

BRIDGEND COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL
REPORT TO CORPORATE PARENTING CABINET COMMITTEE

20 SEPTEMBER 2011

REPORT OF THE CORPORATE DIRECTOR - CHILDREN

THE RESIDENTIAL CARE REDESIGN PROJECT

1. Purpose of Report

- 1.1 To provide an update on the progress of the implementation of the Residential Redesign project.

2. Connection to Corporate Improvement Plan / Other Corporate Priority

- 2.1 Residential provision within Bridgend for our Looked After Children is linked to the theme of "Young Voices" as part of the corporate plan and community strategy.

3. Background

- 3.1 The Residential Services Review was initiated in September 2008 and endorsed as part of the corporate *Supporting Vulnerable Children* programme. Its remit was:

- to examine the provision of residential services within Bridgend's community homes to identify whether a redesigned service can improve the outcomes of children and young people who become looked after.

- 3.2 The review included:

- review of key documents such as the Statement of Purpose for each home, inspection reports and a sample of case files;
- data that included occupancy rates, admission and discharge information and financial costings;
- interviews and discussions with residential staff, young residents and young people who had left the residential provision and were living elsewhere, parents and carers;
- questionnaires to social work staff and managers and other professionals from health, Police, Youth Offending Service, Education and the Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service.

- 3.3 From the review, one of the key findings indicated a high number of unplanned admissions which often resulted in a mismatch of provision and occupancy rates.
- 3.4 The report concluded that children and young people who require residential care often have complex needs and in the right circumstances, when it is used as a flexible alternative solution, the outcomes it achieves are positive. It is essential that all services meeting the needs of these children and young people are of a high quality and readily available and those agencies with responsibility for working with children and young people should be involved in the planning and delivery of services for the individual children.
- 3.5 Further work was undertaken and a further report was presented to Committee in January 2011 with the following options for consideration:
- an emergency/assessment facility;
 - a complex needs unit;
 - a transition unit.
- 3.6 A decision was made subsequently that Cartrefle and Pant Morfa should be retained as children's homes and would become the transition unit and complex need unit respectively and that Maesteg children's home should be decommissioned.
- 3.7 The Complex Needs Unit will provide four placements of varying lengths, up to a period of twelve months, to children/young people of either sex and in the age range 11 to 15 years who cannot live with their own immediate or extended family. It will provide placements for those who are particularly vulnerable and present complex needs. Staff will work with the children/young people through an intensive approach which could include therapeutic intervention and behaviour modification whilst working in partnership with parents/carers and relevant professionals. The aim is to stabilise the child/young person and to prepare them for a successful move on to a more permanent or long term placement.
- 3.8 The success of the unit also depends on significant levels of engagement from a multi-agency partnership - education, CAMHS and other health services and schools.
- 3.9 The Transition Unit will have four beds for care leavers aged 16+ and will focus on preparing young people to live independently. Each young person will sign up to a programme that will assist them in achieving this. The programme is aimed at young people who have the commitment, attitude and motivation to achieve their independence, taking into account their level of maturity. Attached to the main unit will be two bedsits, these will primarily be used to further young people's independence. The Unit will also have a team of two outreach workers who will provide support to young people who have

successfully completed their independence programme but still require an amount of support when they have moved into community based supported accommodation.

3.10 Staff will be working with a range of professionals including from the careers service, benefit agencies, aftercare team and housing. This is in line with our development of a multi-agency, post 16 service to support young people into adulthood.

3.11 A project team has been established to manage the changes.

4. Current Progress

4.1 The Project Team continues to meet monthly. The newly appointed Principal Officer for Accommodation & Regulated Services has now taken up the post and assumed responsibility for management of the project.

4.2 All related project documents have been reviewed and updated and work streams reviewed to ensure that the aims of the project are achieved.

4.3 All staff have been consulted on the new service and the “match & slot” process has been completed. As a result of this process, three staff were displaced: one member of staff is considering redundancy; one member of staff has accepted a full time position within the Family Support team and the other care worker is looking for redeployment within the Authority.

4.4 Children/young people and their families have also been consulted and work is progressing with them and their allocated social workers to ensure that their future plans are progressed.

4.5 Statements of Purpose and Children’s Guides have been developed for each of the new units and are currently being consulted upon. These are attached as Appendix I and II.

4.6 All relevant policies and procedures are in the process of being reviewed and amended.

4.7 Work to establish an alternative “emergency bed” provision is also progressing, detailed analysis has been completed and this information is being used to identify appropriate alternatives.

4.8 Plans and costing for the refurbishment work needed on the two new units have been identified and work is due to commence in September 2011 with a target completion date of October 2011.

4.9 Work to decommission Maesteg has also commenced and the application to terminate the registration was submitted to CSSIW in July. Applications to vary the terms of registration for the two new units will be completed once

the Statements of Purpose have been finalised and the review and update of policies and procedures has been completed.

- 4.10 A competition to “name” the two new units was launched Monday 8th August 2011 and the Corporate Parenting Committee has kindly agreed to judge the competition and select the winning names.

5. Effect upon Policy Framework & Procedure Rules

None

6. Equality Impact Assessment

- 6.1 This has been considered but it is felt that as this is an update on the progress of the project and not a report about policy or decision making and each child’s needs are assessed on an individual basis, it is not applicable.

- 6.2 It should be noted that an Equality Impact Assessment has previously been completed and submitted (January 2011) in relation to the new service redesign, the closure of Maesteg and the need for work to be completed in order to ensure that this is disabled access to the properties, this will be considered in the refurbished works as far as is reasonably practical.

7. Financial Implications

- 7.1 It was initially expected that the budget for the refurbishment work of the Units would be funded from the “disposal/sale” of Maesteg. However, additional monies have since been secured via funding from the Welsh Government and built into the capital programme. The cost of the work will be met from this funding.

- 7.2 It is also expected that the redesign of the residential services would make a saving of £200k over a 2 year period in the revenue budget. It is still expected that this target will be achieved.

8. Recommendation

- 8.1 It is recommended that the Committee notes the progress of the Residential Redesign Project.

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Background documents

None