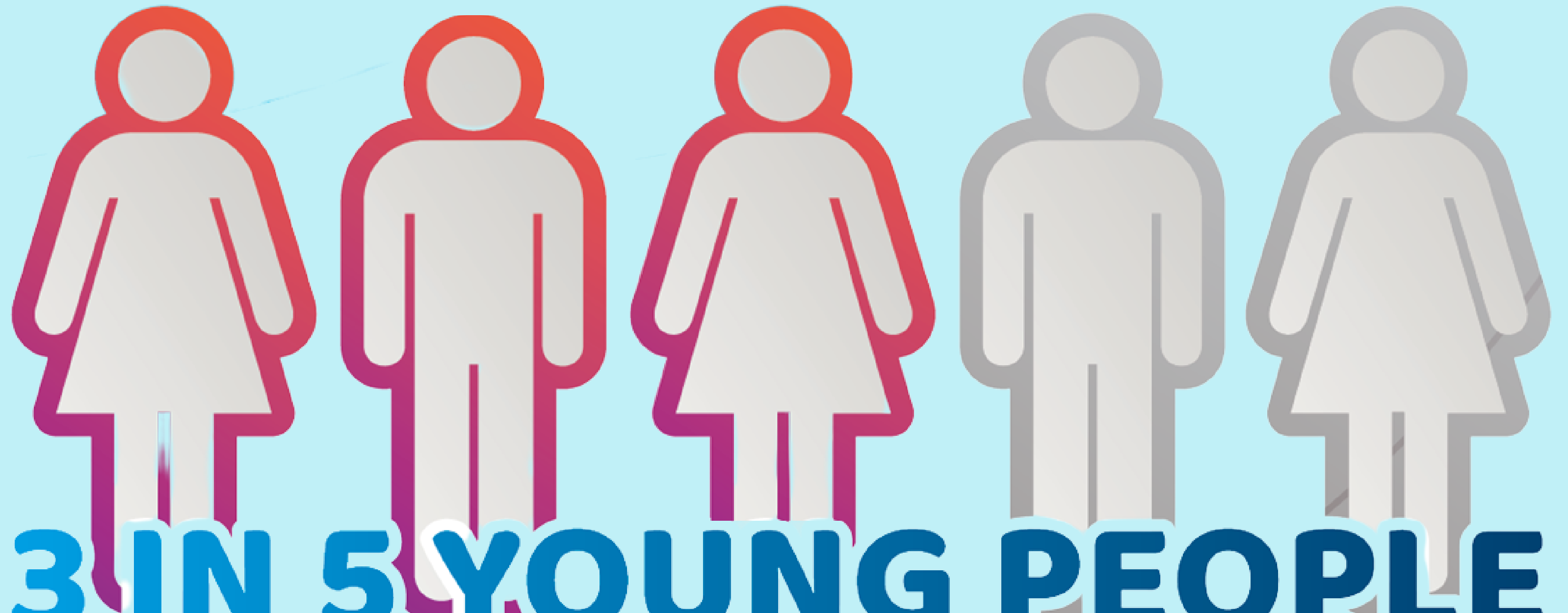


JUST OVER

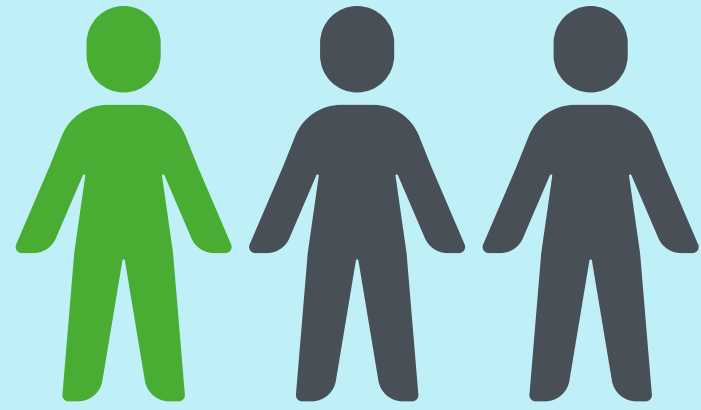
3 IN 5

PROFESSIONALS

**who responded to our
survey had seen binbags
being used to move any or
all of the belongings of a
child or young person with
whom they had worked in
the last five years.**



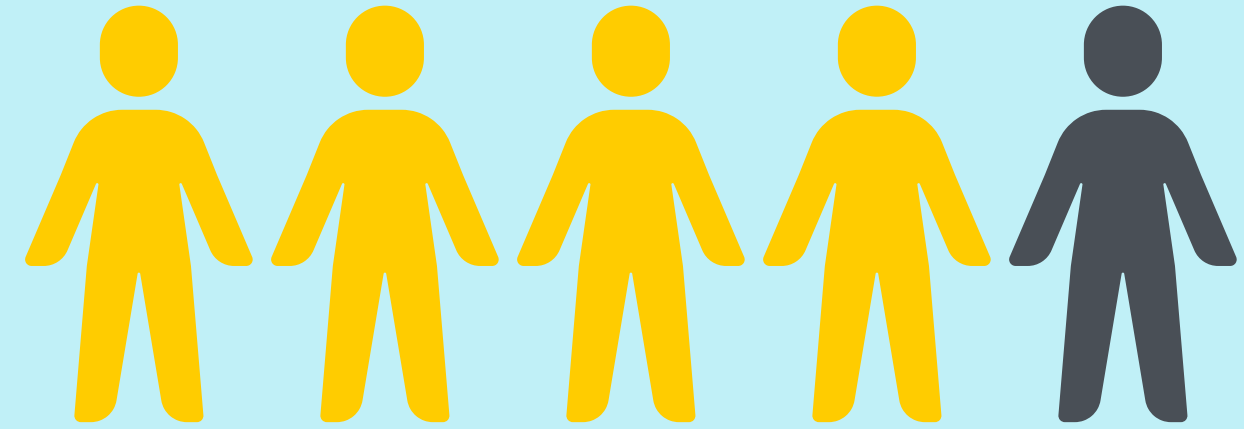
said that at least one, but often more of their personal belongings had been lost or damaged when moving home while living in care.



Only

1 IN 3

LOCAL AUTHORITIES
have formal written
guidance used to support
their staff or carers to
help children and young
people to move
successfully.



4 in 5

**CHILDREN AND
YOUNG PEOPLE**
said they were not
contacted by someone
from their local authority
to ask for
their views about how
the move went.



1

We will help you to keep your most precious belongings with you safely during your move and promise they will not be moved in binbags.

2

We will provide written guidance for you and anyone helping you to move, which we will publish on our website.

3

We will never move or throw away your belongings without your consent and will always respect your personal property.

4

We will support you to make a complaint if any of your belongings have been lost or damaged during your move.

5

We will communicate with you about your move and ask you how the move went.

Next steps

1

Publish the pledge and your guidance concerning placement moves on your website. Make sure the guidance turns the pledge into practice.

2

Order your free pack-away travel bags through NYAS' partnership with Madlug, so that no children and young people in care are forced to use bin bags when moving.

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3

Inform children and young people of your local authority's commitment to NYAS' 'My Things Matter' pledge and what they can expect when moving.

4

Support staff through any changes made by their line manager and colleagues in relation to NYAS' 'My Things Matter' pledge, including the Emergency Duty Team and others involved in moves.

5

Inform management and members about the important commitment the local authority has made to improve the experience of moving for all your children and young people in care.

6

Celebrate your achievements in relation to the 'My Things Matter' pledge through internal newsletters, annual accounts statements, reports to members and senior managers, social media channels, etc. Let NYAS know of key achievements so that we can publicise and celebrate these with you.

7

Assist NYAS in their evaluation of the 'My Things Matter' campaign by providing evidence when requested of actions and outcomes related to the pledge.





Thank you for working with us to enrich the lives and experiences of the children and young people in your care.



**CARDIFF COUNCIL
CYNGOR CAERDYDD**

CORPORATE PARENTING ADVISORY COMMITTEE

27 March 2023

Young Person Gateway

Reasons for the Report

1. This report provides the Committee with information in relation to the Young Person Gateway (YPG) which is the Accommodation Gateway for young people aged 16-21. The report aims to inform the Committee of the current structure of the YPG, data on outcomes and information around the expansion and development plans for the Gateway.

Background

2. The YPG initially launched on 5th October 2015 and is an accommodation and support gateway for young people in Cardiff who are threatened with homelessness or who need to move on from care.
3. The Gateway was set up to allow better partnership working between Housing and Children's Services, ensuring that regardless of whether a young person had a housing duty or a Children's Services duty, their accommodation options and pathways were the same. The Gateway was also intended to reduce the number of high-cost placements for Looked After Children.
4. The YPG was expanded in 2022/23 and now contains 173 units of accommodation, split between two contracts.

- Contract 1 is led by the Salvation Army in partnership with Church Army and Taff Housing.
 - Contract 2 is led by Llamau in partnership with Hafod Care Association.
5. Contract 1 has a total of 109 units of accommodation and comprises of larger hostel spaces (the largest is 29 units) along with several self-contained units in the community. Support ranges from 24 hour on site for larger accommodation projects and floating support for self-contained flats.
 6. Contract 2 has a total of 64 units of accommodation which all have staff on site 24 hours a day, with no more than 7 units in each of the buildings. These schemes are intended for young people with higher support needs.
 7. As of 06.03.2023 there were 68 young people on the waiting list to enter YPG. Referrals into the Gateway come from three main referral routes: young people homeless in an emergency who need immediate placement; young people whose threat of homelessness could not be prevented; and young people who need to move on local authority care. The Accommodation Team work closely with Llamau Advice Officers and Children's Services to ensure that any particularly urgent cases are prioritised and provided with emergency accommodation.
 8. Where a Child Looked After requires move on from their current accommodation (e.g. residential or foster care), their Social Worker refers the young person direct to the Accommodation Team responsible for managing the waiting list for YPG. The young person's risk and support details are considered and a referral to a suitable placement within YPG is made. With the correct planning of cases, these young people are usually placed in a planned way where YPG providers and the young person are able to meet and create a relationship before the move.
 9. For any 16 / 17-year-olds presenting who are not already open to Children's Services, they will be advised of their right to a Child Looked After assessment under the Southwark Judgement. A social worker and housing representative

will carry out this meeting with the young person who will choose whether they wish to become a Child Looked After or not.

10. Where a young person presents as homeless in an emergency, Llamau Advice Officers carry out the homeless application. Cases being considered as homeless on the day of presentation would usually be those who are, for example, fleeing abuse (i.e., domestic, honour-based violence, county lines), bailiff warrant or a parental notice where the relationship has completely broken down. The Llamau Officer will obtain all relevant information in order for the young person's full support needs and a referral to the most suitable accommodation option is made. Liaising with partner agencies is essential to obtain this information (schools, Youth Justice Service), as well as discussions with any other relevant parties who can include landlord, parents / carers. Prevention of homelessness is always a key priority where it is a safe and suitable option.
11. Where a young person is threatened with homelessness, this provides a greater opportunity to be able to prevent this homelessness by either working with their current accommodation provider or assisting with sourcing alternative accommodation outside the Gateway (e.g. private rented accommodation). Llamau's mediation service and the Local Authority's dedicated YPG Prevention Officer work with this client group to achieve positive outcomes outside of entering YPG.
12. A Senior Accommodation Officer, dedicated to managing the YPG, was appointed in September 2022. The Officer's role focuses on the monitoring and developing of the YPG, such as working with Children's Services and providers to work on complex cases within the Gateway to ensuring move-on pathways out of the Gateway are as effective as possible.
13. Young people that are placed within the Gateway generally experience very positive outcomes, especially given the high needs that many present with. Between 1st April 2022 and 28th February 2023, move on out of the Gateway was as per below from each contract:

- Salvation Army
 - **70 (84%) young people positively moved on from the YPG**
 - 45 (64%) moved into a Tenancy Training property
 - 25 (36%) positively returned home / Moved in with family or friends / Moved to University / Moved out of area
 - **13 (16%) young people experienced a negative exit**
 - 4 (31%) abandoned
 - 6 (46%) were evicted
 - 3 (23%) were sentenced to prison and are currently still there
- Llamau
 - **28 (80%) young people positively moved on from the YPG**
 - 15 (54%) moved into Tenancy Training property
 - 9 (32%) positively returned home / Moved in with family or friends / Moved to University / Moved out of area
 - 4 (14%) moved into the Private Rented Sector
 - **7 (20%) young people experienced a negative exit**
 - 2 (29%) were sentenced to prison and are currently still there
 - 4 (57%) evicted due to antisocial or violent behaviour
 - 1 (14%) refused offer of accommodation

14. While in YPG supported accommodation, young people are supported to learn independent living skills and performance against this is closely monitored. The contract with the providers includes detailed targets that they are required to meet which include the number of young people in Education, Training and Employment, the number of young people regularly paying their Service Charge and the number of young people maintain contact with family where safe to do so. The providers are responsible for supporting the young person to achieve these outcomes and develop skills necessary to do so.

15. Since its introduction in March 2016, the main pathway out of the supported accommodation provided by the Gateway is via the Tenancy Training scheme. Once 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 neighbours.

16. Whilst the training used to be held in person, during the Covid19 pandemic the training team developed virtual training for young people, meaning that young people were still able to move on to independence throughout the crisis. Following positive feedback from young people and providers the decision was made to continue the training virtually. There are occasions where the training can be carried out in person, for example where the young person requires the support of an interpreter.
17. Once training is complete the young person is given Immediate Priority on the Social Housing Waiting List. This is the highest priority on the waiting list and ensures young people move on as quickly as possible.
18. To ensure continuity the young people who move on from the supported accommodation provision continue to receive support from the same provider for 12 months and this can be extended if necessary. Should they prove not to be ready for independent living they can return to supported accommodation.
19. As of 28.02.2023, since March 2016, 453 young people have been housed through the Training Tenancy scheme.
20. There are only 4 young people who have been unable to maintain their tenancies since March 2016, producing a 99% tenancy sustainment rate for the Tenancy Training pathway.

Development

21. Due to the increased complexity of the young people accessing YPG, a Young Person's Multi-Disciplinary Team (YP MDT) was introduced in January 2022. The YP MDT is a multi-agency response to the most challenging young people to ensure young people can access and maintain accommodation with additional specialist support. The YP MDT is now out of its pilot phase and the team are currently supporting over 30 young people, both within and outside

the YPG. The team comprises of 4 Complex Needs Case Coordinators, 2 Outreach Counsellors through Cardiff Mind and a Transitions Social Worker. Recruitment is ongoing for 2 Substance Misuse Workers, a Mental Health Community Psychiatric Nurse and an Approved Mental Health qualified Social Worker.

22. In addition to the YP MDT, a pilot additional housing pathway has also been developed for young people with complex needs which is complementary to the YPG. The Young Person's Housing First Scheme has been developed by the Council and aims to provide complex young people with tenancies in the community with very intensive support. The pathway is suitable for highly complex young people, such as those who may be a significant risk to others if placed with vulnerable young people in the Gateway. 5 young people are currently following this pathway; 2 of these are in tenancies with a further 3 pending property matching.
23. In January 2023, a pilot pathway was launched to move on Unaccompanied Asylum-Seeking Children (UASC) who were ready for semi-independent living from either YPG or Children's Services placements. It was identified that UASC were staying in accommodation for long periods due to issues moving them on to permanent accommodation while they still did not have settled immigration status, subsequently causing bed-blocking in YPG and Children's Services accommodation. A partnership between the YMCA Cardiff, Housing and Children's Services was therefore developed, and provides a range of accommodation options for UASC. The accommodation comprises of 5 units with George Williams House located in YMCA The Walk, Cardiff and 13 units of shared accommodation in 3 dispersed houses.

Next Steps

24. It has been agreed that the YPG will be expanded by 24 units of accommodation in 2023. Following the procurement open route process, Llamau were awarded this contract. This expansion is specifically to increase

the units of accommodation available to Children's Services to move Children Looked After from high-cost residential placements into the YPG. The first of these units is expected to be available from April 2023.

25. The Senior Accommodation Officer will work closely with Children's Services to create joint housing plans for all Children Looked After aged 15+. This will allow YPG a better opportunity to analyse upcoming demand and work towards securing a suitable placement for all young people.
26. An additional specialist accommodation project for young people with complex needs continues to be in progress with a current handover date of June 2024. The young people referred for this project would be able to live independently but will have complex and challenging support needs including, offending behaviour, substance misuse and high mental health issues.
27. Tai Ffres is a collaborative Service between United Welsh Housing Association, Llamau and Cardiff Council to provide an additional Housing pathway for young people aged 16-25. Tai Ffres aims to create up to 130 safe, secure and affordable homes for young people by April 2027. Young people will be offered Tai Ffres accommodation via the Tenancy Training pathway. The scheme is currently securing accommodation for the first offers to be made.

Financial Implications

28. The report details the work undertaken in the Young Persons gateway, which is currently funded through a combination of external grant and council revenue funding. Accommodation setting costs that are not eligible for grant funding are funded as increased gateway placements displace external residential placements, for the Council's Children looked after cohort. Any ongoing increases in the number of accommodation settings will need to be met by external grant funding, or within existing service area resources following an Officer decision report.

Legal Implications

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

RECOMMENDATION

The Committee is recommended to:

- a) Note the development of the YPG.

DEBORAH DRIFFIELD

Director of Children's Services

21 March 2023

Cardiff's Right Place Accommodation Strategy & Capital Plan



Vision

At Cardiff Children's Services our vision is clear – we want to provide families with the right support, from the right person at the right time, in the right place and at the lowest safe level of intervention, enabling them to remain with family where it is safe for them to do so.

However, for some children and young people their needs are best met in an accommodation setting and we want to ensure that there is enough sufficiency in Cardiff. All children and young people deserve to have a place they call home where they are safe, nurtured and protected.

The vision will be realised through the strategic use of existing housing resources and proactive housing development, aligned to social care priorities for children and young people. This will be supported by a corporate commitment by the council and combined with joined up working across council directorates and partner organisations.

The overall vision as per the Cardiff's Children Services Strategy is to:

- Safely reduce children looked after numbers
- Keep young people safely within their families and communities
- Reduce expensive out of area placements
- Develop a model of integrated partnership working that places the young person at the centre of planning
- Become an accredited model of best practice in planning and delivering support to children and their families



Cardiff's Right Place Strategy

Cardiff's Right Place Strategy is the implementation of the North Yorkshire No Wrong Door model that provides an integrated service for young people, aged 12 to 18, who either are in care, edging to or on the edge of care, or have recently moved to supported or independent accommodation whilst being supported under No Wrong Door.

The flexible and resilient integrated team supports the young person throughout their journey to ensure that they are not passed from service to service but instead are supported by a dedicated team of edge of care and residential workers, a clinical psychologist, speech and language therapist and a Police worker. Some young people are placed in the hubs, and others are supported by outreach while either in foster care or living with their families. Central to the No Wrong Door innovation is that all staff are trained in a trauma informed, restorative, and solution-focused approaches.

The model is a non-traditional approach to working with adolescents experiencing complex journeys - with an innovative residential 'Hub' at the heart of the service. It provides:

- Short term placements and edge of care support (in and out of care).
- A range of services, support, and accommodation options.
- Embedded specialist roles working together (shared practice framework).
- An integrated service with a defined culture and practice model.
- An integrated team that 'sticks with' young people on their journey.

Through a whole systemic change this approach has been proved to improve in outcomes for those young people being supported. These improved outcomes include a reduction in total time spent in residential settings and a total reduction in the number of children looked after, as well as a reduction in missing, arrests, and hospital admissions.

The Right Place strategy is a whole system approach to practice with stated characteristics:

- Thinks differently – about risk management and safeguarding adolescents.
- Psychologically informed systemic practice across Children's Services.
- Reduces handoffs and episodic planning.
- Right services, right time, right place to meet need.
- Always striving for permanence in family/community setting (connectivity).
- Strengths based and restorative approaches and practice.
- Is aspirational – building self-esteem, foundations for the future and improving the lived experience for young people. This leads to a systemic service wide integrity and delivering against the ambition of 'sticking with' young people.

Key to the integrity of the model these are the 'Non-negotiables' and 'Distinguishers' of the North Yorkshire Model.

The 8 'Non-Negotiables' of No Wrong Door

Essential values, principles and ways of working together
(without which a model ceases to be faithful to the NWD approach)



High Standards and ambitions for all young people



A belief in young people and their right to a family, whatever shape or form it takes



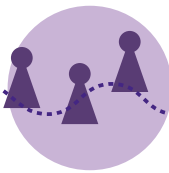
Residential care as a short-term intervention, not a long term solution



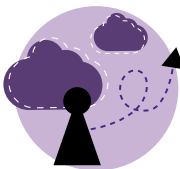
A commitment and investment in staff support, and being rigorous about holding them to account



A commitment to do whatever it takes to support young people within their community



Employing an unconventional and flexible workforce, including the use of creative sessional contracts to respond quickly



Forward looking and aspirational



Bring young people into No Wrong Door quickly but move them on slowly

The 10 'Distinguishers' of No Wrong Door

The distinguishing features and practical elements of the operating model (setting it apart from traditional services & ensures NWD stays true to its vision & aims).



Always 'progressing to permanence' within a family or the community



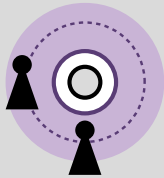
'No appointment assessments'



High 'stickability' of the key worker



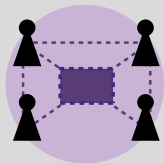
Close partnership working



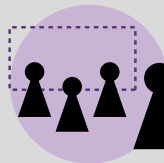
A 'core offer' to all young people



A 'No heads on beds' culture



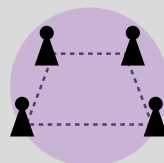
Multi-agency intelligence led approach to reduce risk



A robust training strategy in therapeutic support



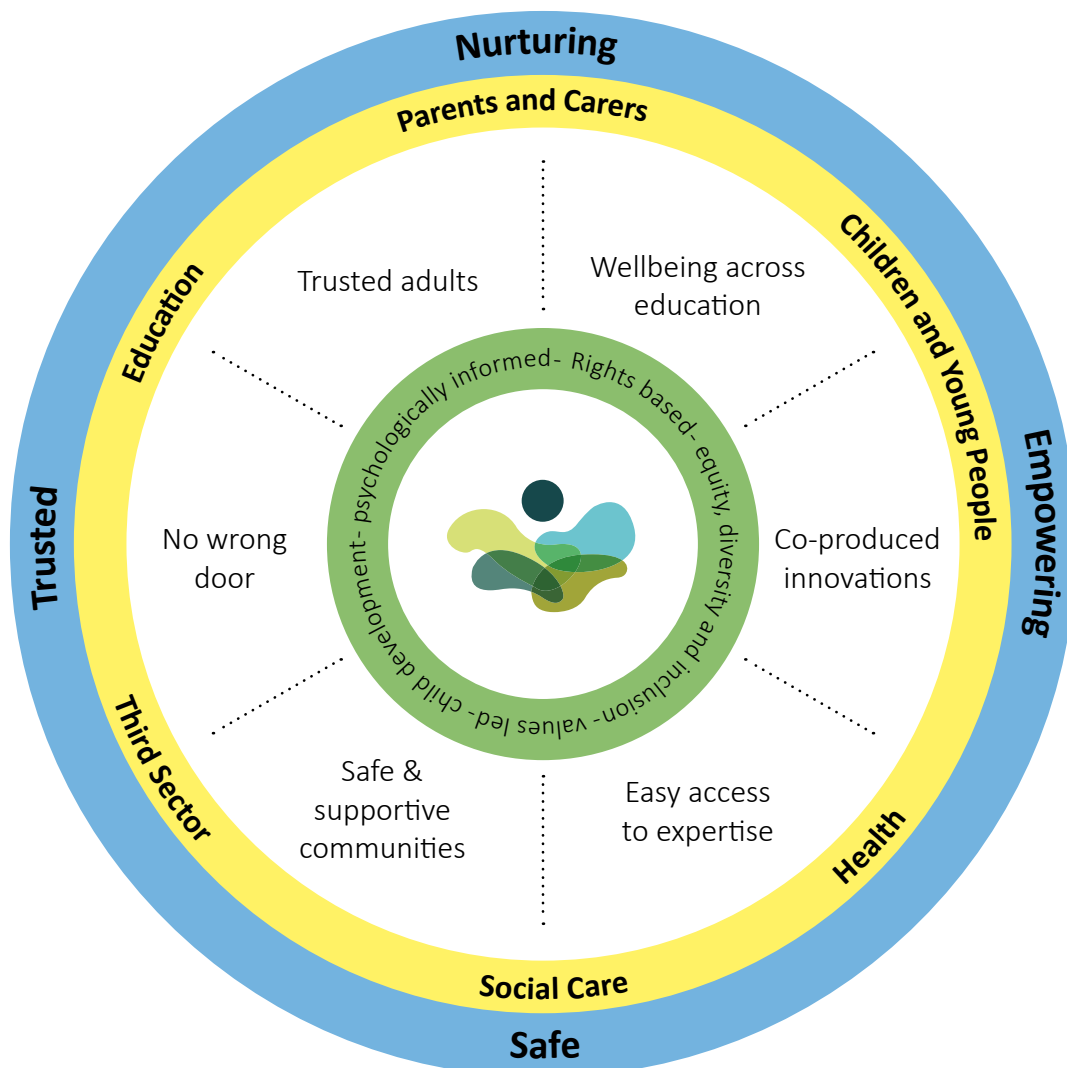
Practice driven by young people's aspirations



Fewer referrals, less stigma

NEST

- The NEST Framework is a planning tool for Regional Partnership Boards that aims to ensure a 'whole system' approach for developing mental health, well-being and support services for babies, children, young people, parents, carers and their wider families across Wales.
- The Framework leads us towards developing services and systems that are Nurturing, Empowering, Safe and Trusted (NEST) and includes a partnership approach from stakeholders listed in the pale green ring on the diagram opposite.
- There are five guiding principles (shown in the central green ring on the diagram opposite).
- There are six core elements to consider in delivery of the whole system approach defined by the NEST Framework (in the white ring in the diagram below).



Young Person's Accommodation and Support Gateway

The Council launched a Young Person's Accommodation and Support Gateway in October 2015 to manage supported accommodation for young people. The Gateway is a collaboration between the Council's Children's Services and Housing Services and acts as the single point of entry into accommodation and support services for young people, regardless of the legal duty which is owed to them.

Once the young person has been assessed in accordance with the appropriate legislation, placements are made by the Council's Temporary Accommodation Team based on the needs of the young person. There are 173 units of supported accommodation, providing a range of options for young people such as small, shared houses with 24-hour support, larger hostels, and independent flats in the community with lower-level support. Plans have commenced to increase the Gateway by a further twenty-four units, coming online in phases from January to December 2023.

The Gateway provides a consistent pathway into settled accommodation. By allowing visibility of all supported accommodation, it broadens choice and increases the chance that young people will be placed in the accommodation most appropriate to their needs.

Young people stay in supported accommodation until they are ready for independent living. They receive a range of support services whilst resident in a placement, and most move on successfully to their own permanent tenancy through the Training Tenancy scheme. Support packages remain in place once a young person has secured a tenancy to help them settle in for up to 12 months. The Tenancy Training scheme is highly successful, with over 300 young people brought housed since its inception in 2016, with 99% maintaining their tenancy.

Housing First Model

The Pilot Housing Led for Young People Service has been set up in line with the current pressures on Children's Services. The pilot targets care leavers and young people with complex needs aged between 16-25 years old.

The Housing Led Service is based on tried and tested Housing First principles. It provides stable and appropriate housing to high-risk people with complex needs with dedicated ongoing support for as long as it is needed. Housing is based on needs with emphasis being placed on the needs and desire of young people. The project works with Private and Social Landlords to secure 1 bed self-contained flats

The service works in collaboration with the Young Persons Multi-disciplinary team to provide a meaningful pathway to Housing ensuring that appropriate and specialist support is in place to reduce the numbers of young people entering homelessness. Referrals are made

direct from Children's Services and be made via Cardiff Council YP MDT Service in a way that compliments the project and ensures that the process is co-ordinated and structured and that the right interventions are made for the young person from the outset. Where a young person is referred to the YP MDT Team an assessment will be made and a decision about their suitability for Housing Led Services will be made. This assessment will also enable decisions around what type of wrap around support is required to ensure the person is safe and supported appropriately.

Overall, the project seeks to provide therapeutic intervention, support and treatment to young people who have complex support needs. In depth assessments take place leading to a person-centred coordinated support and treatment plan. It allows young people to discuss their specific needs and access a range of support from professionals and helps inform us of any gaps or barriers within mainstream services.

The project is funded to support 5 young people into accommodation. We are currently supporting 1 young person in their tenancy and have 2 young people receiving pre-tenancy support while waiting for a property.

Why do we need an accommodation strategy?

As outlined in our Children Services Strategy 2023/26 our overarching aim is to keep children with their families and where that is not possible that suitable foster placements are sought. There are circumstances however, where this is not always possible, or not safe to do so, and therefore where children and young people have to be accommodated in a residential setting it is important that there is sufficient residential placements in Cardiff for them.

National context

As the capital city, Cardiff can play a key role in the delivery of Welsh Government's Programme for Government agenda. Cardiff's Right Place Strategy directly supports one of the well-being objectives – to Protect, re-build and develop our services for vulnerable people – this includes the following specific commitments.

- Provide additional specialist support for children with complex needs who may be on the edge of care.
- Explore radical reform of current services for looked after children and care leavers.
- Eliminate private profit from the care of children looked after.
- Fund regional residential services for children with complex needs ensuring their needs are met as close to home as possible and in Wales wherever practicable

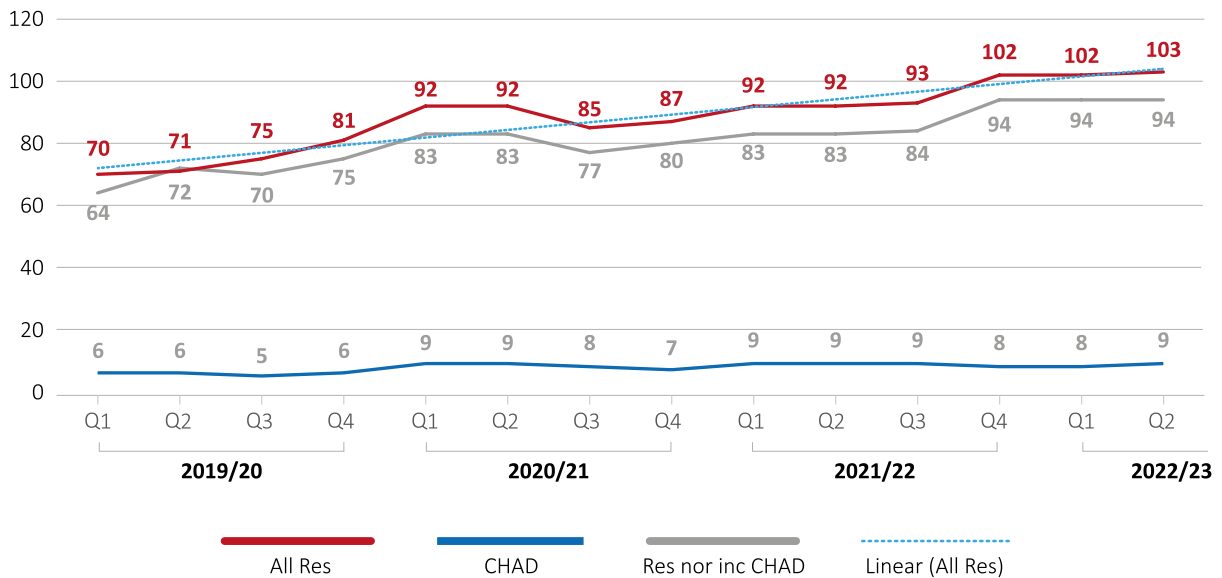
Local Context / Needs Analysis

Our understanding of the increasing demand has identified the four main areas that we need to address:

- - Children's Residential Provision
- - Specialist mental health services and step-down from hospital
- - Short break requirements for children with disabilities and complex needs
- - Unaccompanied Asylum Seeking Children (UASC)

Children's Residential Provision

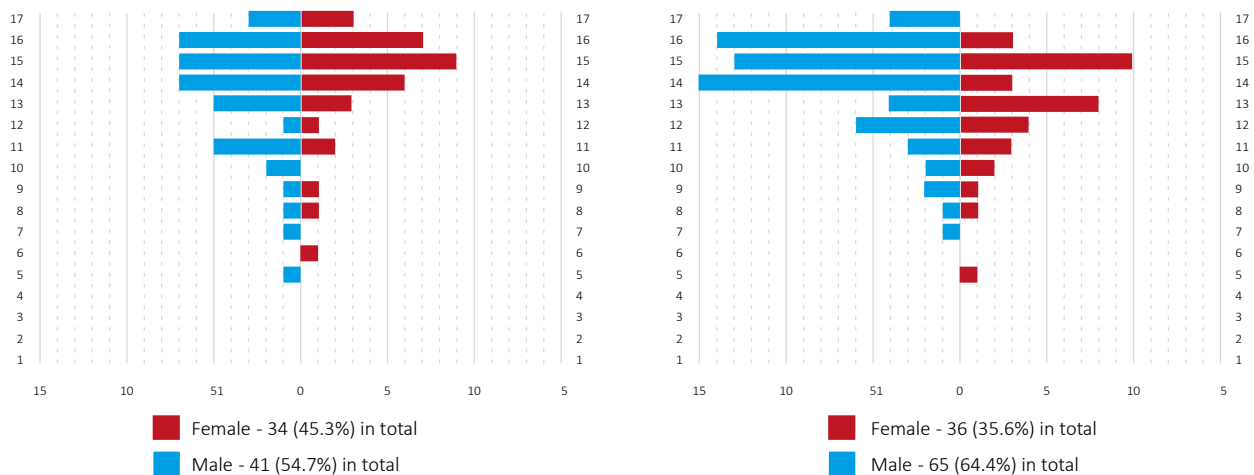
Graph showing the increase in residential placements over time



The number of children in residential placements by age and gender

As at 31st March 2020

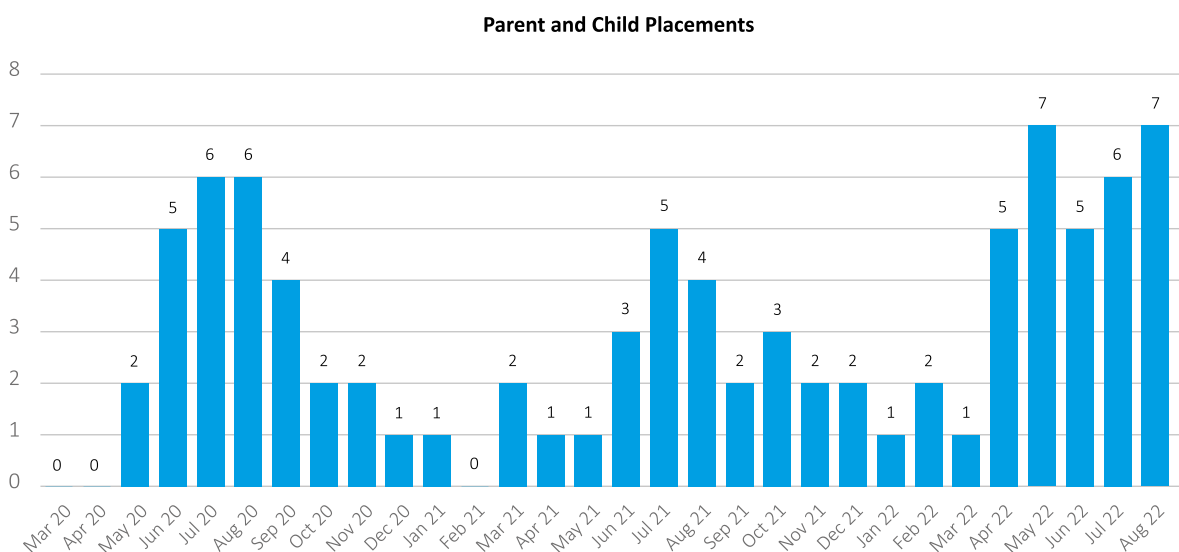
As at 31st August 2022



The number of boys in residential placements has increased by 59% from 41 to 65 over the period above, whereas girls in residential placements has increased by just 6% from 34 to 36. The following table shows the volume of young people placed in out of county placements and exemplifies the need for this strategy to be delivered at pace with 78 out of a total of 100 placements being Out of Cardiff.

Ages	In Cardiff	Out of Cardiff	Total	Percentage in Cardiff
Under 13	3	20	23	13%
13-15	8	37	45	18%
16/17	11	21	32	34%
Total	22	78	100	22%

The above figures do not include residential parent and baby assessment centres, these are used for between 11 and 14 weeks at a time and current usage over the past 2 years is below.



All of these parent and baby placements are outside of Cardiff and frequently outside of Wales because there is no local provision.

Specialist Mental Health Services and Step-Down from Hospital

During the COVID-19 pandemic Cardiff experienced an increase in the number of children and young people (CYP) presenting to emergency units following self-harm or suicide attempts. Whilst the majority of young people were able to be discharged back to their homes or previous placements once they were medically fit, there were a small but growing number of young people who did not meet the criteria for Child and Adolescent Mental

Health Services (CAMHS) or tier 4 in-patient support because their needs were not best described as related to a 'mental illness' but did require ongoing support to enable them to safely return to living within the community. These young people were best described as experiencing past and current extreme emotional distress and were often not able to return home or to previous placements because this was either not an appropriate environment to meet their needs and allow a period of emotional stabilisation, or there were multi agency concerns in relation to the ability for risk to be mitigated within these environments.

A regional, integrated group of operational leads was convened to develop a model that can respond to the needs of this group of young people. They have agreed on an integrated delivery model that combines an outreach approach to work with young people and families across all settings with an accommodation solution for young people who cannot return home or to a community placement.

The outreach staff team and the accommodation solution provide support and safe space for a young person to stabilise following their emotional distress and become ready to start the intensive therapeutic work that addresses the cause(s) of their distress.

Overnight Short Break Requirements for Children with Disabilities

The Social Services and Well-being (Wales) Act 2014 states a disabled child is a child that has a physical or mental impairment, which has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on that child's ability to carry out normal day to day activities.

Cardiff is committed to deliver the very highest quality services to children, young people with additional needs and their families. We want to ensure all children are safe, happy, enjoy their learning and thrive to be as independent as they can possibly be.

The provision of services to children and young people under the age of 18 with additional needs is delivered by the Child Health and Disability (CHaD) Team within Cardiff's Childrens Services.

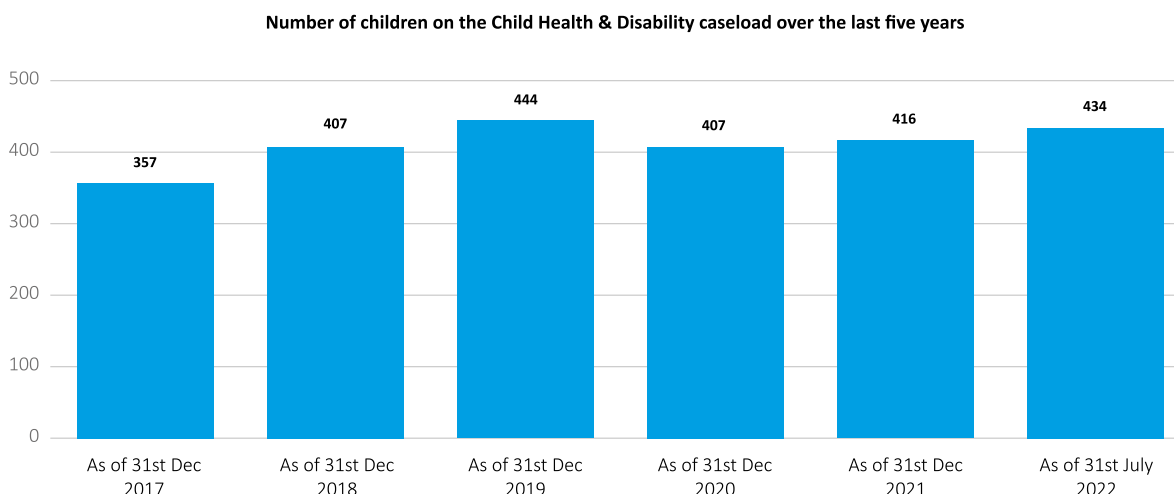
Short breaks (previously called respite provision) look after a young person temporarily so that their carer can have a break and provides a positive experience for the person cared for, to enhance the quality of their lives and support their relationship.

Tŷ Storrie, run by Cardiff Council is located in the west of Cardiff. It is a purpose built registered Childrens Home for children and young people aged between 6 and 17 with disabilities and complex needs.

There are currently 25 children accessing Ty Storrie as well as 23 children and young people on the waiting list. These children needs are met through additional packages including community care respite.

This is partly the reason for a 63% increase in domiciliary care payments.

The caseload of CHaD has remained relatively consistent over the past 5 years:



UASC

The majority of UASC arrive in the UK and Wales ‘spontaneously’ however some children may arrive in the UK under the mechanism of s.67 Immigration Act 2016. A small number of children have already been resettled in Wales and more may come. The National Transfer Scheme is currently available in Wales and facilitates the transfer of children out of local authorities in England where there are large numbers being cared for, such as Kent and Croydon. The National Transfer Team work with us as well as the Wales Strategic Migration Partnership, to identify any possible placements for these children. In Cardiff, there are currently 53 children and young people open to the UASC team. Colum Road is a 6-bed property which was opened in March 2022 and is available for UASC aged 16 and above, arriving via the National Transfer Scheme (NTS) or spontaneously. The Assessment Centre offers an initial period of accommodation 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. These placement options include Fostering, supported lodgings, and supported accommodation.

Once a young person reaches the age of 18 and they have received settled status, they can access a range of accommodation in Cardiff as per any other young adult. Due to delays in assessing claims, Cardiff Council are continuing to support and accommodate previous UASC who are now over 18 and who have no recourse to public funds until their status is finalised.

Current Provision in Cardiff

The below table is the complete list of regulated placements in Cardiff. There are a variety of reasons why homes may not operate at full occupancy including matching with other young people, specific high need cases, staffing levels or restrictions placed by the Inspector.

Provision for CHaD	Home	Provider	Beds
No	Oakway	Cardiff Council	2
No	Falconwood	Cardiff Council	3
No	Crosslands	Cardiff Council	6
No	Heath House	BASE Support Ltd	4
No	Trevene House	Maponos Ltd	4
Both	Ninian House	Genus Care Ltd	3
No	Connaught Rd	BASE Support Ltd	4
No	Graig Llywn House	Keys	4
No	New House Lodge	Athena Care Group	5
No	Isgoed	Keys	4
Yes - CHaD	Ty Jibreel	Gofal Cymru Care	3
Yes - CHaD	Ty Mikail	Gofal Cymru Care	3
Yes - CHaD	Ty Coryton	Orbis	26
Yes - CHaD	Ty Cwtch	Salutem LD	16
Yes - CHaD	Ty Croeso	Gofal Cymru Care	3

Capital Budget

The council has already identified previous years capital funding which can be used as well utilising grant funding a range of sources.

Capital Allocations as at 22/23		Total
Right Homes, Right Support Strategy - Residential Provision for Children Looked After	Subject to a business case, to make improvements to the residential offer for Children Looked After by the Council which are currently placed outside of the Council boundaries and with Independent Fostering Agencies. This includes an emergency pop-up unit, an assessment unit, and additional residential places in the city.	£1,900,000

Capital Allocations as at 22/23		Total
Children's Respite Provision	Following an assessment of respite services for children at Ty Storrie, to align service provision with the needs of young people.	£2,898,000
Safe Accomodation ICF Regional	Provide safe accommodation in a psychologically-informed environment for children / young people who are experiencing a crisis in their emotional wellbeing and mental health and require a safe place or 'sanctuary', away from their normal home, in which to recover and recuperate	£695,000
Children's Services Accommodation Strategy	Balance of proceeds from disposal of 150 Thornhill Road ring-fenced for schemes which provide direct benefit to children	£229,000

Recommended Requirements

Children's Residential Provision

Utilisation of current assets to maximise their usage to meet needs, the recommendations are as follows;

- Retain **Crosslands** as a 6-bed residential unit with minor upgrades to the home
- Retain **Falconwood** as a 3 bed residential unit
- Retain **Oakway** for use as an emergency provision for a 1 bed residential home
- Develop **Baden Powell** and upgrade the property and register the property as a 2-bed residential home
- **Bronwydd Road** – upgrade the property to be a therapeutic placement and register property as a 1-bed residential home

Purchase and develop additional properties to meet the demand;

- **3 x 3 bed children's home for younger children** – linked to our inhouse foster carers to support quick step down
- **4 x 3 bed and 3 x 4 bed children's homes predominantly focused on older children**

These properties should complement our existing portfolio and be strategically located across Cardiff to support young people who have to move into a residential home to keep their positive links to their area such as education, family and friends.

These proposals will deliver a total of 46 beds across the city within the control of Cardiff Council. This is in addition to the 28 beds currently being provided by other providers bringing in a total children's home provision in Cardiff to 74. Acknowledging this is 20 less than the 94 children currently in residential provision at the end of this 3-year strategy the need in Cardiff will be reviewed as the following factors need to be considered;

- Supporting children who need to be placed out of area
- The planned increase to the Young Persons Gateway
- The introduction of the Housing First model
- The increase in in-house fostering (including specialist foster carers)
- The overall shifting the balance of care to prevent the demands

The need for the **Parent and baby assessment centre** for up to 4 placements in Cardiff is highlighted in the demand analysis. Due to the specialist nature of this provision, linked to the Commissioning Strategy we will look to find a partner to deliver this provision.

Specialist Mental Health & Step-down from hospital

1 large property to accommodate up to 2 CYP at any one time, 1 staff sleep in and office space

The service will offer an accommodation solution for CYP who cannot return to their place of residence. This accommodation solution will support up to up to two CYP at any time, aged 10-18, subject to matching of the CYP in residence which will be understood through the psychological formulation. The home will be in line with Regulation and Inspection of Social Care (Wales) Act 2016 (RISCA) regulations and registered with Care Inspectorate Wales and the building will be designed in line with recommendations from the implementation of the NEST/NYTH model – building psychologically informed environments.

- 2 bedrooms for CYP
- 1 bedroom for sleep in staff ideally with ensuite
- 1 office / staff space for multi-agency support services
- Lounge / play multifunctional space downstairs
- Rooms for the team to use with CYP (therapy / sensory)
- Garden space – areas for play outdoor and undercover canopy plus potential separate garden room to allow for separate spaces so that young people with different needs can be kept at a distance from one another when needed
- Car parking for staff
- Positive warm, welcoming homely design with robust furniture and materials and emphasis on sound proofing

- Safety principles to be incorporated into design to protect CYP who may be at risk of suicide and self harming
- Consideration given to location in regards of proximity to Accident & Emergency and away from anything which could facilitate risk taking behaviour

Requirements for Children with Disabilities

The need is solely on the short break and shared care arrangements

- **Redesign of Ty Storrie** into 4 self-contained units with communal space for specialist shared care arrangements to bridge the gap between overnight short breaks and 52-week accommodation
- **Additional lower level short break provision** – this property would suit being delivered from a larger bungalow property for up to 4 children at a time

Summary of properties

Name of Property	Current	Proposal
Crosslands	6 bed	6 bed
Falconwood	3 bed	3 bed
Oakway	1 bed	1 bed
Baden Powell	unregistered	2 bed
Bronwydd Road	unregistered	1 bed
3 x 3 beds additional for younger children	-	9 bed
4 x 3 beds additional for older children	-	12 bed
3 x 4 beds additional for older children	-	12 bed
Ty Storrie	2 bed	4 bed
CHaD Short Breaks	-	4 bed
Specialist Mental Health	-	2 bed
Parent and Baby	-	4 bed
Colum Road	6 bed	6 bed

These additional properties will be sought through open market purchase and refurbishment/remodelling, new build opportunities through housing development schemes plus the opportunity of repurposing existing assets to meet these needs.

CORPORATE PARENTING ADVISORY COMMITTEE

27 March 2023

Children Services Accommodation Strategy update

Reasons for the Report

1. This report has been prepared to provide the Committee with an update in relation to the Children’s Services Accommodation Strategy in Cardiff.

Background

2. On the 19th January 2023 Cabinet approved the new Children’s Services Strategy, which has been developed to set out the vision and direction for service provision over the next 3 years.
3. The Children’s Services Strategy sets out how we will seek to work with our partners to meet the needs of children, young people and their families, using the least interventionist approach. We call this “shifting the balance” and we are focusing on three key areas:
 - a. Place – ensuring that children remain at home with their family where it is safe and appropriate to do so.
 - b. People – recruiting a permanent workforce and reducing our reliance on agency social workers.
 - c. Practice - developing our practice to ensure it is strength based, trauma informed, restorative, research led and family focused.
4. At Cardiff Children’s Services our vision is clear – we want to provide families with the right support, from the right person at the right time, in the right place

and at the lowest safe level of intervention, enabling them to remain with their family where it is safe for them to do so.

5. However, for some children and young people their needs are best met in an accommodation setting and we want to ensure that there is enough sufficiency in Cardiff for them. All children and young people deserve to have a place they call home where they are safe, nurtured and protected.

6. The Accommodation Strategy, which was also approved at Cabinet on 19th January 2023 as an appendix to the main strategy, sets out the accommodation provision that we need. This strategy is closely linked with our work to implement The Right Place model in Cardiff (based on the North Yorkshire Model) and includes our ambitious plans to increase residential care provision for children and young people in Cardiff.

7. The strategy sets out how we will meet our commitments against the national context and the pressure areas that we need to address to meet local need. These are:
 - a. National context:
 - i. Provide additional specialist support for children with complex needs who may be on the edge of care.
 - ii. Explore radical reform of current services for children looked after and care leavers.
 - iii. Eliminate private profit from the care of children looked after.
 - iv. Fund regional residential services for children with complex needs ensuring their needs are met as close to home as possible and in Wales wherever practicable.
 - b. Local pressures:
 - i. Mainstream children looked after.
 - ii. Specialist mental health services and step-down from hospital.
 - iii. Short break requirements for children with disabilities and complex need.

8. Accommodation Strategy is attached at Appendix A
9. Since the approval of the strategy there has been significant momentum in the delivery of new provision and this is included for committee in the The Accommodation Strategy Presentation which is attached at Appendix A (i)

Financial Implications

10. The strategy timespan is for three years and the accommodation strategy details additional properties to increase residential placement provision within the authorities boundaries. The acquisition of these properties will have a longer lifespan than the strategy, and when capital expenditure is being incurred, there will need to be a longer planning horizon, with a risk assessment and consideration of mitigations that might be required, to ensure that assets being bought, created or reconfigured will continue to provide benefits to the council over the lifespan of the asset. The accommodation strategy notes previous Capital allocations that have not been utilised to date and the possibility of external grants to fund the acquisition and adaptation of properties. Further work will be required to ensure the accommodation strategy is affordable within the current funding envelope and utilisation of grants are in accordance with timescales and the terms and conditions of the individual grants.
11. Currently there are significant cost pressures within Children's Services, as high-cost placements and bespoke care arrangements have arisen due to external changes since the pandemic and insufficient market capacity leading to increased prices. This strategy aims to manage and reduce the risk of significant overspends in future years through the implementation of several individual strands of work. Not included in the strategy is an implementation timetable or a risk assessment on the delivery of the strategy, which will need to be developed and delivered promptly to ensure corrective management actions can be taken to address the current financial challenges facing the service area and the authority. An appropriate financial monitoring mechanism will be required, aligned with performance indicators and delivery plans, to measure and communicate

financial performance and cost effectiveness of schemes deriving from the strategy and ensure ongoing management control of schemes.

Legal Implications

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

RECOMMENDATION

The Committee is recommended to note the Children's Services Accommodation Strategy pilot to make any observations or comments and, if appropriate agree how the implementation of the Strategy is reported to this committee going forward.

DEBORAH DRIFFIELD

Director of Children's Services
21 March 2023



**STRONGER
FAIRER
GREENER**



Cardiff's Right Place Accommodation Strategy



[#GweithioDrosGaerdydd](#)
[#GweithioDrosochChi](#)

[#WorkingForCardiff](#)
[#WorkingForYou](#)

Accommodation Strategy Summary



**STRONGER
FAIRER
GREENER**



- The Accommodation Strategy went to Cabinet on the 19th January 2023.

- The strategy gives an overview of the current position, analyses demand and details the proposals for the following workstreams with consideration for The Right Place and NEST/NYTH framework;
 - Children’s Residential Provision
 - Children with Disabilities
 - Mental Health and Emotional Wellbeing
 - Unaccompanied Asylum Seeking Children (UASC)
 - Parent and Baby



Children's Residential Provision

Demand

Ages	In Cardiff	Out of Cardiff	Total	% in Cardiff
Under 13	3	20	23	13%
13-15	8	37	45	18%
16/17	11	21	32	34%
Total	22	78	100*	22%

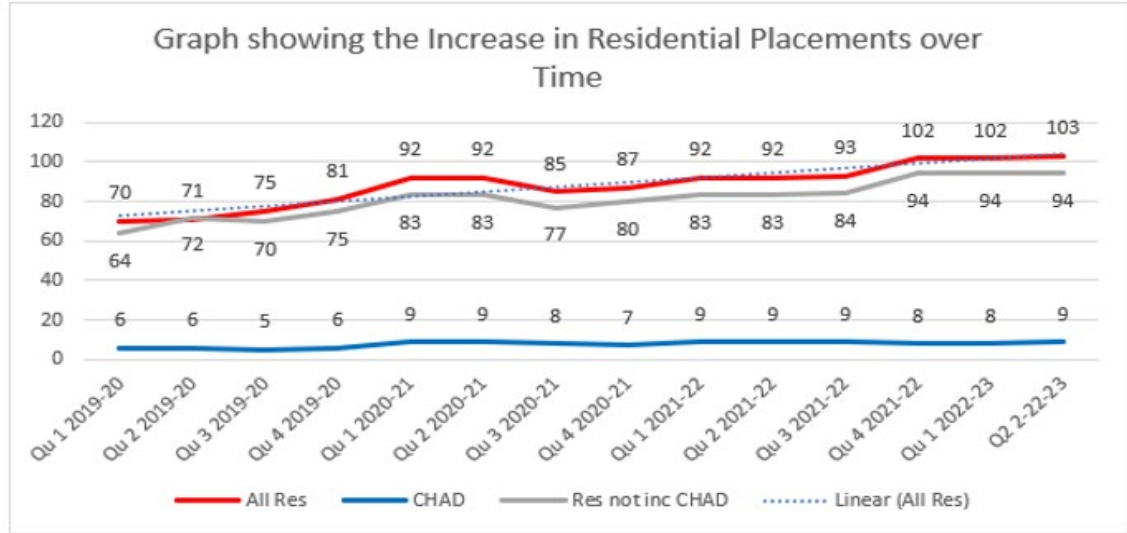
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The table shows the volume of young people placed in out of county placements and exemplifies the need for this strategy to be delivered at pace with 78 out of a total of 100 placements being Out of Cardiff.

*This includes Parent & Baby Placements



**STRONGER
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Increasing need for residential placements as can be seen in this graph, in particular males aged between 14-16 years old. The number of boys in residential placements has increased by 59% from 41 in March 2022 to 65 in August 2022, whereas girls in residential placements has increased by just 6% from 34 to 36 during the same period.

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Utilisation of current assets to maximise their usage to meet needs, the recommendations are as follows;

- Retain Crosslands as a 6-bed residential unit with minor upgrades to the home.
- Retain Falconwood as a 3 bed residential unit
- Retain Oakway for use as an emergency provision for a 1 bed residential home.
- Develop Baden Powell - upgrade the property and register the property as a 2-bed residential home
- Bronwydd – upgrade the property to be a therapeutic placement and register property as a 1-bed residential home.

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Purchase and develop additional properties to meet the demand;

- **3 x 3 bed children's home for our younger population** – linked to our inhouse foster carers to support quick step down
- **4 x 3 bed and 3 x 4 bed children's homes predominantly for our older children and young people.**



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Demand

There are currently 25 children accessing Ty Storrie as well as 23 children and young people on the waiting list. These children's needs are met through additional packages including community care respite.

This is partly the reason for a 63% increase in domiciliary care payments.

Proposal

The need is solely on the short break and shared care arrangements;

- **Redesign of Ty Storrie** into 4 self-contained units with communal space for specialist shared care arrangements to bridge the gap between overnight short breaks and 52-week accommodation.
- **Additional lower level short break provision** – this property would suit being delivered from a larger bungalow property for up to 4 children at a time.



Specialist Mental Health & Emotional Wellbeing

Demand

- Increase in number of CYP presenting in A&E following self-harm or suicide attempts and in emotional distress.
- A regional, integrated group of operational leads developed a model that can respond to the needs of this group of young people. They have agreed on an integrated delivery model that combines an outreach approach to work with young people and families across all settings with an accommodation solution for young people who cannot return home or to a community placement.

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Proposal

- **1 large property to accommodate up to 2 CYP at any one time, 1 staff sleep in and office space**

The service will offer an accommodation solution for CYP who cannot return to their place of residence. This accommodation solution will support up to up to two CYP at any time, aged 10-18, subject to matching of the CYP in residence which will be understood through the psychological formulation



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UASC

Demand

In Cardiff, there are currently 53 children and young people open to the UASC team



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Proposal

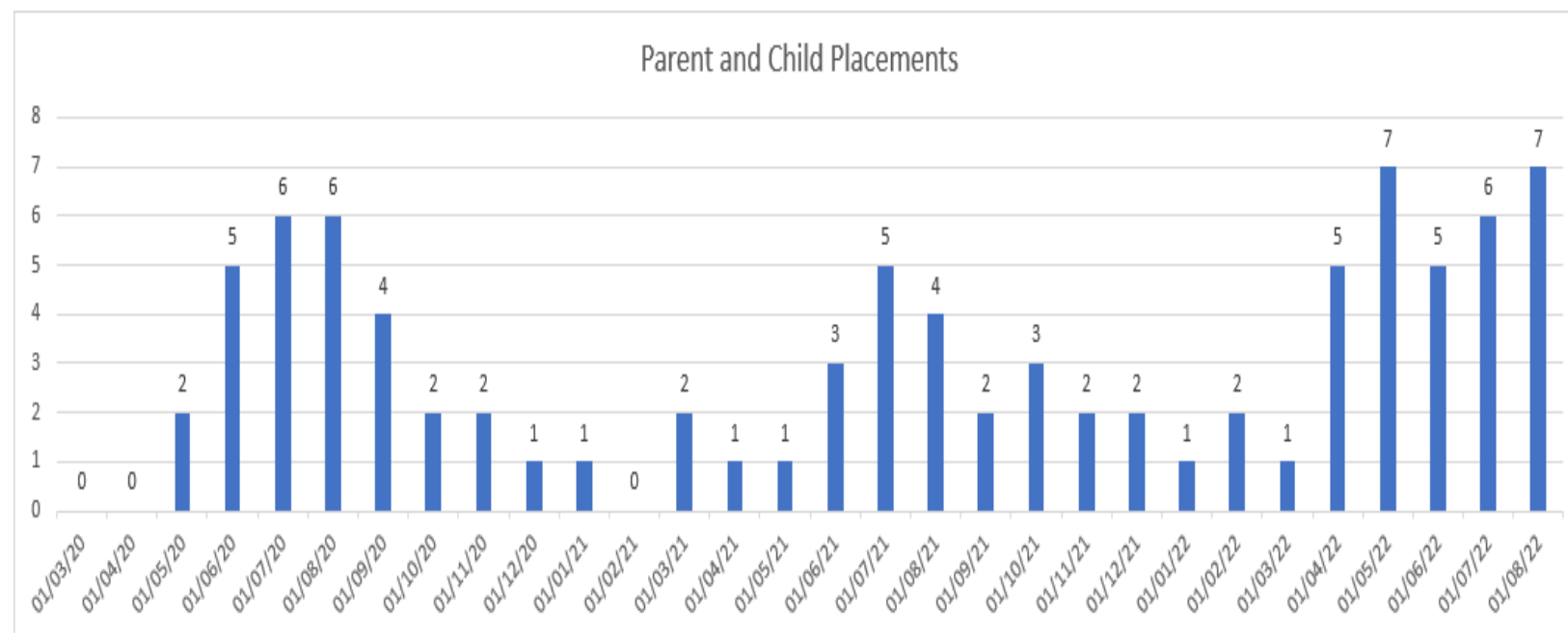
Retain a 6-bed property which was opened in March 2022 and is available for UASC aged 16 and above, arriving via the National Transfer Scheme (NTS) or spontaneously

Parent and Baby

Demand

There are no parent and baby placements in Cardiff and these placements are frequently outside of Wales because there is no local provision.

Proposal Due to the specialist nature of this provision, linked to the Commissioning Strategy we will look to find a partner to deliver this provision. Discussions are taking place with a provider who are looking to expand this provision within South Wales.



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Name of Property	Current	Proposal
Crosslands	6 bed	6 bed
Falconwood	3 bed	3 bed
Oakway	1 bed	1 bed
Baden Powell	unregistered	2 bed
Bronwydd Road	unregistered	1 bed
3 x 3 beds Additional under 13	-	9 bed
4 x 3 beds Additional over 13	-	12 bed
3 x 4 beds Additional over 13	-	12 bed
Ty Sannie	2 bed	4 bed
CHAI Short Breaks	-	4 bed
Specialist Mental Health	-	2 bed
Parent and Baby	-	4 bed
Colum Road	6 bed	6 bed

These additional properties will be sought through open market purchase and refurbishment/remodelling, new build opportunities through housing development schemes plus the opportunity of repurposing existing assets to meet these needs.



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Proposals Summary

These proposals will deliver a total of 46 beds across the city within the control of Cardiff Council. This is in addition to the 28 beds currently being provided by other providers bringing in a total children's home provision in Cardiff to 74.

Acknowledging this is 20 less than the 94 children currently in residential provision at the end of this 3-year strategy the need in Cardiff will be reviewed as the following factors need to be considered;

- Supporting children who need to be placed out of area
- The planned increase to the Young Persons Gateway
- The introduction of the Housing First model
- The increase in in-house fostering (including specialist foster carers)
- The overall shifting the balance of care to prevent the demands



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Housing & Social Services Board



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Governance

Childrens Services Capital Programme Board established with monthly meetings which will feed into the Social Services Programme Board

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Children's Services Capital Programme Board

Project Team –

- Monitors capital spend,
- Oversees funding bids,
- Collates design requirements,
- Project briefs and leads on capital workstreams below- Regeneration in partnership with key contacts in children's services

Children with Disabilities

Children Looked After

Specialist Mental Health & Step-down from hospital

UASC

Parent and Baby



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Progress

General Children's Residential Provision

- **Baden Powell** - Member consultation completed, positive feedback with one request for greenery to be incorporated at the front. Development works well underway at the property including electrics and fire suppressant sprinkler system and successful pod installed during February Half Term.
- **Oakway** – Refurbishment works complete
- **Crosslands** – Meeting at the home to discuss upgrades took place with colleagues from Housing Regeneration. As a result a list of essential works that are required was compiled along with a wish list of changes to the property. FM visiting in February to look at boiler concerns. Scope for extension pod being investigated with DFG's to redesign Kitchen space.
- **Bronwydd** – Contractors booked to start sprinkler works at the property in March followed by refurbishment and refurnishing works.
- **New 7 x 3 beds** – The property market search continues for further suitable properties. Talks are continuing with Housing Development to discuss what houses are available on new build sites. These properties are more cost effective as require little refurbishment works and have sprinkler systems installed as standard. A full review of all sites that are completing in the next 2 years is underway to analyse location, site plans and availability.
 - **Hawthorns Pentwyn Property** – Property purchase working through legal stages. Ward member consultation complete, (no issues raised) Additional funding to be sought from Housing with Care Funding (HCF), ODR for purchase signed off by estates, DFG's to deliver refurbishment works.
 - **St Mellons Property** – Formal offer accepted on property. Ward member consultation complete, (no issues raised), ODR for purchase signed off by estates. DFG's to deliver refurb. Additional funding to be sought from Housing with Care Funding (HCF)
 - **Llandaff Property** – Large property set over three levels. Initial drawings created to allow high level costings. Home Buyers Survey completed on property with valuation to inform costings.
- **New 3 x 4 Beds** – Potential 5 bedroom house has been identified on an upcoming Housing Development Site. Agreement in principle for us to purchase the property and currently reviewing plans and costings. Further properties being identified, with programme dates and cost estimates being provided.
- **St Mellons Family Centre** – Visit taken place with Housing to look at available space and discuss potential options. Initial concept drawings have been created to include office space, 2 residential units plus staff sleep in space.

Children with Disabilities

➤ Re-design of Ty Storrie

Stage 1 Design Principles have been signed off. RIBA stage 2 design work progressing well and staff engagement sessions underway.

➤ Additional lower level short break provision

Property market search continues for a larger bungalow property.

Also in discussions with Housing Development who have identified a potential opportunity in an up and coming site with a close proximity to Ty Gwyn where a large number of child and young people in our Child Health and Disability Team attend.



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Specialist Mental Health and Emotional Wellbeing

➤ A number of properties were visited throughout Cardiff and Vale of Glamorgan

➤ Suitable Property Identified - Roath

- Offer formally accepted, property purchase working through legal stages.
- Ward consultation complete with no feedback or concerns received.
- ODR for purchase signed off by estates
- Initial outline programme prepared including input from Clinical team following initial design meeting. Discussions to start defining space requirements and overarching design principles for the project.



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**CARDIFF COUNCIL
CYNGOR CAERDYDD**

CORPORATE PARENTING ADVISORY COMMITTEE

20th February 2023

CORPORATE PARENTING ADVISORY COMMITTEE ANNUAL REPORT 2022-2023

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 2022/23 is attached at Appendix A.
This report outlines the Committee's activities from March 2022- January 2023

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

RECOMMENDATION

The Committee is recommended to:

- 1) Provide comments on the contents of the Committee's Annual Report 2022/23.
- 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 2023.

DEBORAH DRIFFIELD

Director of Children's Services
27 March 2023

CORPORATE PARENTING ADVISORY COMMITTEE

**Annual Report
2022/23**

CHAIR'S FORWARD

I am pleased to introduce the 2022/2023 Annual Report of the Corporate Parenting Advisory Committee.

Following the easing of Covid 19 restrictions, the Committee have been able to re-engage with care experienced children and young people, this has provided members of the Committee to hear the views, challenges and achievements directly from care experienced young people in Cardiff.

A particular highlight for me has been attending the annual Bright Sparks awards, this ceremony has been running for 17 years and recognises the achievements of children looked after, families, carers, and staff.

I was privileged to be able to give out an award on the evening, and it was fantastic to see so many people face to face. It was great to see all the accomplishments of our young people and celebrate their success, resilience, and determination.

This year has also provided an opportunity to strengthen our role as a Committee by welcoming new members following local government elections. Members of the Committee have taken part in training, hearing key messages from our young people of the expectations of us as a Committee and as Corporate Parents.

Looking to the year ahead, the Committee will focus on building on engagement sessions, as well as visiting services, and organisations providing opportunity to hear from staff, families, and young people directly, on the services that support them.

Councillor Sarah Merry

Chair, Corporate Parenting Advisory Committee

DIRECTOR'S OVERVIEW

The Annual Report for 2022/2023 highlights several key pieces of work that the Corporate Parenting Advisory Committee has been involved in over the past year.

The report focuses on a variety of updates that the Committee have received which includes the work undertaken to recognise and support young parents in and leaving care, a new provision in the city to support our Unaccompanied Asylum-Seeking Children and the exciting plan to develop a new Virtual Headteacher role.

It is encouraging to see the engagement session being held between our young people and members of the Committee which has provided an opportunity for members to hear directly from our young people as well as the plan for further engagement through the members visits programme.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank members of the Committee for their contributions and active involvement throughout the year. I would also like to welcome new members to the Committee and thank all for their encouragement and passion to engage with our children and young people.

Deborah Driffield
Director, Children's Services

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 2022/23. 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
- Committee Training
- Young People Engagement
- Activity of the Committee
- 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**) [Children's care services \(cardiff.gov.uk\)](https://www.cardiff.gov.uk/childrens-care-services)

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 2022/23 municipal year, 2 Committee meetings were held. Two scheduled meetings in July 2022 and October 2022 were adapted to a training session to support new members in their role, and as an engagement session with members of the Committee and children and young people

The scheduled meetings were held on:

- 15th March 2022
- 28th June 2022 (Training session)
- 18th October 2022 (Children and Young People Engagement session)
- 9th January 2023

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.

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.

Corporate Parenting Training

In June, the Corporate Parenting Officer and Operational Manager for Safeguarding & Reviewing Hub facilitated a series of training sessions, helping new members gain an understanding of the Committees purpose and the expectation of the role as a member of the Corporate Parenting Advisory Committee and Corporate Parent.

The session also provided an opportunity to discuss the previous arrangements for the Committee and what new members would like to see from future meetings.

The following topics were covered as part of the session:

- Definition of Corporate Parenting
- Legislation
- Cardiff Context
- Messages from young people
- Roles and responsibilities of members of the Committee

Members of the Committee were informed of the definition of Corporate Parenting with an overview of some of the reasons why young people might go into care, as well as how young people are supported in a range of different care settings. Committee Members were informed how Committee meetings adapted to restrictions of the Covid 19 pandemic and how future meetings would be held using a Hybrid approach.

During the sessions, data was provided in relation to the number of care experienced young people in Cardiff and out of county within the context of national trends.

The Committee were informed of how Children and Young people can influence service development plans and the importance of hearing from care experienced young people. The sessions also included key messages from Children and young people explaining what they would like to see from their Elected Members and professionals.

Discussions were held about best way to provide data and information to the Committee with examples shown of performance monitoring and demographic data that has been provided at previous Committee meetings.

Individual training sessions were also held with members who were unable to attend the group training session with the Operational Manager and Corporate Parenting Officer providing the same content.

Members noted the importance of hearing directly from Children and Young people, feedback from members of the Committee included building on previous engagement sessions that had taken place and the need for young people's experiences to be reported via performance monitoring case studies.

The Committee noted that they would like to hear directly from Children and Young people about their experiences and views to help shape and influence the work programme for the Committee for the upcoming year.

Children, young people and Elected Members Engagement session

The Terms of Reference for the Committee sets out that:

“to achieve the best outcomes for children looked after and care leavers the Corporate Parenting Advisory Committee will: Identify key priorities by: engaging with relevant children looked after forums, as determined by the young people, to drive the committee’s priorities”

Following feedback from members of the Committee at the Corporate Parenting training session, and in line with the Committees Terms of Reference the scheduled Committee meeting in October 2022 was adapted as an engagement session with some members of the Committee and care experienced young people who are part of the Bright Sparks group.

The Bright Sparks group is a peer support forum for care experienced children and young people, with the principal objective of ensuring that Children and Young People are afforded a voice and are active participants in shaping policy and service provision within the council and within a wider external context. The group are supported by a participation officer from the National Youth Advocacy service (NYAS).

The session provided an opportunity for members of Committee to hear the views and direct experiences of care experienced young people. It also provided an opportunity for the young people of the group to find out more about the role of the Committee members.

During the session members of the Committee were shown a video that was developed by Children and Young people, the video was a young person friendly version of Cardiff’s Corporate Parenting Strategy and included key messages which showed what support children and young people would like to see from professionals and organisations and Elected Members. The full video can be found here: [Cardiff Corporate Parenting Strategy 2021-2024 / Strategaeth Rhianta Corfforaethol 2021-2024 - YouTube](#)

To help build confidence, some of the young people were supported by staff to facilitate a series of ice breaker activities, also providing an opportunity to build rapport with members of the Committee.

An open discussion then took place to provide an opportunity for the young people of the Bright Sparks group to share their direct experiences with members of the Committee.

The discussions were based around the following themes:

- Mental Health & Well-being support Services
- Accommodation
- Profit from Care

Several questions were asked by the young people to Committee members in relation to the themes, for those young people who were unable to attend the session the participation worker from NYAS relayed messages and questions on their behalf.

Towards the end of the session a discussion was held on the achievements of young people, focusing on individual experiences of what Children and young people were proud of.

Attendees at the session were informed that the themes and issues discussed would be presented to the next Committee meeting with a set of key actions and next steps attached to each of the themes discussed. The themes discussed would also form the Work programme of the Committee for the year.

Bright Sparks Awards

The Bright Sparks Awards ceremony is an annual event that has been running for the past 17 years. Children and Young people involved in the Bright Sparks group plan

and organise the event each year, they host, perform, and announce winners on the evening.

The ceremony provides an opportunity to celebrate the accomplishments and successes of looked after children, carers, parents, care leavers and staff.

In December 2022 the first face-to-face Bright Sparks Awards Ceremony event in over two years, took place. The event was held at city hall and had over 200 individuals in attendance, this included children and young people, as well as their carers and families.

Some members of the Committee attended the ceremony to present several awards to young people and families, showing recognition of achievements, these included recognising the determination and perseverance of young people in Educational Settings.

The evening showcased a variety of performances from children and young people which included piano performances, singing, and the reading of a poem. Videos were also shown of young people's work and visit to a local farm. The ceremony also provided an opportunity for members of the Committee who attended to talk and meet young people, families, and staff.

Committee updates

During 2022/2023 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.

Updates were provided from a range external and internal staff from directorates including the third sector, children services and education directorate.

The updates allow members to ask questions, have open discussions and find out how they can support as their role as Committee members and Corporate Parents.

March 2022

National Youth Advocacy Service (NYAS) update

In March 2022 the Committee welcomed the NYAS Advocacy Officer and the Service Manager / Committee Advisor to the meeting to provide members with an update on the work undertaken by the National Youth Advocacy Service between the 1 April and 31 December 2021.

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 and is commissioned by Cardiff and the Vale to provide a regional advocacy service to children and young people in receipt of support from Children's Services.

The Committee were provided with details of how referrals were made to the advocacy service, and how the service supports to enable and empower children and young people to have a voice and to effectively participate within decision making processes. Information was given on the active offer of advocacy and issues-based advocacy service.

Members of the Committee were also informed how the advocacy service adapted to Covid 19 restrictions to ensure that advocacy was still made available to children and young people during the pandemic and the examples of some the issues raised by young people who received support. The Committee were also informed of how the service was promoted and awareness raised amongst different teams in Cardiff.

Column Road Assessment Centre

Members of the Committee were provided with an update on a new refurbished accommodation for Unaccompanied Asylum-Seeking Children. The Principal Social Worker attended the meeting and provided information of the planned date of opening and the type of support that would be provided.

Members were informed that the accommodation would be for unaccompanied asylum-seeking children aged 16 and over who have arrived via the Home Office mandatory transfer scheme.

The accommodation would be provided for an initial period to enable a wellbeing and age assessment to be undertaken, which will enable a more longer-term appropriate placement to be found in line with their identified support needs.

Members were provided with information in relation to the range of needs which will be met by the centre, including health, educational, linguistic, and cultural needs. The centre would also provide a place to develop independent living skills and focus on activities and community integration.

The members visit programme has been developed to include a visit to meet the team who support unaccompanied asylum-seeking children to find out more about the accommodation and other support provisions in place.

Voices from Care Cymru update

The Operational Director for Voices from Care Cymru attended the meeting to provide an update and overview of the work of the organisation and the work planned with Cardiff as a Local Authority.

The Committee were informed of Voices from Care Cymru's work, which 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 facilitate participation and social action groups. Voices from care Cymru also deliver a range of engagement activities and events to facilitate a care community for care experienced children and young people on a national basis.

Members were advised that a national Corporate Parenting charter was being developed and how a series of national conversation events to further develop the charter would take place. The Committee were informed of the Welsh Government Basic Income Pilot for care leavers and the work of Voices from Care Cymru over a 6-month period. This included working with young people to drive forward the need to remove the stigma related to the care experienced community, meeting with ministers to discuss the changes needed, launching the care community “kindred knot” pin badge and launching a time capsule to measure and make accountable Welsh Government in the progress of their promises.

The Committee were informed of Voices from Care Cymru’s national wellbeing and mental health service and the number of care experienced young people who have been supported through the programme. 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.

A discussion was held regarding funding with particular focus on the national wellbeing and mental health project. Members were informed that the funding for the project would end in 2024 with a hope it could be maintained bearing in mind the numbers of young people who have linked with that project.

Look to year ahead – Corporate Parenting Strategy Update

The Corporate Parenting Strategy is a three-year multi agency plan that sets out what we all need to do as corporate parents to support our Looked After Children and Care Leavers to enable them to thrive and improve outcomes. 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

Members of the Committee were reminded of the development of the strategy which included the engagement and feedback obtained from over 250 care experienced children and young people, 70 professionals and members of the Corporate Parenting Advisory Committee.

The Committee were also informed of a Corporate Parenting Operational group that had been established to extend Corporate Parenting responsibilities and to monitor progress of the strategy. Members of the Committee were informed of the membership to the group and the shared action plan that was used to galvanise staff to provide updates on projects that could support care experienced young people.

Members of the Committee were updated of what progress had been made since the launch of the strategy in line with each of the priorities with a description of several projects that would take place for the year ahead.

Updates to the Committee included working in partnership with the Child Friendly City team to hold a specific event for Care experienced young people, a pilot with Cardiff University to support access to university and a campaign to support young people with emergency placement moves.

Draft Annual Report- November 2020 to January 2022

Members had been provided with a copy of the draft report which outlined the Committees activities from November 2020 to January 2022.

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 were included in the report.

Updates that were provided in the Annual Report included updates around key systems that 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 Annual Report also included the wide range of project and service updates the Committee received which included an engagement session with Children and young people. Due to local government elections the Annual Report for the Committee November 2020 and January 2022 went to Cabinet and Council in September 2022.

The Committee noted the report and delegated 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 for The Chair to present the Annual Report to full Council.

January 2023 updates

Children, Young people, and Elected Members Engagement session update

In January the Corporate Parenting Officer presented an overview to the Committee of the engagement session that took place with Children and Young People and some members of the Committee in October 2022.

Members of the Committee were provided with a description of how the session looked, which involved children and young people of the Bright Sparks group taking a lead in facilitating the beginning part of the session with support from staff.

The Corporate Parenting Officer provided a presentation with an overview of key themes that came out of the session with a description of the next steps that would be taken by the service area and partners to implement changes.

The following themes were raised at the engagement session by Children and young people and were presented to the Committee:

1. Improvement to emotional health and well being services
2. Accommodation
3. Profit from Care

Members of the Committee were provided with a summary of the issues that were discussed at the session which included direct quotes from Children and Young people of how they would like services to be developed in the future. This included a change in the social provisions across the city, the need to ensure those young people at risk of homelessness have access to the right support and the commitment that profit from care should never be discussed in front of young people.

Members stated the importance of the commitment not to discuss profit from care in front of Children and young people should be monitored to ensure a difference is being made.

A discussion was held with members to find out how they found the session, and if they would like the similar sessions to continue. Members of the Committee expressed that they found the session useful and would be happy for similar sessions to be held in the future.

CASCADE- Good Practice Charter for Parents in and Leaving Care

The Engagement Manager from the Children's Social Care Research and Development Centre (CASCADE) attended the Committee to inform members of the development of a good practice Charter to support Parents in and leaving care.

Members of the Committee were informed of a five-year study that was conducted by CASCADE which included engagement with a number of parents and professionals as well as analysis of Local Authority survey data and national data sets in Wales.

Committee members were informed of the findings from the research which helped to develop the charter. These findings included:

- Widespread stigma (e.g., parents' capacity to be parents is questioned because of their past experiences)
- Discriminatory practices (e.g., routine referral for pre-birth assessment)
- Underdeveloped and inconsistent support
- Concerning rates of separation between parents and children (e.g., the survey found 1 in 4 children were separated from both birth parents)

It was noted that the research findings were not unique to Wales and similar evidence has been noted from international studies and reviews.

The Engagement Manager for CASCADE provided a presentation to the Committee of the key messages within the charter which included a commitment to support parents in or in the process of leaving care from a variety of agencies and a commitment to challenge stigma and discrimination.

Members of the Committee were informed of how a steering group in Cardiff has been established to help implement the charter, members were informed of membership to the group which includes representation from a range of teams within Children's Services and the NHS.

Committee members noted that the signing up to the charter should be meaningful and make a real difference to care experienced parents. Members of the Committee were informed that the presentation and report was an introduction to inform members of this piece of work and that updates would be provided on its implementation at future Committee meetings.

Virtual School and Virtual Headteacher Update

A consultant attended the Committee to provide members with an update on the work undertaken to develop a **Virtual School (VS)** and a **Virtual Head Teacher (VSH)** post in Cardiff. Cardiff Council was successful in applying to Welsh Government for funding for a pilot which will run from April 2023 to August 2024, before future evaluations are submitted to Welsh Government leading to establishing both the VS and VSH in Cardiff to further improve the educational outcomes of all children and young people who are looked after, and care experienced.

The Committee were informed that the core purpose of the role of the Virtual School Head Teacher was to drive up improvements in the educational progress and attainment/achievement of all children looked after by their authority, including those that have been placed in schools in other authorities. Putting the looked after children and young people at the heart of all they do. The VSH will have an important role in working in partnership with other authorities to support the educational progress of children in their schools but looked after by other authorities.

Members of the Committee were informed that the Virtual School is not a physical building where the children who are looked after attend and that the children and young people will continue to attend the schools they are registered at. Children who are looked after are being educated across many schools, the Virtual School Head Teacher would track their progress as if they were in a single school.

The Achievement Leader, Key Groups, advised the Committee that the recruitment and appointment to the role of Virtual Headteacher would be in time for the start of the pilot in April 2023.

A discussion was held regarding the importance of communication between various departments and services and engagement with external bodies and the age of young people supported through the pilot. Members were informed that the pilot would currently focus on school aged young people but that it could be extended to cover pre-school and post-16 ages in the future.

Discussions took place in regards to children who are placed out of County. Members of the Committee were informed that the Virtual Headteacher role would be for all looked after children by Cardiff, irrespective of where the placements are. In addition, there is a database with a complete list of Children Looked After, where their schools are and what the Council is doing to support them. It was noted of the additional challenges relating to children out of county. Officers advised that placing children in Cardiff was usually preferred where possible, as it offered the best chance of meeting their needs. Members were also informed of the national placement sufficiency situation, which makes matching local placement more challenging.

Members were informed that it can be difficult to secure the right Additional Learning Needs provision when the children are in different Local Authority areas. It would be desirable for there to be a national approach and it is hoped that the VSH could drive forward conversations in relation to this.

Members Visit Programme proposal

The Corporate Parenting Officer provided members of the Committee with a proposal of a members visits programme for the year ahead. Members of the Committee were informed, that the purpose of the planned visits were to help support members gain a wider understanding of the services and organisations that support care experienced young people in Cardiff.

The Committee were informed that the visits would provide an opportunity for members of the Committee to meet staff and some of the visits would also provide an opportunity to hear directly from the children and young people themselves.

The Committee were provided with a set of provisional dates and venues of the visits with a description of the services and organisations that were planned. A discussion was held regarding a timetable of visits to different schools to speak with a wide range and number of young people so that they can listen to their views.

The services and organisations that were included in the members visits programme included visits to a primary and secondary school, a mental health service provision and a local Childrens accommodation.

Members expressed the view that where there were restrictions on the number of members who could attend, that a reserved list should be in place and that members on the reserve list would receive at least 1 days' notice if asked to attend.

It was agreed that members receive the dates of the proposed visits in advance and it was noted the importance of feedback to the Committee following the visits.

Following agreement on the Members Visit programme in January, three members of the Committee undertook a visit to the Unaccompanied Asylum-Seeking Children (UASC) team in February.

Members met the team manager, Social Workers and Social Work Assistants who work to support unaccompanied asylum-seeking children arriving in Cardiff. The visit provided an opportunity for members to find out more about the service, the range of support that is offered and the challenges that are faced when delivering the service.

Discussions were also held regarding how members of the Committee would be able to support the service.

Forward work programme

The Forward Work Programme for the Corporate Parenting Advisory Committee sets out the Committee business that will be considered during the period identified in the

programme. The programme has been developed to enable the Committee to monitor the progress being made to support the children looked after by the authority.

Following a recent engagement session with children and young people looked after, several themes have been identified which are mirrored in the Forward Work Programme to effectively plan the work of the Committee for the forthcoming municipal year. This will ensure that the agenda and issues considered at the Committee will reflect the needs of our young people.

The themes to be reflected in the Committees Forward Work Programme are as follows:

- Having a safe and stable home in and after care
- Improving emotional well-being and physical health
- Education, employment, and training

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. Several 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 care experienced young people.

For members of the Committee to gain an understanding of the services and issues impacting Children and young people a Key Performance Indicator (KPI) Dashboard has been a standing agenda item on the Committee. When presented to the Committee a discussion is held on the common themes and demographic data covering several service areas including Children Services, Education, Housing and into work.

In January 2023 the Operational Manager for the Safeguarding and Reviewing Hub, introduced the report which sought approval from the Committee on the proposal for a draft Key Performance Indicator Dashboard to continue to be a standing agenda item at Committee meetings.

Members were informed that the Dashboard would bring together key data regarding Children Looked After and would encompass different areas such as Children's Services and unaccompanied asylum seeker children, number of placements moves, different placement types and the change in placement types over time, information on key achievements and educational performance of Children looked After. Input from the Education Directorate as well as the Cardiff and Vale University Health Board will continue to be included to provide a holistic overview of the Children Looked After by Cardiff.

A discussion was held on the appropriate frequency for presenting Dashboard data to the Committee, and whether Members would prefer more case studies rather than data. It was suggested that data need not be presented to every meeting and that the progress over time was the most important information. Members expressed a preference for visual presentation of data and a combination of data and case studies.

Members noted the importance of a balance between positive and negative case studies. Officers advised that case examples would be used which whilst would not be an actual young person to preserve confidentiality would provide a realistic overview of Looked After Child's experiences.

Data is now reported biannually to the Committee with a comparison being made from previous data to help identify progress, trends, and challenges.

The case studies are a standing agenda item to provide an overview to members of the Committee of the experiences of care experienced children and young people.

Conclusion

During 2022/2023 there was a focus to support new members of the Committee in their role following local government elections in May 2022.

As Covid 19 restrictions eased it also provided opportunities for members to meet children and young people face to face and take part in an annual celebration event.

Of particular interest to the Committee were:

- Corporate Parenting Training session
- Updates on accommodation for our Unaccompanied Asylum-Seeking Children
- Engagement session with Children and young people

Looking to the year ahead the focus will be building on listening events with our care experienced young people to hear their direct experiences and meeting staff and organisations through the members visits programme.

The themes and discussions from listening to our young people have been reflected in the members Forward Work Programme for the year.

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**CARDIFF COUNCIL
CYNGOR CAERDYDD**

CORPORATE PARENTING ADVISORY COMMITTEE

27 March 2023

Case Studies of Children Looked After and Care Leavers

Reasons for the Report

1. This report seeks the Committee to note and the case studies as provided at Appendix A

Background

2. The anonymised case studies provided in Appendix A provides the Committee with the real-life circumstances of Care experienced young people in Cardiff and aims to help the Committee to gain an understanding of the everyday challenges, experiences, and outcomes faced by Children Looked After and Care Leavers.

Issues

3. Our Children Looked After and Care Leavers have support from a wide range of services each day, including Education, Health, Housing, and training. These services all have a pivotal role to play in ensuring that our young people are able to thrive, stay safe and live independently.
4. The case studies provided in Appendix A are provided by members of the Corporate Parenting Operational group. The purpose of the Operational group is to work in partnership to improve outcomes for Children Looked After and Care Leavers in Cardiff by way of a detailed action plan. Membership of

the group include representation from internal and external agencies such as Education, Housing , and into work.

Financial Implications

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

Legal Implications

6. There are no legal implications arising from this report

RECOMMENDATION

7. The Committee are recommended to note the case studies provided in Appendix A and to make any observations or comments

DEBORAH DRIFFIELD

Director of Childrens' Social Services.

21 March 2023

Appendix A - Case Studies

Education – Looked After Children in Education (LACE) Youth Mentors

A was introduced to his LYM due to truancy of lessons at A Cardiff Secondary School. A would roam around the hallways and, on occasions, not attend school at all and visit his mother at her home.

A was contacted regularly by his LYM at his foster placement to discuss reintegration back into school and post 16 destinations. A has lost confidence in his ability to socialise and was playing games on his computer until the early hours of the morning.

As a result, LYM took A to play football to learn about A's hobbies to help support A to return to school and apply for a post 16 provision. LYM had built a good relationship with A and was able to support A to return to school to sit his GCSEs and also helped him apply for a place at college, where he received a conditional offer.

His LYM also referred Child A to Into Work, BrightStart programme, to engage Child A over the summer and keep a steady routine ready for September.

A has responded well to enrolling in College. A attends 3 days a week and has begun to socialise with other peers in his classes. A has become more independent and has started to ride the bus on his own. His confidence has increased since he has attended College. A had struggled at first with lecture/lesson times being a struggle to keep to time, but A has been eager to keep attending college and his SW is working on time efficiency with him.

Children Services – Leaving Care team

When moving to Personal Advisor services, B had failed all of her A Levels, so her PA having some knowledge of the educational system post 16, managed to liaise with a local College to enrol her on a course, that was course work based, since it was evident that B was struggling with the exam based A Level course. B enrolled onto an Access to HE in Health & Social Care and passed with excellent grades.

B then decided she would like to work as a social worker and was advised by PA to undertake some work experience in an area, alongside her studies, that would relate to this, which she did. She worked in a local elderly people's care home, and this assisted her university application. Due to her age – being so young – PA knew that this would support any application for a university degree to social work.

B applied for 3 universities, was accepted by all. She is now studying for her Social Work Degree, and achieving very good grades. So far she has achieved a 2:1 for 1st semester, and is on track to keep up these great grades.

B has been supported by the PA services with regards to her accommodation since she found living in halls too distracting for her studies. B is now settled in a small flat near the university and this is helping her to focus on her studies.

Into work service

C came to Bright Futures with multiple different barriers to engagement with any sort of employment, education, or training. C has significant mental health difficulties which makes day to living a challenge, and as such has been unable to sustain employment. Through Bright Futures, C has been helped in numerous ways with their wellbeing and with day to day living.

When C was first referred to Bright Futures, they had occasionally volunteered at a Library in the past. Noticing the passion that C had for working in the library and the positive effects volunteering had on their wellbeing, it was suggested to C that a Bright Start placement would be a good opportunity for them to build up more confidence in the workplace while being supported by a Bright Start support worker.

After a gradual process of helping C preparing for placement, C began a Bright Start placement in a Library. In this placement C thrived and became increasingly confident in themselves and their ability to work more regularly. As such, C applied for a job in one of the hubs as a hub officer. Although not successful in gaining the role it was a huge step for C and something that would not have happened at the start of their time on Bright Futures.

After completing their placement, C has been supported to access sign language courses, something they are extremely enthusiastic about and would like to explore as a future avenue for work. C has now completed three sign language assessments and is continuing to study it.

Alongside supporting C to gain more confidence in relation to work, education and training, Bright Futures have also supported them in relation to their wellbeing. C's Bright Futures mentor has supported them to access assessments at their local Community Mental Health Team so that they can access specialised support for their mental health. In addition, C's mentor has also attended GP appointments with them and supported them in challenging decisions in relation to their mental healthcare and acting as an advocate in C during appointments when they felt too anxious to speak.

After a difficult time and many challenges over the last 12 months, C is now volunteering regularly at their local hub, supporting the hub staff with library duties as and when required. This is something C is thoroughly enjoying, and in the meantime, C's Bright Futures mentor is continuing to help C take steps towards full-time sustainable employment.

Housing – Young persons Gateway

D was referred to YPG aged 16 and was open to Children's Services under Care and Support. They had been staying with a friend for 3 months following a relationship breakdown with their mother. D was described as an extremely

vulnerable young person who presented a lot younger than their 17 years of age. They were diagnosed with dyslexia and showed poor mental health which included self-harm and occasional use of cannabis.

On first presentation to YPG, it was thought that mediation between D and their family would be possible with the intention to return home, however, as D began to share more about their home life it was agreed that this would not be a suitable option. D disclosed that they did not have contact with their father and that their mother was emotionally abusive towards them stating that their mother had said that they did not love or care for them. D had witnessed domestic abuse in the home as well as noting their mother was a heavy drinker and sister used cannabis daily. D's sister had also made direct threats to D which had resulted in the police becoming involved.

D was initially placed in one of YPG's larger 24 hour Supported Accommodation units and whilst they did well for a short amount of time, their cannabis use increased, and they displayed disruptive behaviour around the project. D reported feeling lonely and began to socialise with adults away from the YPG Project who took financial advantage of them and encouraged them to take Class A drugs. The Accommodation Provider ensured that Multi Agency Referral Forms (MARF) were submitted regarding their concerns and also encouraged D to become more involved in the activities in the project and making positive relationships with other residents.

A move to alternative accommodation was discussed, however, when this was initially discussed D did not want to engage with staff. Through persistence, D did begin to engage with support staff and agreed to them making a referral to the Multi-Disciplinary Team (MDT) for additional support and intervention.

An MDT referral was promptly completed and through the partnership of MDT and YPG Accommodation Providers, D was moved to a smaller project. Here they began to engage well with the Complex Needs Case Coordinator via MDT and the accommodation staff who were able to support them to register and attend their GP and a further referral into mental health services was completed. D has been engaging well with counselling and enjoys working with the Diversionary Activities team as an active member of the choir. D is also being supported to explore their gender and sexuality and has joined an LGBTQ+ support group.

Through the support given by MDT and YPG, D is now no longer using Class A substances or self-harming. They feel safe in their accommodation and positive about their future. D is enrolling onto the Learning4Life programme and making great progress in becoming ready to live independently via the Tenancy Training route.

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**CARDIFF COUNCIL
CYNGOR CAERDYDD**

CORPORATE PARENTING ADVISORY COMMITTEE

27 March 2023

FORWARD WORK PROGRAMME

Reasons for the Report

1. This report seeks approval of the committee's Forward Work Programme (FWP) as provided at Appendix A.

Background

2. The FWP for the Corporate Parenting Advisory Committee sets out the committee business that will be considered during the period identified in the programme. The proposed programme has been developed to enable the committee to monitor the progress being made to support the children looked after by the authority.
3. Previously, the Committee identified that the agenda for its meetings should be driven by looked after children in Cardiff and that a greater emphasis should be placed on the participation of young people in the work of the Committee.

Issues

4. Following a recent engagement session with children and young people looked after, several themes have been identified these will be mirrored in the FWP to effectively plan the work of the committee for the forthcoming municipal year. This will ensure that the agenda and issues considered at the committee will reflect the needs of our young people.

The themes to be reflected in the Committees FWP are as follows:

1. Improving emotional well-being and physical health
 2. Having a safe and stable home in and after care
 3. Education, employment, and training
5. Each meeting of the Committee will focus on one of these themes with relevant reports and updates being provided by the service areas and partners.
6. Other items will be added to the Committee Forward Work Programme in line with the terms of reference

Committee Engagement with Young People

7. Several workshops, meetings and events will be planned with Elected Members which will enable young people to discuss and raise any issues in a more informal setting. The option of engagement events between children and young people and elected members will continue to be made available with officer support. Ongoing engagement of children and young people with elected members will be included in the forward work plan.

Performance Monitoring

7. The programme includes an opportunity at each committee meeting to consider timely and relevant performance information. This will be made available on a bi-annual basis via the CPAC dashboard. This will inform the committee of progress being made in respect of the Corporate Parenting Strategy and the delivery of the services to our children looked after and young people.

Financial Implications

8. The report and accompanying appendix provide an overview of the planned work programme for the Corporate Parenting Advisory Committee. As the committee fulfils an advisory role, there are no financial implications directly arising from this report. Any activities referenced within the report or programme are to be funded from within existing available resources.

Legal Implications

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

RECOMMENDATIONS

10. The Committee is recommended to

- a. consider the contents within the FWP and the member visit programme

DEBORAH DRIFFIELD

Director of Childrens' Social Services.

7th March 2023

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WORK PROGRAMME CORPORATE PARENTING ADVISORY COMMITTEE 2023 -2024– v.1

Topic type	Agenda Item	Agenda topic	Description	Responsible Service Area and Additional Invitees
Committee Date: TBC				
Educational Achievement, Employment & Training	1.	Bright futures update- Traineeship programme	To receive an update on the Bright futures work programme and to make any observations or comments.	Cardiff Commitment / Children Services
	2.	Youth Mentors		Education/ Directorate
	3.	Members Visit (Schools)	Members Visit report presented to the Committee showing	
	4.	Care Leavers report	To receive an update on the Care Leavers service including NEET and Care Leavers as Parents, Care Leavers going to university and entering employment	Children's Services
	5.	Item To be identified by the Committee		
Performance Management	6.	CPAC Dashboard	CPAC Bi-annual review of Dashboard	Children's Services
	7.	Virtual Head Teacher/ Virtual School	To receive an update of the progress made for the Virtual head	Education Directorate

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