

MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE CORPORATE PARENTING CABINET COMMITTEE
HELD IN COMMITTEE ROOM 1/2/3, CIVIC OFFICES, ANGEL STREET, BRIDGEND,
ON TUESDAY 15 NOVEMBER 2011 AT 4.40PM

Present:

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 P J White - Cabinet Member - Communities

Invitees:

Councillor K R T Deere
Councillor M Thomas
Councillor K S Hunt

Officers:

C Turner - Interim Head of Safeguarding and Family Support
S Price - Head of Regeneration and Development
M A Galvin - Senior Democratic Services Officer - Committees

112 ELECTION OF CHAIRPERSON

In the absence of the Chairperson and Cabinet Member - Children and Young People, Members unanimously

RESOLVED: That the Cabinet Member - Resources be elected Chairperson for the meeting.

113 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from the following Member and Officer:-

Councillor A E Davies - Hospital appointment
H Anthony - Other Council Business

114 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

None.

115 MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

RESOLVED: That the minutes of a meeting of the Corporate Parenting Cabinet Committee dated 20 September 2011, be approved as a true and accurate record.

116 INTERIM REPORT ON QUALIFICATIONS AND PERFORMANCE ACHIEVED BY LOOKED AFTER CHILDREN (LAC) FOR ACADEMIC YEAR 2012/11

The Corporate Director - Children submitted a report, that informed Committee of the progress made over the past three years in relation to qualifications achieved by LAC, with particular reference to 2010/11.

The Head of Safeguarding and Family Support introduced the report, and confirmed that for quite a number of years there had been some concern expressed by local authorities and associated partners regarding educational opportunities for children looked after in the care system compared to those that were not in care.

In terms of BCBC, he advised that work was ongoing in this area with a number of initiatives having been put in place. The Education Department had in place a team that looked after the needs of Looked After Children, headed by a Looked After Children Education Officer. This team operated a comprehensive looked after system that accounted for every looked after child, each of which had a Personal Education Plan with the aim being to give these young people every support and opportunity to attain vocational and educational qualifications.

The Head of Safeguarding and Family Support, explained that the Service was required to provide data to the Welsh Government, to evidence its performance against a number of key indicators.

The Looked After Children in Education (i.e. LACE) Team had become well established he confirmed, and they worked with schools, social workers and carers on issues relating to barriers of achievement for Bridgend's Looked After Children, with a view to helping them to fulfill the objectives set out in Bridgend's Children and Young People's Plan and other relevant policies.

The Head of Safeguarding and Family Support then referred Members to Paragraph 4.1 of the report, which contained details of the number of Looked After Children and their attainments within the last year, as well as a comparison to similar achievements and attainments made in recent years. He also referred to Members to the SEGLAC Grant that was available for local authorities for the purpose of improving the learning and well-being of Looked After Children, that was available up until the end of August 2014.

Paragraph 4.2 of the report outlined tables that provided further information in relation to key indicators of Looked After Children educational achievements and performance, whilst Paragraph 4.3 then expanded upon a number of other successful initiatives that were being pursued through various universities amongst others, by the LACE Team to improve outcomes for Looked After Children. Plans were also underway to arrange a ceremony for the 2012 Looked After Children's achievements next March, the Head of Safeguarding and Family Support added. He added that Members would be able to attend this event, should they so wish.

Finally, the Head of Safeguarding and Family Support confirmed that the Education Authority were still awaiting the final report from the Wales Audit Office on an Education Study previously conducted, which when received would give an assessment of how well the Authority were meeting the needs of its Looked After Children and focussing on areas of specific need to improve its overall performance.

The acting Chairperson enquired if there was any data that could be shared at a future meeting, that reflected progress upon an individual from the time they entered the care system up until the time they left.

The Head of Safeguarding and Family Support advised that this would be difficult to produce for all 350 children in care due to limited resources, however, he confirmed that a sample of case studies reflecting this data could be provided in due course.

Members wished it placed on record, the continued support committed to young people in care that the Local Education Authority were providing, as this was invaluable at such an early period of their lives.

RESOLVED: The Corporate Parenting Cabinet Committee noted the report on educational attainment and outcomes for Looked After Children 2010-2011.

117 **ROTA VISITING UPDATE**

The Head of Safeguarding and Family Support presented a report which provided information to the Committee on rota visits to Safeguarding and Family Support establishments.

Attached at Appendix 1 to the report, was a schedule of visits to the four children's establishments between April and September 2011, together with a summary of the comments made following such visits.

The Head of Safeguarding and Family Support confirmed that the next rota visiting programme was due in May 2012, and that Members would be contacted to invite them to participate in this.

An Invitee noted he had visited Bakers Way Home in the summer, however, that was not evidenced in the Appendix. The Head of Safeguarding and Family Support confirmed he would look into this issue and in turn contact the Member accordingly.

The Head of Safeguarding and Family Support stated that he could not over stress the importance of Members visiting these premises, particularly as it allowed a point of contact for service users that was over and above that of the staff at the home, and it gave them an opportunity of expressing to persons outside the Home how they were managing there.

RESOLVED: The Committee considered and noted the information contained in the report.

118 **INFORMAL FORWARD WORK PROGRAMME - OCT 2011 TO APRIL 2012**

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

The Head of Safeguarding and Family Support confirmed that the topics detailed in Appendix 1 to the report, had previously been accepted in the IFWP, but there were two additional items to be presented to the January 2012 meeting, and these were outlined in 4.1 of the report.

The Acting Chairperson asked the Officer if the findings from the inspection and assessment of the Adoption Service could be shared with Committee at a future meeting.

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The Head of Safeguarding and Family Support advised that this topic, to include current performance levels of the service, would be subject of a Presentation to all Members next March, and that a report could be presented to the March 2012 meeting, subject to further minor modifications being made in terms of reporting certain other items included in the Informal Forward Work Programme.

RESOLVED: That the Corporate Parenting Cabinet Committee approved the proposed Informal Forward Work Programme.

The meeting closed at 5.23pm.