

BRIDGEND COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL

REPORT TO CORPORATE PARENTING CABINET COMMITTEE

15 SEPTEMBER 2009

REPORT OF THE CORPORATE DIRECTOR - CHILDREN

PROGRESS ON DEVELOPING A CORPORATE WORK EXPERIENCE SCHEME

1. Purpose of Report.

1.1 To update the Committee on progress and to provide further information in relation to corporate schemes for work experience and apprenticeships for care leavers.

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

2.1 This report links with the theme "Young Voices", one of the new corporate priorities for 2009/10.

3. Background.

3.1 As corporate parents, the Authority can use its resources to support care leavers to gain work experience and apprenticeships. The Corporate Parenting Cabinet Committee's forward work programme places emphasis on the need to support care leavers into further education, employment or training.

3.2 The Authority has existing schemes which provide work experience and opportunities for all children who are still at school, including further opportunities for young people in their last year at school who are not participating in the mainstream curriculum, details of these schemes have previously been included in a report to the Committee at its meeting on the 14th July 2009. However, none of these existing schemes explicitly support looked after children and young people and care leavers.

* 3.3 A corporate protocol, appended at 1, is in place and a review of the protocol will be undertaken.

4. Current situation / proposal.

4.1 The Authority is currently piloting an apprenticeship scheme, following agreement with Members and the Building Maintenance Service: the Building Maintenance Service having identified an acute succession planning issue. This apprenticeship scheme is now being actioned and will, in future, be evaluated. The Authority's Corporate Parenting Officer and After Care Team Manager have met with a representative from the Building Maintenance Service to discuss the scheme and to make the Service aware of the Authority's corporate parenting role. While places on the scheme are awarded on merit, the Service is now fully aware of the Authority's corporate parenting role.

4.2 A more detailed exploration of introducing apprenticeships across other services will be progressed by the Transformation & Development Officer during 2009/10. Funding issues are particularly challenging as a substantial investment would be

necessary to launch an apprenticeship scheme. The work experience scheme currently offered by the Authority does not have funding implications for the Authority.

It is proposed that further information on apprenticeship schemes be obtained and reported back to Committee following officers and the Lead Member for Children for the Authority meeting with officers from Rhondda Cynon Taff, where a scheme has been in place for some time.

It is essential to recognise that all departments of the Authority need to work together in their corporate parenting role to achieve the benefits that the Committee is looking for in relation to its care leavers.

5. Effect upon Policy Framework& Procedure Rules.

5.1 None

6. Legal Implications.

6.1 None.

7. Financial Implications.

7.1 Individual placement support costs not yet quantified.

7.2 Investment into apprenticeship schemes, not yet quantified.

8. Recommendation.

8.1 That the Committee notes the progress made to date and endorses the need for further progress towards placing looked after children in years 10 and 11 at school, and care leavers, in suitable work experience situations.

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Background documents

Work Experience Report presented at the (this report went to Corporate Parenting Cabinet Committee 14th July, 2009)