

BRIDGEND COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL

REPORT TO CORPORATE PARENTING CABINET COMMITTEE

13 July 2010

REPORT OF THE CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

The Chairperson has accepted this item as urgent in accordance with Rule 2.4 (e) of the Cabinet Procedure Rules within the Council's Constitution on the basis that the timing of the meeting of the Children and Young People Overview and Scrutiny meeting prevented a report with the Committee's recommendations being available for circulation before the Cabinet meeting in accordance with Rule 5 of the Access to Information Procedure Rules. The reason for urgency is that the directorate needs to progress the work with some urgency as there has already been significant slippage in completing the review. The next meeting of the Cabinet Corporate Parenting Committee is not for another two months which would create a further delay in progressing the next stage of the project and have budgetary implications.

RESIDENTIAL REVIEW

1. Purpose of Report

- 1.1 To present to the Corporate Parenting Cabinet Committee the comments and recommendations of the Children and Young People Overview and Scrutiny Committee made on the 5 July 2010 in relation to the Residential Review.

2. Connection to Corporate Improvement Plan / Other Corporate Priority

- 2.1 The key Corporate Aims and Priorities identified in the Corporate Plan 2009-11 have been embodied in the Overview & Scrutiny Forward Work Programmes. The Overview and Scrutiny Committees engage in review and development of plans, policy or strategies that support the Corporate Priorities.

3. Background

- 3.1 At their meeting on 5 July 2010, the Committee considered a report by the Children's Directorate detailing the Residential Review and its findings in addition to a report which was submitted to the Corporate Parenting Cabinet Committee on June 22 with the following recommendations:

The Cabinet Committee is asked to:

- a) *approve the proposal that Bridgend's residential provision for looked after children is reconfigured to create a complex needs unit and a transition unit, with closure of a third unit, redeploying staff where appropriate to strengthen the reconfigured units and the family support service; and*

b) *notes, if i) above is approved, that implementation will be managed as a project as part of the corporate Supporting Vulnerable Children programme.*

3.2 The Cabinet Committee agreed, in principle, the proposals detailed above, and determined to invite the Children and Young People Overview and Scrutiny Committee to consider the report and offer their comments.

4. Current Situation / Proposal

4.1 As a result of detailed discussions with Officers from the Children's Directorate and the Cabinet Member for Children & Young People, the Scrutiny Committee agreed with the Cabinet Committee's proposed decision. However, Members considered that the Directorate summary and detailed review reports could be strengthened by more clearly presenting the rationale underpinning the identification of the preferred Option.

4.2 The Committee's recommendations to Cabinet were as follows:

- a. *To ensure the reconfiguration of the service proceeds smoothly and is able to be understood by those likely to be affected, the Committee recommend that the argument for the chosen option is made clearer throughout the report, particularly in the formulation of conclusions.*
- b. *In view of the need to best utilise the specialist skills of current staff, the Committee recommends that efforts are made to eliminate the threat of redundancies in favour of redeployment.*
- c. *The Committee recommends that as part of the reconfiguration of the service, appropriate provision is made available for those Looked After Children who would prefer residential to foster care in order to better meet their needs.*

5. Effect upon Policy Framework & Procedure Rules

5.1 The work of the Children and Young People Overview and Scrutiny Committee relates to the review and development of plans, policy or strategy that form part of the Policy Framework and consideration of plans, policy or strategy relating to the power to promote or improve economic, social or environmental well being in the County Borough of Bridgend.

6. Legal Implications

6.1 None

7. Financial Implications

7.1 As outlined in the report to the Children and Young People Overview and Scrutiny Committee the budget strategy already incorporates a £100,000 saving to be achieved in 2010/2011 through the review of the service's residential provision. Restructuring of the existing 3 units into 2 specialist units will generate savings of approximately £137k, along with any consequential savings arising from bringing existing placements in-house. Due to the anticipated time taken to restructure the

service, the full-year effect of the savings will not be generated in this financial year, so there will be an overspend on this budget for 2010/2011.

8. Recommendation

- 8.1 The Cabinet Committee is asked to receive and consider the comments and recommendations of the Children and Young People Overview and Scrutiny Committee in relation to the Residential Review.

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Background Documents

Children and Young People Overview and Scrutiny Committee:
Papers and Minutes – 5 July 2010