
Voices From Care Cymru: Welsh Government Review of Corporate Parenting

Reasons for the Report

1. The report aims to provide the Committee with an update on Voices From Care Cymru's involvement on Welsh Governments Corporate Parenting work programme

Background

2. Voices From Care Cymru's journey on corporate parenting has been ongoing for the last 10 years. Working with Local Authorities to develop Corporate Parenting pledges, supporting care experienced young people to attend & present to their corporate parenting panels, alongside young people we deliver training to corporate parents and within 4 local authorities we facilitate participation / social action groups.
3. Since 2016 Voices From Care Cymru have been working with Welsh Government on extending the duties of corporate parenting to all public bodies in Wales and for this to be enshrined in legislation.
4. We have received a commitment for Welsh Government that Corporate Parenting will be strengthened in statutory guidance, clarifying roles and responsibilities and extending duties across the public sector.

Moving Forward

5. Over the next year, Welsh Government will be embarking on an extensive programme of work and engagement activity to take forward a new 'refreshed' approach to corporate parenting.
6. The new approach is about doing things differently and to organisations' best abilities including the charter referred to below. Whilst other elements will be about strengthening what is already in place by raising awareness and increasing knowledge about organisations' roles and responsibilities.

Corporate Parenting Charter

7. The consultation will also seek to identify a better and more commonly understood term than 'corporate parenting', and what this could mean for bodies outside of local authorities.
8. Welsh Government and Voices From Care Cymru will engage with care experienced children to identify what corporate parenting means to them and their expectations from the services they routinely engage with. We will look to co-produce a voluntary Charter that organisations can sign up to setting out their commitment and unique offer to care experienced children.
9. This voluntary Charter will enable all stakeholders, across the public and private sector and the devolved and non-devolved spheres, to sign up to a common statement of improved support and action when working with care experienced children.
10. It is anticipated the Charter will allow signatories to describe how they engage with care experienced children and what they propose to do differently or offer in addition to care experienced children in the future.

Strengthening Legislation

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

This will be achieved by:

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

Corporate Parenting task & finish group

12. Consisting of Welsh Government representatives, care experienced young people and sector representatives, this task and finish group will advise on the extension of corporate parenting principals to public bodies in Wales.

Supporting consultations

13. Working with Welsh Government partners and care experienced young people to co-produce a Corporate Parenting Charter for Wales. This charter will enable all stakeholders, across the public and private sector and the devolved and non-devolved spheres, to sign up to a common statement of improved support and action when working with care experienced children.

14. It is anticipated the Charter will allow signatories to describe how they engage with care experienced children and what they propose to do differently or offer in addition to care experienced children in the future. We will be work with Welsh Government to support national conversation and public engagement on corporate parenting at awareness raising/consultation events to ensure young people's perspective and views are heard. Dates have yet to be set for the working group or young person consultations.

Partnership Working: Cardiff & Voices From Care Cymru

15. Voices From Care Cymru would welcome support during the consultation phase on Corporate Parenting. Though involvement in the national conversation, young person's consultation and potentially the task and finish group.

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

17. Voices From Care Cymru are developing a 'Guide to Growing up in Care' Padlet, an online information resource, for care experienced young people created by care experienced young people. There are opportunities for young people to become involved as guide editors who will help create the content. This is due to go live in January 2022.

Voices From Care 'Care Experienced Symbol'

This symbol represents the power of connectivity & positive relationships for care experienced people in Wales.



Mae'r symbol hwn yn cynrychioli pŵer cysylltedd a pherthnasoedd cadarnhaol i bobl a phrofiad gofal yng Nghymru.

By wearing this knot you proudly stand as a care experienced person or an ally who is committed to empowering care experienced children and young people from across Wales to connect together, claim their rights and lead change.



VOICES FROM CARE CYMRU

Trwy wisgo'r cwlmwm yma rydych chi'n falch o sefyll fel person â phrofiad gofal neu gynghreiriad sy'n ymrwymo i rymuso plant a phobl ifanc â phrofiad gofal o bob rhan o Gymru i gysylltu gyda'i gilydd, honni eu hawliau ac arwain newid.

18. Voices From Care Cymru have been working on developing a symbol that care experienced young people and their allies can wear to show their commitment to empowering the voices care experienced children and young people. Current role out is limited, the pin badge is being currently being distributed to young people through our membership packs.

Financial Implications

19. The financial resources used in working with Voices from Cymru and Welsh Government are found from within the overall existing budgetary allocation of the Care Directorate

Legal Implications

17. Whilst there are no legal implications at the time of this report, there are likely to be when any changes referenced in paragraph 11, “strengthening legislation” come into force.

RECOMMENDATION

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

DEBORAH DRIFFIELD
DIRETOR OF CHILDRENS SERVICES
14 JULY 2021