

MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE CORPORATE PARENTING CABINET COMMITTEE
HELD IN COMMITTEE ROOMS 1/2/3, CIVIC OFFICES, ANGEL STREET, BRIDGEND,
ON TUESDAY, 7 SEPTEMBER 2010 AT 4.30PM

Present: -

Councillor A E Davies - Chairperson

Councillor M E J Nott - Leader
Councillor D Sage - Deputy Leader
Councillor H J David - Cabinet Member - Resources
Councillor L C Morgan - Cabinet Member - Wellbeing
Councillor J C Spanswick - Cabinet Member – Communities

Invitees -

Councillors M W Butcher
Councillor K S Hunt
Councillor R D Jenkins
Councillor M Thomas
Councillor K J Watts

Officers

H Anthony - Corporate Director - Children
L Harper - Head of Safeguarding and Family Support
C Turner - Interim Head of Safeguarding and Family Support
(designate)
V Watkins - Principal Officer - Corporate Parenting
S Pryce - Head of Regeneration and Development
P Williams - Human Resources Officer
P Gavigan - Principal Solicitor - Litigation
G P Jones - Democratic Services Manager

67 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies were received from the following Officers for the reasons stated:

A Harris - Other Council business
L Fradd - Holiday
M Shepherd - Prior Commitment

68 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

None.

69 MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

RESOLVED: That the minutes of the meeting held on 13 July 2010 be approved as a true and accurate record.

70 ROTA VISITING UPDATE

The Head of Safeguarding and Family Support presented a report which provided the Committee with information relating to the rota visiting to Safeguarding and Family Support Service establishments.

She explained that rota visiting allowed Councillor's to contribute to the safeguarding of our children, young people and vulnerable adults to ensure that the quality of care provided is appropriate. Members undertake visits to the children's and adult's social services establishments in pairs and provide written reports for noting or action. The appendix attached to the report, detailed the visits carried out to the four children's establishments between January 2010 and July 2010 together with a summary of the comments made. Out of 28 possible visits to the four children's establishments between those dates, 18 were carried out.

Some Members commented that they were disappointed with the details of the visits that had been provided in the appendix. Concerns were expressed regarding the consistency of visits being made to the Baker's Way and Pant Morfa establishments and the lack of detail in the comments made by Members undertaking the visits. They referred to the report regarding Rota Visits that was presented to the Committee in March that confirmed the importance and continued commitment that was required by members in carrying out these visits. It was suggested that the possibility of enhancing member ownership for the visits would be improved by having dedicated members for each establishment. This may ensure that visits were more consistent and that establishments were able to be visited on a more regular basis.

The Deputy Leader responded that changes to the process may be needed to continue to improve the service but that the Committee should be aware that the 20 councillors on the rota schedule, also visited other residential establishments within the borough. He stated that he and the Cabinet Member for Resources had visited residential establishments and they had all been excellent. If any concerns had been raised during these visits they would have been referred to officers for further investigation. Members also commented on the need for report writing training to assist them when completing the feedback from their visits.

It was proposed that Officers look into the possibility of providing guidelines to members regarding appropriate questions to ask children and young people when visiting a residence. It was requested that the proforma be enhanced to provide a "tick box structure" to guide members of the things to check and report on during their visit. Further training would be beneficial to reduce the significant differences in the processes carried out by those members undertaking rota visits. Further work could be carried out on this matter and reported back to the Cabinet Committee as necessary.

Members then queried the best method for the Corporate Parenting Champions from each of the Scrutiny Committees to report back to their relevant committees. Options were discussed which included have the minutes of the Corporate Parenting Cabinet Committee placed on the Scrutiny Committee agenda for noting and the Champion could verbally respond if there were any further queries.

RESOLVED: . The Cabinet-Committee Corporate Parenting:

1. Considered the information provided in the report and noted its contents.

2. Requested that a review of the Rota visiting process relating to the Children's Residential Service be undertaken and reported back to the Cabinet Committee in March 2011.

71 PROPOSED INFORMAL FORWARD WORK PROGRAMME

The Head of Safeguarding and Family Support presented a report which sought approval of the proposed Informal Forward Work Programme covering the period September 2010 to March 2011. She reviewed the programme and outlined the contents of the programme.

The Chairperson commented that there were items that had been previously agreed to be considered that had not been included in the programme. She also requested that an item relating to domestic abuse and looked after children from the perspective of victims becoming perpetrators be included for consideration in the programme.

The Head of Safeguarding and Family Support suggested that other items could be considered such as updates from the Looked After Children (LAC) project which was looking at the costs of maintaining children whilst in care. It was also suggested that items regarding the Recruitment of Carers, the process of Residence Orders when planning for permanence and the Commissioning of Services should be added.

The Chairperson then informed the Committee that this was the last meeting for the Head of Safeguarding and Family Support before she retired. The Committee expressed their thanks for the hard work that she had undertaken with Children's Services in the last few years and wished her well in the future. They also welcomed Colin Turner who would be the Interim Head of Safeguarding & Family Support who would be taking on the responsibility for the Committee in the future.

RESOLVED: The Cabinet Committee Corporate Parenting considered the proposed informal forward work programme, and requested that further work be carried out to provide more detail on the items that were to be presented to the Cabinet Committee.

The meeting closed at 5.35pm.