

MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE CORPORATE PARENTING CABINET COMMITTEE
HELD IN COMMITTEE ROOMS 1/2/3, CIVIC OFFICES, ANGEL STREET, BRIDGEND,
ON TUESDAY 5 APRIL 2011 AT 3.45PM

Present:

Councillor A E Davies - Cabinet Member - Children and Young People

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

Invitees:

Councillor R D Jenkins
Councillor M Thomas
Councillor K Watts

Officers:

H Anthony - Corporate Director - Children
C Turner - Interim Head of Safeguarding and Family Support
S Hughes - Legal Officer
A Bowen - Group Manager - Communities
S Driscoll - Team Manager - After Care Service
M A Galvin - Senior Democratic Services Officer - Committees

89 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

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

Councillor K R T Deere - Holiday
S Pryce - Other Council business
V Jones - Other Council business

The Chairperson confirmed that the Leader would be arriving late, as he was attending the funeral of a friend of the family.

90 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

None.

91 MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

RESOLVED: That the minutes of a meeting of the Corporate Parenting Cabinet Committee dated 8 February 2011 be approved as a true and accurate record.

92 POST 16 SERVICE

The Corporate Director - Children submitted a report, the purpose of which was to outline the proposals contained within the attached Appendix 1, "Designing the

Future”, to develop a universal Post 16 – 21 Service for all children and young people in need of support living within the Bridgend County Borough.

The Chairperson introduced the Team Manager - After Care Service to the meeting to speak upon the report.

He explained that the Local Authority were aiming, through collaborative working with partners, to align and integrate service provision to meet the multiple needs of vulnerable young people in Bridgend, for example NEETS, LAC/CARE Leavers and homeless young people.

The Team Manager - After Care Service confirmed that the major objective of “Designing the Future”, was to address the above issues by the formulation of a specialist integrated team for young people aged 16 - 21, in order to more effectively and efficiently meet their needs by the method of a ‘one-step’ single point of contact.

This proposal would also contribute to forging more robust links with important corporate themes and initiatives, and focus upon improved integrated working between relevant teams, departments and agencies that currently support young people.

The Team Manager - After Care Service explained that to date, preliminary discussions had taken place with colleagues in the Children and Young People’s Partnership, the Youth Service, the 14 - 19 Network and the Housing Department, from which the document ‘Designing the Future’ had been drafted.

Should the plans outlined in the report come into fruition and be fully realised, the Team Manager - After Care explained that this would lead to an improvement in the co-ordination of front line services for the above category of young people, and reduce fragmented working and duplication of work.

It was important he added, that young people who perhaps had complex needs of the type outlined in Paragraph 4.3 of the report, were afforded the opportunity of a high standard of advice and support to assist them in dealing with their problems, and help them through transition from after care or looked after children into living independently.

Paragraph 4.5 of the report then outlined the main aims of the proposed new service.

The Team Manager - After Care Service advised the Cabinet Committee, that in order to develop and progress the initiative, further consultation work was required to include the design of the new service and the development of a revised structure, which would then be undertaken within realistic time frames and be project managed.

The document advised that support from the key agencies outlined on page 7 of ‘Designing the Future’ would support the different groups of young people to be supported.

The Team Manager - After Care Service advised, that a similar model as the one proposed in Bridgend, had been adopted in Torfaen with some success.

The Group Manager – Communities supported the proposal, which she felt would assist vulnerable young people such as the homeless.

The Team Manager - After Care Service confirmed in response to a question, that finance to support the model would come from sharing of resources presently provided separately, through relevant organisations supporting it collaboratively.

It was suggested that the Prison and Probation Services and Youth Offenders Team be added to the list of consultees involved in taking the initiative further forward, and Officers agreed in principle to this proposal.

- RESOLVED:
- (1) That the Committee considered the report and noted the progress that has been made with regard to the initial development of a Post 16 Service.
 - (2) That the Committee approves the continued development of the project to include consultation taking into account the views across a range of potential partners and services.
 - (3) That Committee agreed that a further report be submitted in six months time providing an update on progress with this initiative.

93 REGULATED SERVICES INSPECTION

The Corporate Director - Children submitted a report, which provided the Cabinet Committee with an inaugural overview of the regulatory inspections within Safeguarding and Family Support Services.

The aims of the report were to inform of the frequency and conduct of inspections, and any outcomes that arose from these.

The Interim Head of Safeguarding and Family Support, explained that Authorities who provided fostering and adoption or residential service for children and young people, were subject to a range of required inspections by the CSSIW, as regulating body.

He explained that within the last 12 months all the authorities premises which provided regulatory services had been inspected, and each of these inspections had resulted in positive feedback being given by the CSSIW, in the form of reports.

The Interim Head of Safeguarding and Family Support, referred Members to the report, which included an overview of the outcomes of the inspections on the following, including a summary of findings for the service, good practice recommendations, and any requirements stipulated by the CSSIW:-

- Bridgend Foster Care
- Bakers Way
- Cartrefle
- Maesteg
- Pant Morfa
- The Adoption Service
- Permanency (planning for Looked After Children)

The Interim Head of Safeguarding and Family Support, advised Members that the report on Foster Care made for good reading, as no requirements had been put forward for the service, and only two good practice recommendations.

The Deputy Leader wished it placed on record that he was happy to see not only stability in Safeguarding and Family Support Services, but also continued improvement, which was key for such a crucial service area of the Authority.

The Chairperson concluded debate on this item, by congratulating the staff who had played their part in supporting the services subject of the inspections.

RESOLVED: That the Cabinet Committee noted the report.

94 ROTA VISITING UPDATE

The Corporate Director - Children submitted a report, that provided information to the Cabinet Committee following rota visits conducted by Members to Safeguarding and Family Support Service establishments.

The Interim Head of Safeguarding and Family Support, advised that Members usually visited establishments in pairs and then compiled written reports for noting, outlining any points that may require actioning by residential staff at the premises or senior offices responsible for policy, procedural and practice guidance. He stressed the importance of Members continued involvement in rota visits as part of their role as corporate parents for and on behalf of the Authority, and to ensure the quality of care being provided at homes was of the required standard.

The report advised that as part of a review of the rota visiting process, two member development sessions had been organised recently, to which Members involved in the rota visiting programme were invited.

Attached at Appendix 1 to the report, was a schedule of visits undertaken by Members in respect of the four children's establishments since April 2010 to the present, together with a summary of the comments made by them after compiling reports after their visit.

The Interim Head of Safeguarding and Family Support, advised that the next Rota Visiting Programme would commence in April 2011.

In terms of some of the comments made by Members as a result of inspections carried out last year, the Leader considered that these in future, be curtailed to issues that specifically relate to the welfare of children and young people being supported at the establishment, rather than for any unnecessary periphery matters.

In terms of future reports to the Cabinet Committee on rota visits, a Committee Invitee recommended that a further column be provided in the table outlining summary of comments, specifying any actions that need to be taken at an establishment, should a Member visiting the premises consider these to be required.

It was suggested that Members who were involved in rota visits be invited to the Cabinet Committee, to discuss first hand feedback from their visits.

It was further suggested that an invitation also be extended to young people at these establishments to meet with Members and Officers, but perhaps in a less formal setting such as an organised event rather than a Committee meeting.

A Member of the Committee asked if these young people had any alternative organisations to contact, to share with for example, any issues of concern they may have.

The Interim Head of Safeguarding and Family Support confirmed that there were, in the form of Childline and in Independent Advocacy Group that the Council commissioned the services of.

RESOLVED: That the Cabinet Committee considered the information provided in the report.

95 INFORMAL FORWARD WORK PROGRAMME - APRIL 2011 TO JULY 2012

The Corporate Director - Children submitted a report which sought approval of the proposed Informal Forward Work Programme (IFWP) for the above mentioned period.

The Interim Head of Safeguarding and Family Support, advised that the Programme attached to the report, included a new Item 14 entitled "Head of Service Annual 'Report submitted to WAG' - Annual Council Reporting Framework".

In respect of Item 18, "Member visits to Residential Children's Homes", the Chairperson suggested, in line with discussions on the previous agenda item, that rota visitors be invited to a future meeting to give Members feedback and that this also be extended to service users.

In terms of the September meeting, she asked that an item be placed on the IFWP, entitled "Examination results for Looked After Children", with the report to include comparable data with national averages.

She finally stated that it would be useful if Members of the Cabinet Committee could also be updated as and when the need arises, with dates of up and coming events such as the LAC Achievements Awards on 15 April 2011, and marketing events for foster carers.

- RESOLVED:
- (1) That the Cabinet Committee approved the items in the Informal Forward Work Programme (IFWP) attached to the report.
 - (2) That a further Item be added to the IFWP for the meeting scheduled in September 2011, 'Examination results for Looked After Children'.
 - (3) That Members who undertake rota visits be invited to the Cabinet Committee in November 2011, to provide feedback on their visits and that consideration be given to extending this invitation to young Service Users.

The meeting closed at 4.50pm.