
Out of County Placements - Report of Committee's Task & Finish Group

Reason for the Report

1. . This report enables the Committee to approve the draft report of this Committee's Task & Finish Group, copy attached at **Appendix A**.

Background

2. At its meeting in September 2017 the Committee agreed to undertake a Task & Finish group to investigate 'out of county placements. The Committee agreed the Terms of Reference for the task group:
 - To review the provision of out of county placements, the types of provision, cost and impact on resources
 - To identify gaps in local provision, social services, and education that result in the need to place children out of county.
 - To identify the barriers to providing additional support in Cardiff and the impact on looked after children in being placed outside Cardiff.
 - To consider plans and proposals to provide improved provision and determine the effectiveness of these improvement in addressing Cardiff high levels of out of county provision.
 - To report the findings of the Committee to the Cabinet.
3. Members of the Task & Finish group were:
 - Councillor Lee Bridgeman (Chair)
 - Councillor Dan De'Ath
 - Councillor Heather Joyce

- Councillor Joel Williams (Backbench Councillor)
 - Ms Carol Cobert, Church in Wales Co-optee member.
- 4 The Task Group reviewed the evidence gathered from discussions with Children's Services senior staff, Social Workers, Voices from Care, the Chairman of the Welsh Government Advisory Committee, advice to the Welsh Government from the ADSS, Fostering Network, the Children's Commissioning Consortium Cymru, and Pembrokeshire County Council. The Members also reviewed a number of publications and reports. As a result of the analysis and assessment of the evidence gathered throughout the Inquiry a number of key findings were identified from which a number of recommendations were agreed, as set out in the attached report at **Appendix A**.

Way Forward

- 5 The draft report of the Task & Finish Group, is attached at **Appendix A**. Members' attention is particularly drawn to the recommendations section.
- 6 Members may wish to consider the report, make any amendments and agree whether to approve the report to be considered by the Cabinet.

Legal Implications

- 7 The Scrutiny Committee is empowered to enquire, consider, review and recommend but not making policy decisions. As the recommendations in this report are to consider and review matters there are no direct legal implications. However, legal implications may arise if and when the matters under review are implemented with or without any modifications. Any report with recommendations for decision that goes to Cabinet/Council will set out any legal implications arising from those recommendations. All decisions taken by or on behalf of the Council must (a) be within the legal powers of the Council; (b) comply with any procedural requirement imposed by law; (c) be within the powers of the body or person exercising powers on behalf of the

Council; (d) be undertaken in accordance with the procedural requirements imposed by the Council e.g. Scrutiny Procedure Rules; (e) be fully and properly informed; (f) be properly motivated; (g) be taken having regard to the Council's fiduciary duty to its taxpayers; and (h) be reasonable and proper in all the circumstances.

Financial Implications

- 8 The Scrutiny Committee is empowered to enquire, consider, review and recommend but not making policy decisions. As the recommendations in this report are to consider and review matters there are no direct financial implications at this stage in relation to any of the work programme. However, financial implications may arise if and when the matters under review are implemented with or without any modifications. Any report with recommendations for decision that goes to Cabinet/Council will set out any financial implications arising from those recommendations.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The Committee is recommended to:

- Consider the draft report of the Task and Finish Group, copy attached at **Appendix A.**
- Endorse the report, subject to any comments the Committee may wish to make, for submission to the Cabinet.

Davina Fiore

Director of Governance and Legal Services and Monitoring Officer

1 May 2018