

**CABINET COMMITTEE CORPORATE PARENTING - WEDNESDAY, 6 MARCH 2019**

**MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE CABINET COMMITTEE CORPORATE PARENTING HELD IN COMMITTEE ROOMS 2/3, CIVIC OFFICES ANGEL STREET BRIDGEND CF31 4WB ON WEDNESDAY, 6 MARCH 2019 AT 10:00**

Present

Councillor PJ White – Chairperson

MC Clarke	N Clarke	HJ David	DK Edwards
J Gebbie	T Giffard	CA Green	D Patel
CE Smith	CA Webster	HM Williams	RE Young

Apologies for Absence

RM James

Officers:

Susan Cooper	Corporate Director - Social Services & Wellbeing
Nicola Echanis	Head of Education & Family Support
Julie Ellams	Democratic Services Officer - Committees
Michael Pitman	Business & Administrative Apprentice
Elizabeth Walton-James	Group Manager Safeguarding and Quality Assurance

190. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

None

191. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

RESOLVED: That the minutes of the meeting of the 10/01/2019 be approved as a true and accurate record.

192. CHILDREN'S SOCIAL CARE - UNIVERSITY SUPPORT PACKAGES FOR CARE LEAVERS - POLICY

The Group Manager Safeguarding and Quality Assurance presented a report on University Support Packages for Care Leavers including what it provided. She explained that the Cabinet Secretary for Education published the Diamond Report which proposed a costed package of recommendations for the future funding of higher education in Wales. This was agreed by Welsh Government and had been implemented during the academic year of 2018-19

She also explained to Members that the local authority was currently supporting 9 care leavers through University on various courses including teaching, accountancy and a Masters in Youth Justice. She said that this was good news and that this number was estimated to increase over the next few years.

A Member commented on the policy stating she was very pleased that the practice that the authority had followed for many years had been put into policy.

The Leader welcomed the report suggested that a review be undertaken in the future to ensure that the support was as effective and the process streamlined as it could be.

The Group Manager Safeguarding and Quality Assurance agreed that a review of the implementation in 6 – 12 months on the whole process would be beneficial to keep track

of the progress of current and new care leavers. The review could also ensure that the policy was making an impact.

A Member stated that she welcomed the policy and thought it was a good idea but had a query on the overall cost to the authority. The Corporate Director - Social Services & Wellbeing said that she could provide Members with that data following the meeting.

Another Member said that while she agreed it should align with the budget, she did not believe there should be a budget cap on what could be given to the care leavers.

The Corporate Director - Social Services & Wellbeing explained to the Member that each person was evaluated on an individual basis but reassured that there was no cap on what could be given. She did agree that there would need to be a monitoring process to ensure there was a responsible amount of money being spent.

A Member asked if support was given to students to apply for grants. The Corporate Director - Social Services & Wellbeing explained that there was help with applying for the grants that were available to them as well as locating other information on funding the students can apply for.

Another Member endorsed the policy but queried who was responsible for the Equalities Impact Assessment as the previous officer was no longer with the authority. The leader explained that the Consultation Engagement and Equalities Manager would be responsible for monitoring.

The Cabinet Member Education and Regeneration asked if there were any views on students working part time alongside their studies. The Corporate Director - Social Services & Wellbeing said it was up to the individual and there were no restrictions in place. They would do everything they could to continue advice and support for them so long as work did not interfere with their studies.

A Member asked if a procedure was in place for care leavers studying at university who were thinking about withdrawing from their studies either to pursue another career or because they felt University was not right for them.

The Corporate Director - Social Services & Wellbeing explained that the main concern was to ensure they are getting all the support that they need in University from the authority as well as the University. If the student still felt that they wanted to leave University then they would provide support for them and ensure that they have the information and guidance to pursue an alternative career.

The Leader said that he felt it would be a great idea to speak to successful care leavers and for them to give their experiences and positive story to current or new care leavers that were thinking of pursuing University. This may help to give them confidence in themselves as well as confidence in the emotional and financial support that may be available to them. The Group Manager Safeguarding and Quality Assurance advised Members that there was already a mentoring service in place but would be happy to develop the service further and welcomed any thoughts on this to be presented during the review.

The Cabinet Member Education and Regeneration stressed that information regarding the policy details needed to be made aware to the public so that misinformation was not spread but also to provide future care leavers with more knowledge and consequently more motivation to pursue University.

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The Corporate Director - Social Services & Wellbeing advised the Cabinet Member that they would link in with schools in County Borough to help promote the policy. She also said that adding the policy to the business plan would be beneficial and looks to do this in the future.

She then provided Members with information about a development in regards to a framework that was currently in a consultation period. The working group responsible aimed for the framework to provide more data and statistics relating to what was done at each stage of the care leavers' process. The framework was being tested by Swansea Council and Gwynedd Council, both Councils volunteered to trial the framework and hoped to discuss the findings with Welsh Government. Bridgend Council hoped to bring the outcomes of their consultation to this committee.

She also explained to Members why some of the items on the Forward Work Programme (FWP) had not been brought to committee today. She explained that there were still enquires ongoing therefore the reports relating to these items have been pulled from the FWP until further notice. She asked the Committee if there were any items that were scheduled later in the year to be brought forward to the next meeting. The Chair suggested that the FWP could be discussed at the political group meetings and suggestions made from that. The Cabinet Member Wellbeing and Future Generations also suggested that after the group meetings it should be discussed at the Cabinet Committee – Equalities meeting at the end of March so that further suggestions could be made.

RESOLVED: (1) That the Corporate Parenting Committee noted the report

(2) That the Corporate Parenting Committee commented on the policy prior to it being presented to Cabinet.

193. URGENT ITEMS

None