

BRIDGEND COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL

INAUGURAL MEETING OF THE CORPORATE PARENTING CABINET COMMITTEE

THURSDAY 27th NOVEMBER 2008

REPORT OF THE CORPORATE DIRECTOR - CHILDREN

1. Purpose of Report.

1.1 To establish the working arrangements of the Corporate Parenting Cabinet Committee, in particular:

- Terms of Reference
- Invitees
- Forward Work Programme
- Review

2. Connection to Corporate Improvement Plan / Other Corporate Priority.

2.1 Corporate parenting responsibilities relate to the Council's priority themes of "Children Today, Adults Tomorrow" and "Creating Learning Communities".

3. Background.

3.1 A Corporate Parenting Task and Finish Group was established by the Social Services and Housing Overview and Scrutiny Committee in December 2005. Its main objective was to determine, through investigation, the extent to which Councillors in Bridgend could be described as "effective Corporate Parents". A progress report was presented to the Scrutiny Committee in December 2006, together with a draft Corporate Parenting Policy (Appendix 1).

3.2 The draft Corporate Parenting Policy was endorsed by the Social Services and Housing Overview and Scrutiny Committee as a basis for consultation with stakeholders, including children and young people. A survey of elected members was undertaken which demonstrated their clear commitment to fulfilling the corporate parent role. Presentations were also made by Officers to the Committee.

3.3 In December 2007, an officer report on corporate parenting responsibilities (Appendix 2) was presented to the Scrutiny Committee to progress the work began by the Task and Finish Group. It was agreed that further work was required to reinvigorate the issues and for the new administration to take up the challenge, following the May elections.

3.4 A Corporate Parenting Cabinet Committee comprising all Members of Cabinet was established by Cabinet on November 4th 2008.

4. Arrangements for the Committee

Terms of Reference

- 4.1 The Cabinet Committee will initially meet bi-monthly.
- 4.2 The outlined terms of reference of the Cabinet Committee, as agreed by Cabinet on November 4th, are:
- to ensure that looked after children are seen as a priority by the whole of the Authority and by the Children and Young People's Partnership;
 - to seek the views of children and young people in shaping and influencing the parenting they receive;
 - to ensure that appropriate policies, opportunities and procedures are in place;
 - to monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of the Authority in its role as corporate parent against Welsh Assembly guidance.

The Committee may wish to consider the need to expand these terms of reference to clarify their scope, as part of the Forward Work Programme. A report to Cabinet will be required to effect changes.

Invitees

- 4.3 The Committee may be assisted by the attendance of the following standing invitees:
- 5 corporate parenting "champions", one "champion" representing each of the Overview and Scrutiny Committees
 - 1 representative of the Youth Council
 - 1 representative of looked after children
 - Corporate Directors and/or Heads of Service from each of the 4 Directorates
- 4.4 The Committee may also invite Members, members of the public and other stakeholders who may assist with specific items of business.
- 4.5 Invitees may facilitate:
- The involvement of the whole of the Authority in developing and providing opportunities for looked after children and young people and care leavers;
 - Raised awareness of Members' roles as Corporate Parents
 - Increased knowledge and understanding by members of the issues involved in Corporate Parenting
 - The input of Overview and Scrutiny Committee Members

Forward Work Programme

- 4.6 An initial forward work programme may include:
- The production of a corporate parenting policy statement
 - Opportunities for work experience and trainee employment within BCBC

- Provision of Support for Care-Leavers to include Housing
- The development of a charter for Looked After Children to include entitlements
- Implementation monitoring

4.7 In addition, in order to inform members, relevant officers may provide information reports and presentations on specified topics to be agreed as part of the Forward Work Programme, and may also include topics such as:

- Profile of the Looked After Children (LAC) population (e.g. by age, gender, placement type)
- Analysis of expenditure/budget for LAC
- Transition services
- Performance Indicators (only on LAC)
- The Integrated Children's Services (ICS) software and its link with quality of care management for LAC
- Other issues identified within the CSSIW Report and the BCBC Action Plan.

Review

4.8 An evaluation and review of the structure, terms of reference and effectiveness of the Corporate Parenting Committee, will take place in July 2009, with full involvement of the Scrutiny process. Details of the Review will be agreed by Cabinet members, and Scrutiny Officers and members.

5. Effect upon Policy Framework & Procedure Rules.

5.1 There is no change to the policy Framework or Procedure Rules

6. Legal Implications.

6.1 There are no legal implications.

7. Financial Implications.

7.1 There are no direct financial implications.

8. Recommendation.

The Cabinet Committee is asked to:

- determine invitees as suggested in paragraph 4.3 above and if so determined :-;
- request Scrutiny Officers to arrange representation from Scrutiny Committees;
- request the Head of Safeguarding and Family Support to provide a representative of Looked After Children to assist the Committee;
- determine that a representative of the Youth Council be sought to assist the Committee;

- (v) determine that a detailed suggested Forward Work Programme be presented to the next meeting of the Committee.

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27th November 2008

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Background documents

Appendices

1. Draft Corporate Parenting Policy
2. Corporate Parenting – Making it happen – December 2007
3. Letter dated 29th September 2008 from Gwenda Thomas, Deputy Minister for Social Services