

CORPORATE PARENTING ADVISORY COMMITTEE

24 MAY 2016

Present: County Councillor Lent(Chairperson)
County Councillors De'Ath, Merry, Sanders and White

83 : APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies were received from Councillor Evans.

84 : DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

No declarations of interest were received.

85 : MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting of 1 March 2016 were agreed as a correct record and signed by the Chairperson.

86 : LOOKED AFTER CHILDREN'S TRAINEESHIP SCHEME ANNUAL REPORT

The public were excluded from the meeting for the presentation provided by the trainee/apprentices in accordance with paragraph 12 of Part(s) 4 and 5 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972.

The Chair welcomed Nicola Wood, Looked After Children's Traineeship Co-ordinator to the meeting, and two young people currently employed by the Council on the scheme.

Members were provided with a presentation by Nicola and the two young people, who gave an account of their experiences of the scheme.

The Chair invited questions, comments and discussion from Members:

- There is to be greater focus on referrals in respect of minority groups as there is a lack of diversity.
- As a result of focus group work that has been done a request has been made by the young people that the words 'Looked After Children' be removed from the scheme title.
- There needs to be greater follow up/support of those involved in the scheme to ensure that they remain on the scheme as whilst, to date there has been 73 referrals, only half have actually engaged in the process. A protocol for appropriate referral is currently being developed, to consider whether referrals are made on the basis of need, of first come first served or older young people. However, it is also important that the needs of the business are also met.
- Interviews are scheduled for June to recruit a support worker, some of those involved in the traineeship will be on the interviewing panel;

- There is to be an online launch of the traineeship scheme towards the end of the year and work is ongoing to create an App which can link with the My Planner App.
- Approaches have been made to other services, for example Shared Regulatory Service, although whilst feedback was positive initially the scheme did not fulfil their requirements.
- Whilst approaches have been made to the City Operations Directorate, in particular Waste Management, and an offer to outline the scheme to the Trades Union, no positive response has been received.

The Chair thanked Nicola Wood and the trainees/apprentices for their attendance, their presentation and for answering Members questions.

RESOLVED: To note the content of the report and the presentation provided.

87 : REGULATION 32 REPORT

This item was not for publication in accordance with paragraph 12 of Part(s) 4 & 5 of the Local Government Act 1972.

Debbie Martin-Jones was in attendance to present the report and to answer Members questions.

RESOLVED: To note the information contained in the Regulation 32 Report and for a letter to be sent to staff at Crosslands Children's Home acknowledging their continued support of children in their care.

88 : EDUCATION MATTERS

The Chair welcomed Nicola Holder (Acting LACE Co-ordinator) and Rosie Walsh (Youth Mentor for Looked after Children to the meeting. Members were provided with a presentation of work undertaken by the Looked After Children in Education Team ('LACE'), the funding for Looked After Children, attainment data, and designated teacher training days.

The Chairperson invited questions, comments and discussion from Members:

- Members were advised that schools are now able to apply for the Pupil Funding Deprivation Grant themselves. Schools like to bid for a sum of money to be used for training in ELSA and LEGO as opposed to the previous system of funding per child.
- Setting education levels for each child begins with a PEP, there is an expected outcome within a certain time frame. An academic assessment would be carried out and there would be an expected level. Members were concerned about the procedure adopted should there be a differences of opinions between schools and the authority. They were advised that it was important that good working relationships are developed with schools. The virtual tracker does aid that communication as it is provides up to date information which is also accessible to the Challenge Advisors.

RESOLVED: To note the content of the presentation provided.

89 : QUARTER 4 COMPLAINTS AND COMPLIMENTS REPORT 2015-16

The chairperson welcomed Kim Brown (Service Manager, Policy and Performance) to the meeting.

Members were provided with a report covering complaints and representations from 1 January through to 31st March 2016, including a summary of complaints active during that period, details of independent investigations and what has been learned from such complaints, details of ombudsman investigations and any themes emerging during the quarter. A summary of compliments was also provided.

The Chairperson invited questions, comments and discussions from Members:

- Members queried and discussed whether mobile working would have any impact on the cluster of complaints often raised about access to Social Workers and whether, in due course, figures from the 12 months previous to the introduction of mobile working and 12 months after could be obtained to enable Members to assess that query.
- Members referred to paragraph 17 of the report and asked that they be provided with a regular update on previous themes that have emerged and raised by Members.

RESOLVED: To endorse the content of the report and be provided with regular updates about previous thematic issues raised.

90 : INDEPENDENT REVIEWING OFFICERS (IRO) REPORT

The Committee welcomed Natasha James (Service Manager, Safeguarding & Review) to the meeting. The report was presented to Members, the purpose of the report to provide information about the role, function and activity of the IRO service. It was noted that IRO's have specific responsibility to escalate concerns about Looked After Children, through a dispute resolution process which can ultimately lead to the involvement of CAFCASS Cymru considering legal action, if through necessary.

RESOLVED: To note the information contained in the report.

91 : CORPORATE PARENTING ADVISORY COMMITTEE REPORT - DISCUSSION ITEM

Members considered the content of the draft Corporate Parenting Advisory Committee Annual Report and confirmed they had no further comment or observations. The Annual Report would go to Council in June 2016.

92 : DATE OF NEXT MEETING

The next meeting of the Corporate Parenting Advisory Committee is on Tuesday 19 July 2016 2.00 pm.

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