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Bridgend County Borough Council
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Civic Offices, Angel Street, Bridgend, CF31 4WB / Swyddfeydd Dinesig, Stryd yr Angel, Pen-y-bont, CF31 4WB

Legal and Regulatory Services /
Gwasanaethau Cyfreithiol a Rheoleiddiol
Direct line / Deialu uniongyrchol: 01656 643395
Ask for / Gofynnwch am: Jeannie Monks

Our ref / Ein cyf:
Your ref / Eich cyf:

Date / Dyddiad: 27th August 2014

Dear Councillor,

CHILDREN & YOUNG PEOPLE OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

A meeting of the Children & Young People Overview & Scrutiny Committee will be held in The Council Chamber, Civic Offices, Angel Street, Bridgend on **Tuesday, 2 September 2014 at 2.00 pm.**

AGENDA

1. Apologies for Absence
To receive apologies for absence (to include reasons where appropriate) from Members/Officers.
2. Declarations of Interest
To receive declarations of personal and prejudicial interest (if any) from Members/Officers in accordance with the provisions of the Members Code of Conduct adopted by Council from 01 September 2008. (Including whipping declarations).
3. Approval of Minutes 3 - 12
To receive for approval, the minutes of the meetings of Children & Young People Overview and Scrutiny Committee held on the 10th June 2014.
4. Placements and Permanency Strategy 13 - 44
Invitees:
Councillor Huw David, Cabinet Member Children & Young People
Colin Turner, Head of Safeguarding & Family Support
Tracy Hughes, Permanency & Placement Officer
5. Implementation of a Single Youth Offending Service Across Western Bay 45 - 54
Invitees:
Councillor Huw David, Cabinet Member Children & Young People
Caroline Dyer, Youth Offending Team Manager
Nicola Echanis, Head of Strategy, Partnerships & Commissioning

Tel/Ffôn: 01656 643643

SMS Messaging/Negeseuon SMS: 07581 157014

Fax/Facs: 01656 668126

Twitter@bridgendCBC

Email/Ebost: talktous@bridgend.gov.uk

Website/Gwefan: www.bridgend.gov.uk

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| 6. | <u>Rota Visiting</u> <u>Invitees:</u> Councillor Huw David, Cabinet Member Children & Young People Colin Turner, Head of Safeguarding & Family Support Judith Brooks, Group Manager – Business Support | 55 - 64 |
| 7. | <u>Learner Travel Policy</u> <u>Invitees:</u> Councillor Huw David, Cabinet Member Children & Young People Nicola Echanis, Head of Strategy, Partnerships & Commissioning | 65 - 80 |
| 8. | <u>Information Report - Performance</u> | 81 - 104 |
| 9. | <u>Social Services Annual Reporting Framework</u> Councillor Huw David, Cabinet Member Children & Young People Colin Turner, Head of Safeguarding & Family Support | 105 - 108 |
| 10. | <u>Forward Work Programme Update</u> | 109 - 112 |
| 11. | <u>Urgent Items</u> To consider any item(s) of business in respect of which notice has been given in accordance with Part 4 (paragraph 4) of the Council Procedure Rules and which the person presiding at the meeting is of the opinion should by reason of special circumstances be transacted at the meeting as a matter of urgency. | |

Yours faithfully

P A Jolley

Assistant Chief Executive Legal and Regulatory Services

Distribution:

Councillors

| | | | |
|-------------|------------|--------------|-------------|
| D K Edwards | P N John | C E Rees | D B F White |
| E P Foley * | M Jones | R L Thomas | R Young |
| C A Green | D G Owen | H J Townsend | |
| M James | G Phillips | C Westwood | |

Registered Representatives:

| | |
|--|--|
| Reverend Canon E J Evans (Church in Wales) | Mr G Isaac (Secondary School Parent Governor Representative) |
| Mr Tim Cahalane (Roman Catholic Church) | Mr R Thomas (Primary School Parent Governor Representative) |
| | Mr W Bond (Special School Parent Governor Representative) |

Co-opted Members:

Mrs S O'Halloran (NAHT)
Mr R Humphries (NUT)
Mr K Pascoe
Mr H Daniel (NAS/UWT)
Mr I Davies (ATL)

MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE HELD IN THE COUNCIL CHAMBER, CIVIC OFFICES, ANGEL STREET, BRIDGEND ON TUESDAY, 10 JUNE 2014 AT 2.00PM

Present:

Councillor E P Foley – Chairperson

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|-------------|------------|--------------|
| D K Edwards | M Jones | H J Townsend |
| C A Green | D G Owen | C Westwood |
| R M James | G Phillips | D B F White |
| P N John | C E Rees | R E Young |

Registered Representatives & Co-opted Members:

Mr T Cahalane (Roman Catholic Church)
Mr R Thomas (Primary School Parent Governor)
Mr W Bond (Special School Parent Governor)
Miss S O'Halloran (NAHT)
Mr H Daniel (NAS/UWT)

Officers:

R Harries - Senior Scrutiny Officer
J Monks - Democratic Services Officer - Committees

Invitees:

Councillor H J David - Cabinet Member - Children and Young People
D McMillan - Corporate Director - Children
C Dyer - Youth Offending Service Team Manager
N Echanis - Group Manager - Integrated Working & Family Support
M Davies - Principal Youth Officer
M Lewis - Group Manager - Integrated Working

110 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies were received from the following Members:

Councillor R L Thomas - Work Commitments
Mr K Pascoe - Work Commitments

111 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Councillor Townsend declared a personal interest under Agenda Item 5 – Youth Service Review, as her sister is employed by the Youth Service.

112 MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

RESOLVED: That the minutes of a meeting of the Children and Young People Overview and Scrutiny Committee held on the 17th March 2014 were approved as a true and accurate record.

That the minutes of a meeting of the Children and Young People Overview and Scrutiny Committee held on the 28th April 2014 were approved as a true and accurate record subject to Councillor Townsend being added to those Members who had submitted their apologies for absence at that meeting.

The Chairperson welcomed the invitees to the meeting.

113 YOUTH OFFENDING SERVICE

The Youth Offending Team Manager presented a report to inform the Committee on the findings of some research commissioned by the Youth Offending Service (YOS) in response to concerns regarding a succession of serious incidents throughout 2012 involving some young people who had taken overdoses, and had either admitted trying to end their own lives, or stated that they did not care if they lived or died. She informed Members that many of those youngsters viewed their lives with little value and although their intention was not to commit suicide, they often took risks with scant regard for the consequences. She explained that Officers were concerned that there was possibly an area of work they were missing where they could be more proactive to prevent those youngsters taking such risks.

Initially the Youth Justice Board (YJB) was approached regarding possible research and further behavioural analysis, and on advice from the YJB an independent researcher was commissioned, with the aim of producing a short report identifying any themes or patterns that may emerge to assist the YOS in developing practise to respond to the findings. Three main themes were identified: domestic violence in the family home; experience of bereavement of a close friend or family member and a young person's involvement in substance misuse. The observations made by the researcher are detailed under paragraph 4 of the report.

One Member commented that the major concern was the reduction in Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAHMS) input, with one nurse off sick and the decision to reduce the number of nurses.

The Youth Offending Team Manager advised that the Leader had written to the Chief Executive of the Local Health Board expressing his concern, and since preparing the report the CAHMS input was now under review, which would take into account the amalgamation of services into Western Bay. She advised that there was the possibility of sharing two nurses across the three organisations, which could be backed up with a general nurse or sexual health nurse in order to meet the more diverse needs of some of these young people.

Another Member referred to the lack of CAHMS facilities in Wales, which would not be resolved without additional resources. She added that 50% of young people were referred out of the area and they were not accessing mental health services as they should.

The Youth Offending Team Manager explained that consultation on mental health services for young people was currently taking place and the results would be passed to the Committee on its completion in July. In response to a question from a Member, she explained that young people are referred to services across Bridgend according to their needs and the suitability of a particular service. She advised that the Team were mindful not to have a "scattergun" approach and referrals are carefully managed in order to avoid confusion.

A Member asked how the identified potential areas detailed under paragraph 3.4, are disseminated to the wider community, such as the Police and what scrutiny could be applied to ensure stakeholders picked up on the lessons learned.

The Youth Offending Team Manager advised that the information is sent to the Children's Safeguarding Board; however she would not be aware of what happened to that information thereafter. She informed Members that she would follow this up after the meeting. She welcomed the Chairperson's suggestions that Members visit the service.

One Member asked for reassurance that the Youth Service would maintain progress in the service under Western Bay.

The Youth Offending Team Manager advised that her colleagues in Swansea and Neath Port Talbot Councils also worked extremely hard to improve the service; however she stressed that there would always be young people who go into crisis, which they could not predict. She added that the title of the service under Western Bay will be the Youth Justice and Early Intervention Service.

The Head of Strategy, Partnerships and Commissioning advised that as the service moved towards collaboration, the Youth Offending Service Manager would be the key person in ensuring that information is disseminated and it was hoped that best practice would be replicated.

A Member asked for assurance that there would be a scrutiny process under the new structure, as this was not mentioned in the report. He stated that all documentation from the Welsh Government had clearly indicated that any collaboration should have an inbuilt scrutiny process.

The Corporate Director – Children explained that the report had been concerned specifically with potential self-harming and suicides among young people; however a report on collaboration could be brought to the Committee at a later date. The Youth Offending Team Manager advised that the scrutiny arrangements would be decided as they moved through the transition period.

The Cabinet Member – Children and Young People informed Members that CAHMS is an area of work he had shown a particular interest in. He suggested the Committee consider the provision and strategies of the service in Bridgend, as support and scrutiny would assist in raising the profile and ensure the attention of the Local Health Board, as he did not believe it currently had the focus and attention it required. He advised that he was on the Western Bay Youth Justice and Early Intervention Management Board along with Cabinet Members from Swansea and Neath Port Talbot Council and he was confident that scrutiny arrangements would be put in place for Bridgend.

The Chairperson thanked the Youth Offending Team Manager for her input.

Conclusions:

The Committee expressed concerns regarding the lack of input from the Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service (CAMHS) and welcomed the YOT Manager's suggestion that they respond to the current consultation on Mental Health Services for Children and Young People in the Youth Justice System.

The Committee suggested that due to the difficulties experienced in accessing support from CAMHS, the YOS should be encouraged to refer young people to other agencies that deal with mental health, such as New Pathways, where it was possible and appropriate to do so.

The Committee also agreed that it would consider adding CAMHS to its Forward Work Programme in order to consider the issue in greater depth.

The Committee agreed that officers would arrange a site visit to the YOS Offices.

The YOT Manager agreed that she would establish what action had been taken by partners in relation to the findings of the research, which had already been shared with them. The Committee particularly wished to ensure that this would take place in the case of the Community Safety Partnership Executive Board, as there was a clear role for them in taking the findings forward and ensuring they were shared as widely as possible.

The Committee noted that the Youth Offending Service was in the process of merging into a regional service, based on the Western Bay footprint. The Committee expressed grave concerns regarding the accountability and transparency of the Western Bay project and stated the

importance of ensuring robust scrutiny arrangements. In the first instance, the Committee agreed that they would ask to receive the copies of the minutes and reports of the Western Bay Joint Committee. It was also agreed that whilst scrutiny arrangements are being developed and consideration should be given to a scrutiny member attending meetings of the Western Bay Joint Committee.

114 YOUTH SERVICE REVIEW

The Corporate Director - Children presented a report to provide the Committee with relevant information and a current overview in relation to the consultation regarding the Youth Service Review (YSR). The Council's Youth Service made temporary operational decisions resulting in the transitory closure of 16 open access youth provisions across the Borough, pending the outcome of the consultation. Through the Medium Term financial Strategy (MTFS) funding for young people's services has been reduced and the consultation process will ensure statistically relevant data is analysed and collated to provide the basis of the youth review. The Youth Service in Bridgend has initiated a service mapping exercise of provision within local communities to ensure all current provision is captured. The service works with a range of individuals, including substance misuse, sexual health, involvement in crime and homelessness, as well as those young people with emotional and physical needs.

She welcomed the Committee's scrutiny of both the Youth Service and the Youth Engagement and Progression Framework, which she advised were interlinked, as there would be transformation of all children's services and changing the way they are operated. She informed Members that the Children's Directorate is required to make savings of £8.8m out of a budget of £40m, which amounts to a 39% cut in the Youth Service and 44% cut in the Inclusion Service. Overall this April, a total of 70 posts across the Directorate had been deleted.

The Corporate Director – Children advised that the priority was to improve outcomes in Bridgend for children, young people and their families, and follow the Welsh Government policy which stipulates that those services should be delivered in a different way. At a later date this would inevitably result in changes to the Social Services and Wellbeing Act. The new national model of regional working guidelines for delivering school improvement and the way in which Youth Services are delivered has also changed in that the Welsh Government stipulates that the Youth Service should work more closely with the third sector and concentrate more as an Authority on increasingly targeting resources towards the most vulnerable children and young people.

She informed Members that the reason for the YSR was to identify ways of developing new techniques for delivering the services through engagement with local communities, the Town and Community Councils, the third sector and the voluntary sector to help deliver that universal provision and ensure integrated working. She advised that it was important those sectors did not take on work without the support of the Authority, whose role was likely to change in the future. The scheduled timeline for the consultation process is detailed at paragraph 4 of the report and the Corporate Director – Children advised that Cabinet had authorised a 40 day formal consultation, and on its completion would make a decision in January 2015 on progressing the model.

The Corporate Director – Children introduced the newly appointed Principal Youth Officer to her first meeting of the Committee.

The Principal Youth Officer explained that it was important to involve as many people as possible in the consultation, particularly those organisations that support children with additional needs, and the questionnaire is being formulated with the support of the consultation team. She informed Members that a wide range of mechanisms would be used to help people understand the consultation process, such as public meetings, workshops and schools, as well as through the Social Media such as Facebook and Twitter.

A Member questioned why youth provision in some of the most deprived areas of the Borough had been closed. He stated that he had met with his fellow Ward Members,

elected Members and other interested parties such as the Police and Youth Workers in Caerau, but as yet had not received any feedback.

The Corporate Director – Children explained that 31 posts had been lost from the Youth Service through the restructure to meet the MTFs and in advance of the YSR, and a short term operational decision was made not to offer open access youth services in some of those areas mentioned. She advised that the YSR would allow the Authority to continue working with those communities and if it could no longer afford to run those services, due to the Welsh Government instructing local authorities to work on a one-to-one basis with targeted groups of vulnerable young people, than the focus would be on who else could run them which would be the next stage of the review.

The Principal Youth Officer informed Members that through a revenue grant this year funding had been allocated to the third sector to provide universal provision, and it was hoped to allocate £30,000 across communities in the Borough to include areas of deprivation; the distribution of the funds would be decided at a meeting with the Bridgend Association of Voluntary Organisations (BAVO) next week. In addition, around £10,000 would be allocated for training third sector providers. She further explained that temporary arrangements had been made with some of the Outreach Teams so that street based provision and a mobile service are in place and to find out where the pressure points are to support those areas which are most in need.

Another Member asked whether the Authority was moving from being a provider model to an enabling model service in view of reorganisation and the loss of some of the workforce. He added that he was concerned about accountability and control and would prefer the service to remain in-house.

The Corporate Director – Children advised that the Welsh Government policy instructs local authorities to work more closely with vulnerable young people and schools, each secondary school being allocated a key worker. In order to develop more targeted work with vulnerable groups and one-to-ones, there would be less open access youth club provision.

The Principal Youth Officer stated that it would be a major challenge to ensure accountability, and therefore certain caveats have been attached to the grants provided to the voluntary sector so that people are clear on what is expected and systems have been set up to ensure they are supported.

One Member referred to the community in Brackla, which has 2,500 children, 21% under the age of 16, yet the open youth service access had been removed from that Ward. She stated that she had only found out about the closure through a member of staff who was being made redundant from the service, and questioned why the Town and Community Council had not been informed of the closure, or given advice on how that provision would now be provided. She added that as there are a total of 4,000 young people up to the age of 25 living in Brackla, the closure of this service would have a knock-on effect as the young people would have nowhere else to go, which would ultimately result in complaints from residents.

The Corporate Director – Children explained that the decision to close the provision in Brackla had been made at very short notice, as the Directorate was required to make savings within a matter of months. She advised that she would be consulting with the Town and Community Council Forum on this matter.

Another Member asked whether accountability would be sought, when outsourcing, through CRB checks, qualifications and Safeguarding Certificates. She advised that Sport Wales had funds available for bids over £25,000 up to £250,000 to provide sports to various communities.

The Principal Youth Officer advised that with regard to accountability, they were working with BAVO to look at Education Training Standards and providers would be required to undergo some quality assurance, their staff would need to be qualified and robust systems put in place before grants are allocated.

Conclusions:

The Committee noted that the Authority is moving to an enabling model of youth service provision and no longer plans to provide the service directly itself. The Committee acknowledge the financial pressures facing the Authority, but expressed some concerns regarding this change. Specifically, the Committee had concerns regarding what Estyn's views of the revised arrangements might be, and had further concerns regarding the accountability of third party providers between Estyn inspections.

The Committee noted that the timeline for the review did not mention scrutiny as part of the decision making process. The Committee requests that the timeline be revised in order to allow Members to have sight of the results of the consultation before it is presented to Cabinet for a decision.

115 YOUTH ENGAGEMENT AND PROGRESSION FRAMEWORK

The Corporate Director - Children presented a report to inform the Committee of the progress being made regarding the implementation of the Youth Engagement and Progression (YE&P) Framework, which has superseded the Not in Education Employment or Training Strategy (NEET). The overarching aim of the Framework is to prevent young people becoming NEET in the first instance, and to re-engage them with education, training or work. This new Framework offers those young people most at risk the allocation of a single point of contact to ensure support is delivered in a coordinated way. It also offers the development of a Youth Guarantee to ensure every young person post-16 has access to a suitable place in learning.

All local authorities throughout Wales have been allocated £50,000 each by the Welsh Government to implement the Framework and have been requested to complete an action plan by March 2014, outlining how each intends to take forward implementation of the Framework. The action plan for Bridgend, attached at Appendix 1 to the report, was developed by a multi-agency task and finish group. Appendix 2 to the report outlines the basis of the Youth Engagement and Progression model, and the full version of the Welsh Government's guidance is available at www.wales.gov.uk/educationandskills. Further work to develop a more focussed implementation plan will continue via a strategic multi-agency group, as ongoing work continues to reduce the number of those young people who are NEET. The more recent performance linked with NEET in Bridgend is outlined in two graphs under paragraph 4 of the report and the Corporate Director - Children advised that the Framework had already had an impact in terms of NEET.

She then introduced to the Committee the newly appointed Group Manager - Integrated Working and explained that although there had been a reduction in the number of Group Managers, this new post was necessary for this new Framework. She stressed that the Group Manager would have a great deal of work to do in bringing together all the services in order to meet children's needs to prevent the need for them to access further services, and ultimately to prevent youngsters becoming NEET in the first place. She advised that the Group Manager had led the workshop to review the NEET strategy and would oversee, amongst others, Flying Start; the Youth Service; NEETs; Family Support across levels of need and the Education Welfare Service, developing them to become integrated, which she stated is the key to transformation, and is a major priority for all partner agencies. The work in terms of governance will be overseen by the Families and Learning Group, who in turn will be overseen by the Children and Young People's Partnership which is monitored by the Local Service Board.

One Member asked what the outcomes from the workshop were and how it had informed and impacted on the Framework.

The Group Manager – Integrated Working explained that the workshop was a review of where the service is now. The Chairperson requested that more information on the workshop be provided to the Committee.

Another Member asked if the Youth Guarantee team is guidance or statutory from the Welsh Government and whether those young people could be guaranteed a quality education. She further asked whether this would impact on those young people who wished to return to education. She then referred to Tier 5 of Appendix 2, which showed the potential for young people to engage in voluntary work. She believed this was a token gesture, as those youngsters would still be reliant on benefits.

The Corporate Director – Children advised that the Authority was required to follow the Welsh Government guidance and the Youth Guarantee looks to getting all young people either in full time education, training or working and that the training should be meaningful, allowing them to progress. She explained that it was not as clear in Wales as it was in England, where the school leaving age had been raised 18. However, a further Youth Guarantee clearly sets out the Authority's obligations to ensure that any 16 year old who wants to continue in education is supported to do so. With regard to voluntary work, she advised that this would be good for those young people who are NEET as it would provide them with skills and experience and was seen as a step into the workplace or further education.

The same Member commented that she would not wish to see voluntary work being included and then being taken away from the NEET figures to make them appear lower. She asked how they could guarantee quality places for every 16 year old, given the financial implications placed on the Welsh Government's budget.

The Chairperson stated that those young people needed an advocate as they lacked an independent voice.

Another Member asked whether the funding to create a new post was just being spent for another management post instead of using the £50,000 towards more frontline lead workers.

The Head of Strategy, Partnerships and Commissioning advised that the new post of an Engagement and Progression Co-ordinator was crucial in developing the Framework.

Conclusions:

The Group Manager – Integrated Working agreed that he would provide the Committee with the outcomes of the multi-agency workshop held on 28 November 2013.

In relation to Welsh Government's Youth Engagement and Progression Model (Appendix 2 to the report) the Committee wished it noted that they disagreed with the inclusion of voluntary work in the definition of Tier 5 – Young People Sustaining Education, Employment or Training. It was the view of the Committee that whilst there were many benefits associated with volunteering as a step forward, young people who were involved in voluntary work were still likely to be reliant on the state benefits and were not taking part in education or paid employment. Therefore, in the view of the Committee, this should not be included at Level 5.

The Committee had a number of concerns relating to the Youth Guarantee (a guarantee that every young person has access to a suitable place in learning post-16). The Committee had concerns regarding how the quality of places would be guaranteed in the light of reduced funding to the further education sector. This issue was of even greater concern due to the fact that, in the view of the Committee, there were very limited opportunities for young people to

express an independent voice. The Committee is of the view that Officers should engage with the Youth Council on this issue in order to establish methods of enhancing accountability for post-16 providers.

In relation to funding, it was agreed that the Scrutiny Officer would undertake additional research regarding the availability of European funding towards the implementation of the Youth Guarantee, and whether the UK government had taken up this opportunity.

The Committee agreed that it would continue to monitor the development and implementation of the action plan.

The Chairperson thanked the invitees for their attendance.

116 ANNUAL FORWARD WORK PROGRAMME 2014-15

The Senior Scrutiny Officer presented a report outlining the suggested topics for consideration in the development of the Committee's Forward Work Programme for 2014/15. Following the development of the long list, Scrutiny Chairs and Officers took part in a work planning exercise in order to develop a shortlist of items and provisionally allocate each item to a meeting date.

Conclusions:

The Committee agreed the following topics for inclusion on its Forward Work Programme:

- Directorate Performance
- Business Plans
- Corporate Plan
- Budget Setting Process
- Young People Not in Education, Employment or Training (NEETS)
- Youth Offending Service
- Youth Service Review
- Looked After Children Strategy
- Looked After Children Budget Overspend
- Social Services Workforce Plan
- Serious Case Review and Regionalisation of the Safeguarding Children Board
- Statements of Special Educational Needs
- Annual School Performance Report 2013-14

The Senior Scrutiny Officer informed Members that at a recent meeting of the Scrutiny Chairs, possible budget savings within Scrutiny were discussed, and particularly the workload around the number of Research and Evaluation Panels. One of the proposals was for the five Scrutiny Committees to meet as one on a specified day in order to discuss all future Business Plans and Corporate Plans which are provided to the Scrutiny Committees. Members agreed that there was a need to look at those Plans together as part of internal collaboration.

Conclusions:

The Committee noted that discussions were ongoing regarding the means by which scrutiny of Directorate Performance, the Directorate Business Plan and the Corporate Plan could be revised in order to make more efficient use of the meetings available to the Committee.

The Committee agreed to add the following items to the FWP, subject to capacity being freed up by the implementation of revised arrangements as described above:

- CAMHS
- Youth Service Review – Results of Consultation
- Youth Engagement and Progression Framework Action Plan

The Committee noted that the FWP as it stood was heavily weighted towards Social Services issues with very few Education items. It was agreed that the Scrutiny Officer will facilitate further discussion of how this issue could be addressed and will provide the criteria used for long-listing items for inclusion, to enable Members to make an informed decision.

It was also noted that due to the number of policy and service changes being implemented as a result of the Medium Term Financial Strategy, it may be necessary to arrange special meetings in order to accommodate pre-decision scrutiny.

117 CORPORATE PARENTING CHAMPION UPDATE

The Assistant Chief Executive - Legal and Regulatory Services submitted an update from the Committee's Corporate Parenting Champion on the work being undertaken by the Cabinet Committee - Corporate Parenting.

Councillor White, in his role as Corporate Parenting Champion, gave a brief update to Members and advised that Swansea City Council would be the host authority for the Adoption Service within Western Bay.

He took Members through the report and reported that the Children's Commissioner's review on independent and professional advocacy services for looked after children (LAC) and young people, care leavers and children in need, which was published in March 2012, had set out 29 key recommendations of which 11 were directed to the Welsh Government. The remaining 18 were directed to local authorities, as the review had concluded that local authorities in Wales were failing in their duties in relation to independent professional advocacy for the vulnerable groups.

An audit was carried out by the Authority which had identified a number of gaps in the current service at the time. In light of this, a procurement exercise for a new contract commenced in December 2013 resulting in a two year contract for independent professional advocacy and independent visiting being awarded to Tros Gynnal Plant, a leading Welsh children's charity who work with some of the country's most vulnerable children and young people, offering them and their families independent and confidential support.

Councillor White further reported that in his role as Corporate Parenting Champion, he had recently attended the LAC Awards Ceremony and the One Year Celebration of the Integrated Family Support Services (IFSS). He described how it had been a pleasure to be invited to the Awards Ceremony, which recognises the skills, talent and hard work of LAC and young people, giving them the opportunity to have their achievements recognised. The One Year Celebration of the IFSS provided the opportunity to meet with the families involved, hear of their experiences and the positive difference the service had made in their lives.

Councillor White then presented a short DVD which had been made by the IFSS team and some of the families who had been referred to the service. The DVD informed Members of how much the service had meant to those families and how it had already succeeded in reducing the LAC population and children on the child protection register.

The Chairperson thanked Councillor White for the quality of his report.

Conclusions: The Committee noted the Corporate Parenting Champion's update.

118 COPORATE PARENTING CHAMPION NOMINATION

The Senior Scrutiny Officer presented a report to request the Committee to nominate one Member as its Corporate Parenting Champion to represent the Committee as an invitee to meetings of the Cabinet Committee – Corporate Parenting.

RESOLVED: That the Committee nominated Councillor D B F White as its Corporate Parenting Champion to represent the Committee at meetings of the Cabinet Committee – Corporate Parenting and noted the appointment of the Chairperson of the Children and Young people Overview and Scrutiny Committee as an additional invitee.

119 NOMINATION TO STANDING BUDGET RESEARCH AND EVALUATION PANEL

The Senior Scrutiny Officer presented a report to seek nominations for the Budget Research and Evaluation Panel in line with the Corporate Resources and Improvement Overview and Scrutiny Committee's recommendations made as part of the 2014-15 budget setting process.

RESOLVED: That the Committee appointed the Chairperson and Councillor M Jones to sit on the Standing Budget Research and Evaluation Panel

120 APPOINTMENT OF A CO-OPTED MEMBER TO THE CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

The Senior Scrutiny Officer presented a report to propose the re-appointment of Mr Kevin Pascoe as a co-opted Member on the Children and Young People Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

At its meeting on the 5th August 2013, the Committee agreed to recommend to Council that Mr Pascoe be appointed as a non-voting co-opted Member of the Committee until May 2014, due to his long standing as a Member of the Committee as a registered representative, as well as his knowledge of and contribution to the work of the Committee. This was agreed by Council in September 2013, and as part of the original decision, it was agreed that the arrangement would be reconsidered after May 2014. It was proposed that this arrangement should continue until the next Local Government elections, after which the appointment would be reviewed.

RESOLVED: That the Committee recommended to Council the appointment of Mr Kevin Pascoe as a co-opted Member on the Children and Young People Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

121 FORWARD WORK PROGRAMME UPDATE

The Scrutiny Officer presented a report outlining the items due to be considered at the next meeting of the Committee on the 2nd September 2014, and further sought confirmation of the invitees to attend the subsequent scheduled meeting to be held on the 13th October 2014.

Conclusions:

The Committee noted the topics due to be considered at the meeting of the Committee scheduled for the 2nd September 2014 and acknowledged the invitees to attend the subsequent meeting on the 13th October 2014.

The Chairperson thanked Rachel Harries for her sterling work in covering the Committee whilst Rachel Keepins' was on maternity leave. Rachel Keepins is due back in August and will be in attendance at the next Committee meeting.

The meeting closed at 5.30pm.

BRIDGEND COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL

REPORT TO CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

2 SEPTEMBER 2014

REPORT OF THE ASSISTANT CHIEF EXECUTIVE – LEGAL & REGULATORY SERVICES

PLACEMENTS AND PERMANENCY STRATEGY

1. Purpose of Report

- 1.1 To present the Committee with the final version of the strategy to reduce the numbers of Looked After Children in Bridgend and to provide Members with an update of the work being carried out under this strategy, and the impact this will have on the budget for this service area.

2. Connection to Corporate Improvement Objectives / Other Corporate Priorities.

- 2.1 The key improvement objectives identified in the Corporate Plan 2013-2017 have been embodied in the Overview & Scrutiny Forward Work Programmes. The amended Corporate Improvement Objectives adopted by Council on 3 April 2013 formally set out the improvement objectives that the Council will seek to implement between 2013 and 2017. The Overview and Scrutiny Committees engage in review and development of plans, policy or strategies that support the Corporate Themes.

3. Background.

- 3.1 At its meeting in November 2013, the Committee received a report containing the draft strategy to reduce the number of Looked After Children in Bridgend.

- 3.2 The conclusions from this meeting are set out below:

- *The Committee welcomed the draft strategy and recognised that this represented a significant amount of work on the part of the Directorate. The Committee noted that it would be supportive of an increase in the number of Special Guardianship Orders and adoptions as a means of reducing the LAC population and improving outcomes for children.*
- *The Committee noted that the high number of teenage pregnancies, and therefore the number of babies of young mothers being taken into care, was a cause for concern. Whilst this was identified in the strategy, the Committee considered that the strategy needed to be more specific about what action the Directorate intended to take in order to address these issues.*

- *Similarly, the Committee considered that there was a need for the strategy to be more explicit regarding the role of other agencies in tackling issues identified in the strategy such as substance misuse, domestic abuse, mental health and teenage pregnancies. The Committee recommends that an action plan should be developed and agreed with partners, particularly the Community Safety Partnership.*
- *Further to this point, the Committee noted that the action plan as it stands lacks timescales and lacks the element of personal responsibility; i.e. no officers or agencies are identified as being responsible for specific actions. The strategy therefore would benefit from a more fully developed action plan.*
- *The Committee also queried what research was available regarding the number of people who have been in care who subsequently have their own children taken into care; the reasons behind this and possible methods of prevention. The Head of Safeguarding and Family Support agreed to investigate this further.*
- *The Committee agreed that it would look again at the strategy at the earliest opportunity. It was agreed that the Scrutiny Officer and the Chairperson would discuss this further with officers to establish a suitable timescale.*

3.3 Members may also recall receiving a report in September 2013 on Looked After Children – Impact of the Public Law Outline where the Committee were advised that under the new Public Law Outline care and adoption cases were now required to be completed in a much shorter period and any independent expert assessments would have to be completed before the case reached the court with the costs absorbed by the Local Authority. The Revised PLO has a new flowchart for case progression which is designed to speed up the process for bringing an application for a care order, such that each case must conclude within 26 weeks or less.

3.4 According to the Children’s Directorate, the impact upon local authorities in England and Wales is enormous and unprecedented and actions were being taken to try to mitigate these, particularly since there were financial implications associated with these changes including wasted costs orders from the courts if the deadline of 26 weeks was not adhered to. The Committee expressed concerns over this and agreed that the impact of the Public Law Outline needed to be strongly incorporated into the LAC Strategy.

4. Current Situation / proposal.

4.1 Attached at Appendix A is a report from the Directorate containing the final version of the strategy to reduce the numbers of LAC, now renamed the ‘Placement and Permanency Strategy’ and the associated Action Plan. This Strategy and its action plan were presented to Corporate Parenting Cabinet Committee as well as Cabinet at their meetings on 7th and 22nd July 2014.

4.2 When examining the report, Members may wish to consider the following points when formulating their questions to the invitees:

- a) *Point 2 of the Committee's conclusions from its meeting in November states the need for the strategy to be more specific in what action is being taken to address the issue of high teenage pregnancies, and the number of babies of young mothers being taken into care. Where does this preventative work factor into the current action plan?*
- b) *What impact, including financial, has there been from changes arising out of the new Public Law Outline which now means that all care proceedings must be concluded within a 26 week timeframe with all assessments being completed by social workers before care proceedings are initiated?*
- c) *How has this impact been incorporated into the Strategy and Action Plan?*
- d) *How has the Authority ensured that other agencies are aware of strategy and essentially agree to buy into it? How is their work being monitored?*

5. Effect upon Policy Framework and 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. Equality Impact Assessment

- 6.1 The equality implications are outlined in the officer's report attached as Appendix A.

7. Financial Implications

- 7.1 The financial implications are outlined in the officer's report attached at Appendix A.

8. Recommendation

The Committee is asked to:

- i. Consider and discuss the information within the attached report;
- ii. Explore issues consistent with its challenge and support role;
- iii. Determine whether it wishes to make any comments or recommendations relating to these reports.

Andrew Jolley,
Assistant Chief Executive – Legal & Regulatory Services
2014

Contact Officer: Rachel Keepins
Scrutiny Officer

Telephone: 01656 643613
Email: scrutiny@bridgend.gov.uk

Postal Address: Democratic Services - Scrutiny
Bridgend County Borough Council,
Civic Offices,
Angel Street,
Bridgend,
CF31 4WB

Background Documents:

None

BRIDGEND COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL**REPORT TO CHILDEN & YOUNG PEOPLE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY
COMMITTEE****2nd SEPTEMBER 2014****REPORT OF THE CORPORATE DIRECTOR – CHILDREN****Looked After Children - Placements and Permanency Strategy****1 Purpose of Report**

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to update Committee on the progress made to develop a refreshed “Strategy to reduce the number of Looked After Children and Young People in Bridgend, now known as the “Looked After Children - Placements and Permanency Strategy”.

2 Connection to Corporate Improvement Objectives/Other Corporate Priorities

- 2.1 This report links to the following Community strategy priorities:
- Working together to raise ambitions and drive up educational achievement.
 - Working with children and families to tackle problems early.
 - Working together to help vulnerable people to stay independent.
 - Working together to tackle health issues and encourage healthy lifestyles.

3 Background

- 3.1 Members will be aware that throughout the last decade, there has been a significant increase in the overall number of Looked After Children in Bridgend. This has resulted in major pressures upon Safeguarding and Family Support Services and associated budgets. It also suggests that a significant number of children and young people in Bridgend are not experiencing childhoods conducive to wellbeing or achieving their full potential. Consequently, in order to direct a strategic response to the growing numbers of Looked After Children, the Council intends to publish its “Placements and Permanency Strategy” within which one of the primary aims is to reduce the number of Looked After Children (LAC) but also to take a whole systems approach to preventing the need for children to become LAC in the first place.

4 Current situation/proposal

- 4.1 Previously Committee has received comprehensive reports on statistical data and analysis of Looked After Children (LAC) in Bridgend, together with details of associated costs. Members were informed that the information contained within these reports would inform a refreshed strategy for reducing the numbers of LAC in Bridgend. Members requested that an update on the newly developed strategy be presented to them in order for Committee to comment and provide feedback.
- 4.2 Attached at Appendix 1, is the Council's "Looked After Children - Placements and Permanency Strategy". It recognises that in order to be effective in reducing numbers of looked after children, will require a strategy that is continually reviewed, has sound leadership, rigorous approaches to prevention and early intervention, targeted interventions to children and families with complex needs, (particularly where there are children on the edge of care), clearly defined approaches to social work practice, a strong collaborative working approach to working with children and families and a proactive use of relevant data, information and intelligence in respect of looked after children.
- 4.3 This Placement and Permanency Strategy describes the placements we want to provide and commission for our LAC, and focuses on how we will improve our current arrangements to improve outcomes for children in our care. However the scope of the strategy is not restricted to making good quality placements. Stages of the care journey, including a clear focus on supporting families to stay together wherever it is safe to do so, and minimising the need for children to become Looked After are also key elements of this strategy. Children's Services are driving a 'whole system' approach to supporting LAC and keeping families together. Together with the Early Intervention and Prevention Strategy, these will form a multi-agency response to driving improved outcomes for children.
- 4.4 The focus in the strategy is on describing what will change in relation to our work with children in care or at risk of coming into care. The strategy contains an action plan for the future rather than an attempt to cover every detail of our current services and support.
- 4.5 In 2013 reports setting out our intention to launch a strategy aimed at reducing looked after children, were presented to the Children's Overview and Scrutiny Committee and the People's Partnership Board. Whilst both meetings welcomed the strategy, the importance of it being managed as a bespoke project was highlighted with the appointment of a project manager being integral to its success. This feedback was welcomed and informed a business case being written for such a post and submitted to the Council's Change Management Programme fund. Funding was subsequently agreed for a 14 month period and recently a project manager has been appointed who is now in post.

5 Effect upon Policy Frameworks and Procedure Rules

5.1 This has been considered but as there are no new or changed services policy / functions in this report, it is therefore not applicable at this time.

6 Equality Impact Assessment

6.1 This has been considered but as the report is for information purposes, an assessment is not deemed necessary at this stage.

7 Financial Implications

7.1 The Council has awarded additional funding of £66,169 from the Change Management Programme Fund to cover the associated costs for a project manager to lead the Permanency and Placement Strategy from the date the project manager takes up her post.

8 Recommendations

8.1 Cabinet Committee is recommended to note and consider the content of this report and associated appendices.

Deborah McMillan
Corporate Director - Children

Date: 29th July 2014

Contact Officer: Colin Turner
Head of Safeguarding and Family Support

Telephone: (01656) 642073

E-mail: Colin.turner@bridgend.gov.uk

Background papers

Appendix One – Placements and Permanency Strategy.

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Looked After Children Placement and Permanency Strategy

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Strategy to reduce the number of looked after children and young people in Bridgend

1. Introduction/Background

1.1 The purpose and aims of the strategy

This Placement and Permanency Strategy for Looked After Children describes the placements we want to provide and commission for our Looked After Children, and focuses on how we will improve our current arrangements to improve outcomes for children in our care. However the scope of this strategy is not restricted to making good quality placements. Stages of the care journey, including a clear focus on supporting families to stay together wherever it is safe to do so, and minimising the need for children to become , after are also key elements of this strategy. Children's Services are driving a 'whole system' approach to supporting Looked After Children and keeping families together. Together with the Early Intervention and Prevention Strategy, they form a multi-agency response to driving improved outcomes.

The focus in this strategy is on describing what will change in relation to our work with children in care or at risk of coming into care. The strategy contains an action plan for the future rather than an attempt to cover every detail of our current services and support.

There is wide agreement in Bridgend that we want all our children and young people to

- thrive and make the best of their talents;
- live healthy and safe lives;
- be confident and caring individuals throughout their lives;
- know and receive their rights.

The children and young people themselves also aspire to this vision of what their lives can and should be.

If good outcomes are achieved, the different needs of children and young people – social, physical, emotional, cultural and learning – will have been met. However, not all children and young people have the benefits of good health, a stable and nurturing family, the necessary personal and social skills or other attributes which will secure their safety and wellbeing.

In extreme circumstances, the local authority will become the legal 'guardian' of children whose own family, for whatever reason, is unable to care for and secure good outcomes for them.

Looked After Children are those children and young people aged between 0 to 18 years who cannot safely remain with their family and are cared for by the local authority. Children are accommodated by the Local Authority either as a result of

court proceedings because they have been or are in danger of being harmed, or with parental agreement. A significant proportion of children coming into care have a history of neglect or abuse. The majority of children and young people looked after by Bridgend are placed in foster care, with only a small proportion of young people placed in residential care, usually due to their more complex needs.

All the research indicates that, in general, outcomes for children who have been looked after, particularly for long periods of time or after a long period of poor parenting and neglect are not as good as those for other children. Children and young people who have been exposed to very poor parenting, neglect and/or abuse require not just care but also support in coming to terms with those experiences which often will have been extremely traumatic and harmful. We also know that the difficulties and negative behaviours experienced by looked after children and young people may be repeated when those young people become parents themselves, often with consequent negative impacts on their children and their children's children.

Hence, we must intervene as early as necessary to ensure that children and young people do not suffer; we need to provide good parenting and (often specialist) support when children are in our care; and we need to put in place plans which will 'turn around' children's lives as quickly and permanently as possible. All these things will help to reduce the likely repetition of harmful behaviour with future generations.

However, being a good corporate parent is expensive. In a world of finite, and diminishing, resources, it is critical that we act swiftly and effectively to ensure we use those scarce resources as efficiently as possible.

To achieve these aims, all partners - the young person, his or her family and the support services – must each understand that they have a responsibility to put the interests of the child or young person first. This is not the same as saying that the child's wishes will always be met, but that his or her views are respected and taken account of when any decisions are made which affect his or her life.

2. Where are we now?

2.1 Background of Bridgend's children's social services

Although the Council is the 'corporate parent' for looked after children and young people, responsibility for the day to day processes and arrangements rests primarily with the Safeguarding and Family Support Service – children's social services. In common with many other authorities in England and Wales, there have been both rising demands on, and concerns about the quality of these services during the last decade.

In September 2005, the authority was placed under a "protocol" by CSSIW because of concerns about the performance of children's social services. Sufficient progress was made so that the protocol was lifted in 2009. However, there have been on-going pressures and challenges including:

- rising numbers of looked after children, children in need and children on the child protection register;
- high levels of vacancies and sickness absence among social workers;
- difficult to manage caseloads;
- high use of agency staff which was both expensive and sometimes unreliable;
- continuing need for improvements in performance;
- overspends in relation to the base budget.

Through strengthening senior management and changes to practice, significant improvements were made during the next two years, particularly in terms of staffing and performance. During 2012, for the first time in many years, the Council had a full complement of social workers in children's services, although there were still issues related to staff inexperience, supervision and rising service demands. The use of agency staff has decreased significantly and caseloads have reduced.

More recently, there has been some deterioration in progress. Firstly, a number of experienced staff have left the Authority and the majority of new staff, especially to the assessment and case management teams, are newly qualified or relatively inexperienced.

The numbers of children and families we are working with have continued to rise, putting more pressures on all services, including adoption, fostering and aftercare. Pressures on our front line safeguarding teams have been exacerbated by significant changes arising of the Family Justice Review which now means that all care proceedings must be concluded within a 26 week timeframe with all assessments being completed by social workers before care proceedings are initiated.

These factors combined mean that there is less resilience within the service and, unsurprisingly, budgets continue to be overspent, despite additional resources being made available year on year.

2.2 National and local research and related plans and strategies

The problems being experienced in Bridgend are not unique but we know, from national studies, that some authorities appear to be managing the difficulties more successfully than others, despite similarly challenging socio-economic circumstances. A number of research studies have been undertaken in Wales and England to identify the characteristics of such successful local authorities. Hence, we have looked closely at these studies and the situation in both Bridgend and other authorities has helped us refresh both our strategic approach and our practice.

Research suggests that some variation in the numbers and rates of looked after children across local authorities can be explained by differences in the demographic and socio-economic profile of each local authority. This is especially the case in relation to population size, deprivation and the proportion of households that are lone parent families. Other aspects affecting the numbers and rates of

looked after children relate to factors more within the control of the local authority and their partners – especially the way that local areas lead, organise and deploy their services for vulnerable children and families.

The most recent Welsh study, published in June 2013, concluded that there is no ‘magic number’ for the rate of looked after children that would help a local area calculate whether numbers are ‘too high’ or ‘too low’. This is because the number of looked after children in a local area is a result of a complex interaction of demographic and socio-economic trends as well as factors connected to the way the local Council leads, organises and deploys its services for vulnerable children and families.

The study, in which Bridgend participated, highlighted five main areas that can contribute to local efforts to reduce the number of looked after children, i.e.:

- strategy and leadership;
- prevention and early intervention;
- approach to practice;
- partnership working, and
- information and intelligence about performance.

The research suggests that:

- there is strong collaborative working at a strategic level and this needs to filter down more to frontline staff and practitioners;
- stakeholders feel positively that the priority for agencies is improving outcomes for looked after children and young people (i.e. safety above numbers or cost), and
- stakeholders praise the commitment to early intervention and prevention and believe that this can help improve outcomes for children, young people and their families.

The main areas for further development were suggested as:

- having in place a clearer strategy;
- further strengthening prevention and early intervention;
- improving the capacity of the wider children’s services to support children and young people with higher levels of risk; and
- reducing the caseloads of social work teams to enable improvements in practice and more direct work with children and families.

In 2013 a study undertaken on behalf of the London Boroughs identified critical success factors that led to the reduction of the numbers of looked after children. These were:

- knowledge and understanding of the LAC population;
- controlling entry, encouraging exit and reducing the duration of the stay in the system; and
- use of alternatives to care.

In addition to the national studies, we have also made contact with other authorities to explore the range of approaches that they are using which appear to be successful.

2.3 Trends in the Bridgend's LAC population

Over the last year, we have been undertaking detailed analysis of our performance and the characteristics of the children and families where children have been taken into care. The full analyses are available in appendix A.

The key trends are as follows:

- Between 2007/8 and 2012/13, the Bridgend LAC population increased by 40% compared to a 24.5% increase across Wales.
- In Bridgend, children under the age of 2 make up 29% of the total number of children entering care. There has been an increasing trend in the number of children under 2 that have entered care since 2008.
- Children under 2 and young people aged 14 to 16 form the main proportion of children entering care, accounting for just over 46% between 2008 and 2014.
- Since 2008, of the total number of children that were aged under 1 at the point they became looked after, 41 have been adopted.

3. Where do we want to be?

3.1 Our shared Vision, Commitment and Aspirations

The development and delivery of this strategy are underpinned by some key principles.

The responsibility for meeting the needs of looked after children, of those at risk of coming into care rests across all of Children's Services.

All of our Looked after Children will be provided with the right type of placement which meets their needs, provides them with some choice about where they live, and enables them to benefit from positive experiences similar to those experienced by other children of the same age.

Placements should provide stability and permanency for children within their families or alternative care arrangements.

We want to enable our looked after children to live within their own family networks, wherever possible, through positive multi agency interventions and with a diminishing demand on resources. We want to reduce the number of children and young people for whom being taken into care is a requirement for their wellbeing and safety.

Where children cannot be supported within their immediate family or kinship network, they will in the main have their needs met in a foster family provided in house, or with independent foster agencies.

Residential placements will only be made where the complexity of a child's needs mean they cannot live in a family setting.

Out of county placements will only be considered in exceptional circumstances.

Placements should support Looked After Children to transition into adulthood with confidence, a strong sense of self-worth, and the skills and abilities to thrive.

Preventative and early intervention services should recognise need early so that we can offer support at an earlier stage to reduce the need for statutory intervention including having to take children into care. Through effective identification and assessment of need we are can reduce levels of risk and help families to prevent problems from reoccurring.

3.2 Our Objectives

The scope of this strategy covers four key objectives:

- We will support families to stay together and reduce the need for children to be looked after by ensuring a strong focus on early intervention and preventative action across agencies
- We will manage risk confidently and provide support at the edge of care to make sure the right children come into care at the right time
- We will provide and commission a flexible and affordable mix of high quality placements to support all children having positive experiences in care, whatever their needs
- We will give children clearly planned journeys through care which enable them to be reunited with family and friends where possible, have stable placements and exit the care system positively.

3.3 Respecting Diversity

Bridgend Council is committed to promoting equality and valuing diversity through our roles as community leader, service provider and employer. It is critical that equality is integrated into our service delivery arrangements and underpins all aspects of our work. We have made a commitment to make progress toward achieving the WLGA Equality Improvement Framework to ensure that we are meeting our equality duties.

This requires us to be:

- F** *Friendly, approachable and professional*
- A** *Accessible to the whole community*

- I Inclusive of the diverse community we serve*
R Respectful of people's differences

We know that being 'fair' does not simply mean treating everyone the same. It means understanding and tackling the different barriers that people face so that everyone has a fair chance to fulfill their potential.

We know that being 'fair' means that we embrace the diversity of our county and challenge discrimination wherever it exists in our communities, whether it is based on a person's gender, race, disability, faith, sexual orientation, age or social status. We want to make our services accessible and responsive to the diverse needs of the people who live in, work in and visit the county borough. This means doing the best we can for our looked after children and those on the edge of care.

4. How do we get there?

4.1 By communicating the strategy.

Communication will be throughout the Council, statutory partners and stakeholders. The strategy will be overseen by the LAC Strategy Board and will report to the Peoples Board. This strategy and the associated action plan will continue to be live documents, regularly updated as each of the projects moves forward, however our commitment to Looked After Children, to the principles in this strategy and to working together to provide the best possible services will remain constant.

4.2 By promoting early intervention and prevention services.

The Early Intervention Strategy will be published in the summer of 2014 outlining the contribution that we can make through strengthening our early intervention model and the pathways through the edge of care services.

The aim will be to drive improvements to family support, its design and delivery, and in doing so, reduce the numbers of families developing more complex needs and thus requiring more intensive and costly interventions, including the need for children to become looked after.

The Local Authority and partner agencies must prioritise the delivery of targeted prevention and early intervention services to stop needs escalating. The early intervention strategy will aim to ensure that prevention and early intervention forms part of a coherent continuum of support and interventions for families. It will be important that our prevention and early intervention services have systems in place to measure their impact, specifically on outcomes for children.

4.3 By continuing to direct resources into evidenced based targeted interventions.

We will focus on supporting families with complex and acute needs through the Intensive Family Support Service and Connecting Families, and we will explore therapeutic models of intervention to meet children's needs.

4.4 By Building workforce capacity and transforming social work practice

The increase in Bridgend's Looked After Children has placed substantial pressure on the availability of Bridgend's own placement resources such as fostering and Adoption, resulting in a reduction of placement choice in house, and an increase in the need to commission placements from the independent fostering and adoption providers. Increased demands on social work teams, reviewing officers and support staff has posed significant challenges for staff in terms of meeting statutory requirements. The financial costs of looking after high numbers of Looked After Children has placed significant and unsustainable pressure on budgets.

To respond to these challenges it is important that our work force has capacity to work proactively, delivering interventions at an early stage to affect positive outcomes for children and reduce the need for them to be looked after. Where necessary this will involve transforming social work practice, ensuring that decisions and interventions are informed by evidence based practice. We need to transform the practice of Children's Services social workers by using strengths based and outcome focussed methodologies.

4.5 By striving for stability and permanence for looked after children.

This will result in increased numbers of adoptions, special guardianship orders, residence orders, and other long term arrangements with foster carers or extended family. We will rigorously pursue the discharge of care orders where these are no longer necessary. We will develop a permanency team to seek alternative legal arrangements for looked after children.

4.6 By promoting a collective responsibility and response to rising numbers in Looked After children.

Historically, activity to manage the increasing Looked After population has primarily focussed on Social Services' responses and systems. This has included continuous review of the threshold criteria for admission into accommodation, tight gate keeping by senior managers to ensure threshold criteria for admission are adhered to, and a clear focus on permanency policies and procedures.

Whilst Social services intervention is targeted at the most vulnerable children and their families, a number of other agencies across the borough have a role to play in supporting families in their task of raising children safely. To succeed, the scope of this strategy to reduce the Looked After population must be sufficiently broad to encompass the role other agencies working with children to ensure that there is a shared responsibility across agencies for its development and implementation. This will require continued commitment from all agencies to multi-agency working, so that provision of preventative family support services, to ensure early intervention before families reach crisis status, is viewed as a shared response between all agencies rather than the primary responsibility of social Services. This is in line with the developments in Social services which are underpinned by the Children Act 2004.

4.7 By maintaining a detailed knowledge and understanding of our LAC population.

Analysis of data and robust self-evaluation will ensure that we know and understand our LAC population and we will be better placed to manage and change in trends.

4.8 By taking a multi-agency approach to working in partnership to increase prevention and early intervention services that focus on particular vulnerable groups. For example:

- Working closely with the Youth Service and Local Health Services under ABMU to reduce the number of teenage pregnancies within the borough;
- Working with Substance Misuse Agencies to support parents with substance and alcohol misuse issues;
- Working with the Support People Programme within the Communities Directorate to improve support to families experiencing domestic abuse.
- Working with Flying Start to address issues of poverty and deprivation within clearly defined geographical areas.
- Working with ABMU Health Board staff in regards to early intervention with the “Baby Friendly Initiative” (BFI) which aims to promote breastfeeding, attachment, eye contact, bonding and positive parenting.
- Work with ABMU to further the “Hello Baby Project“ which expands upon BFI by promoting fuller attachment through baby massage, grow brain, nutrition and diet and safety.
- Working in partnership with NSPCC to develop and promote services that specifically address issues of child neglect, such as the proposed ‘Thriving Families Project’.

| Work stream | Actions | Lead | By when | Savings attributed |
|--|---|--------------------------------------|--|---------------------------|
| 1 Families stay together | | | | |
| 1.1 Review of family support offer across levels of need | Remodel all early intervention and prevention services under one Group Manager. Review effective evidence based parenting programmes | Deborah McMillan | Dec 2014 | 2 GM posts: £116K |
| 1.2 Focus Flying Start Centres of helping families in need | Agree a service level agreement between Flying Start and social care to define how they will work together. Explore opportunities for contact to be supervised through Flying Start. This will help to relieve pressure on Safeguarding Teams. | Tina Haddon | Sept 2014 | |
| 1.3 Focus on early intervention and prevention programmes | Develop and implement early intervention strategy to ensure that all relevant stakeholders commit to targeted prevention and early intervention approach. | Nicola Echanis | Draft strategy complete by mid Aug 2014. To Corporate parenting October 2014. | |
| | Establish pilot Childs Journey project using lean systems thinking. | Michelle Hatcher | January 2015 | |
| 1.4 Develop and extend the Team Around the Family model and integrated working | Transfer of additional children's services staff into MAC teams. Childrens social care staff to become aligned with hubs. | Colin Turner / Nicola Echanis | June → Dec 14 | |
| 1.5 Improve attendance in school | Team around the school to refocus on vulnerable children and young people. | Nicola Echanis | April 15 | |

| | | | | |
|--|---|---------------------------------------|-----------------|--|
| | <p>Agree target cohort in every school.</p> <p>Establish permanent exclusions task and finish group.</p> | | | |
| 2 Manage risk confidently at the edge of care | | | | |
| 2.1 Transformation of social care practice | <p>Liaison with local colleges about the training programme for the Social Work degree so that practitioners are better informed from the outset.</p> <p>Induction programme for all new staff.</p> <p>Focused supervision and appraisal.</p> <p>Training programme for SW.</p> <p>Review of assessment processes.</p> <p>(To link with the work of the Strategic Improvement Board Workforce Development Group.)</p> | Colin Turner / Claire Holt | April 15 | |
| | Multi agency audit of cases to provide detailed analysis for the reasons behind the increase in LAC. | Tracy Hughes | Dec 14 | |
| 2.2 Making use of kinship networks | <p>Explore approaches to engaging extended families and kinship networks.</p> <p>Increase number of special guardianship orders, residence orders, and other long term arrangements with foster carers or extended family.</p> | Tracy Hughes | Dec 14 | |

| | | | | |
|---|--|--|--------------------------------------|--|
| 2.3 Review panel arrangements | Agree process to identify young people on edge of care. | Nicola Echanis / Mark Lewis | Complete | |
| 2.4 Remodel Connecting Families | Explore Community budgets model with LSB partners. | Deborah McMillan | Complete | |
| | Refocus entry criteria for Connecting Families Identify edge of care cohort. | Nicola Echanis | Complete | |
| | Reallocate funding to offer respite as a preventative edge of care service. | Nicola Echanis | Complete | |
| 3 Robust commissioning | | | | |
| 3.1 Joint adults/children's commissioning team (ALN) | Regular reviews of placements (ALN). Transition plans to supported or independent lodgings agreed in timely manner. Formalise robust commissioning arrangements Negotiate discounts and savings with providers. | Mel Davies / Michelle Adamson/ Ian Oliver | Dec 2014 | |
| 3.2 Increase number of fostering families | Increase number of in house foster carers. | Natalie Silcox/ Colin Turner | Increase by 9, April 2015 | |
| | Review CCSR framework agreement. | | Complete | |
| 3.3 Review the gatekeeping arrangements for agreeing placements | Review processes for identifying any placements. Develop QA arrangements for the Accommodation and Permanence Panel and Out of Authority Panel. | Colin Turner / Nicola Echanis | Sept 14 | |
| 3.4 Accommodation strategy for 16-18 year olds | Increase the number of supported lodging hosts. | Natalie Silcox | Increase by 5, April 2015 | |

| | | | | |
|---|--|--|-------------------|--|
| | Framework agreement for spot purchasing. | | April 2015 | |
| 4 Clearly-planned journeys | | | | |
| 4.1 Swift permanence arrangements | Recruit P/O Placements and Permanency to lead on permanence. | Colin Turner | May 2014 | |
| | Embed permanency procedures. | Natalie Silcox | Sept 14 | |
| | Audit of 15+ cohort. | Wendy Wilcox / Natalie Silcox | Sept 2014 | |
| | Audit of S20 cohort not in permanent placements. | Elizabeth Walton- James | Annual | |
| 4.2 Monitor and maintain adoption performance for BCBC children | Implementation of Western Bay Regional Adoption service. Consider establishing specialist team. | Natalie Silcox | Sept 14 | |
| 4.3 Improve transition into adulthood and independence | Just @sk Plus work with housing providers to focus on moving on to independence. | Wendy Wilcox / Colin Turner | April 2015 | |

Appendix A

Trends in Bridgend's LAC population

Figure 1: The total number of looked after children and young people in Bridgend as at the end of the last 14 financial years

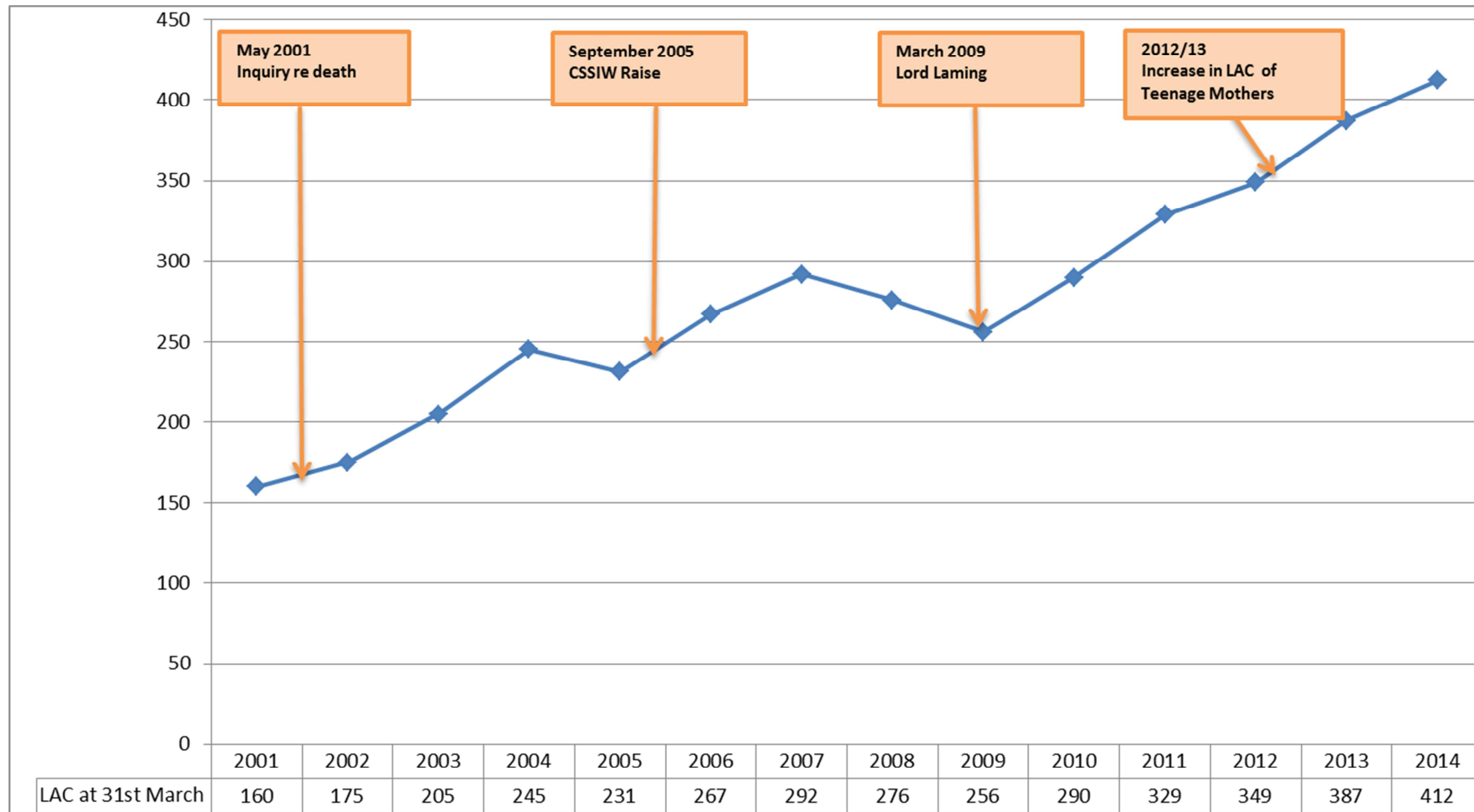
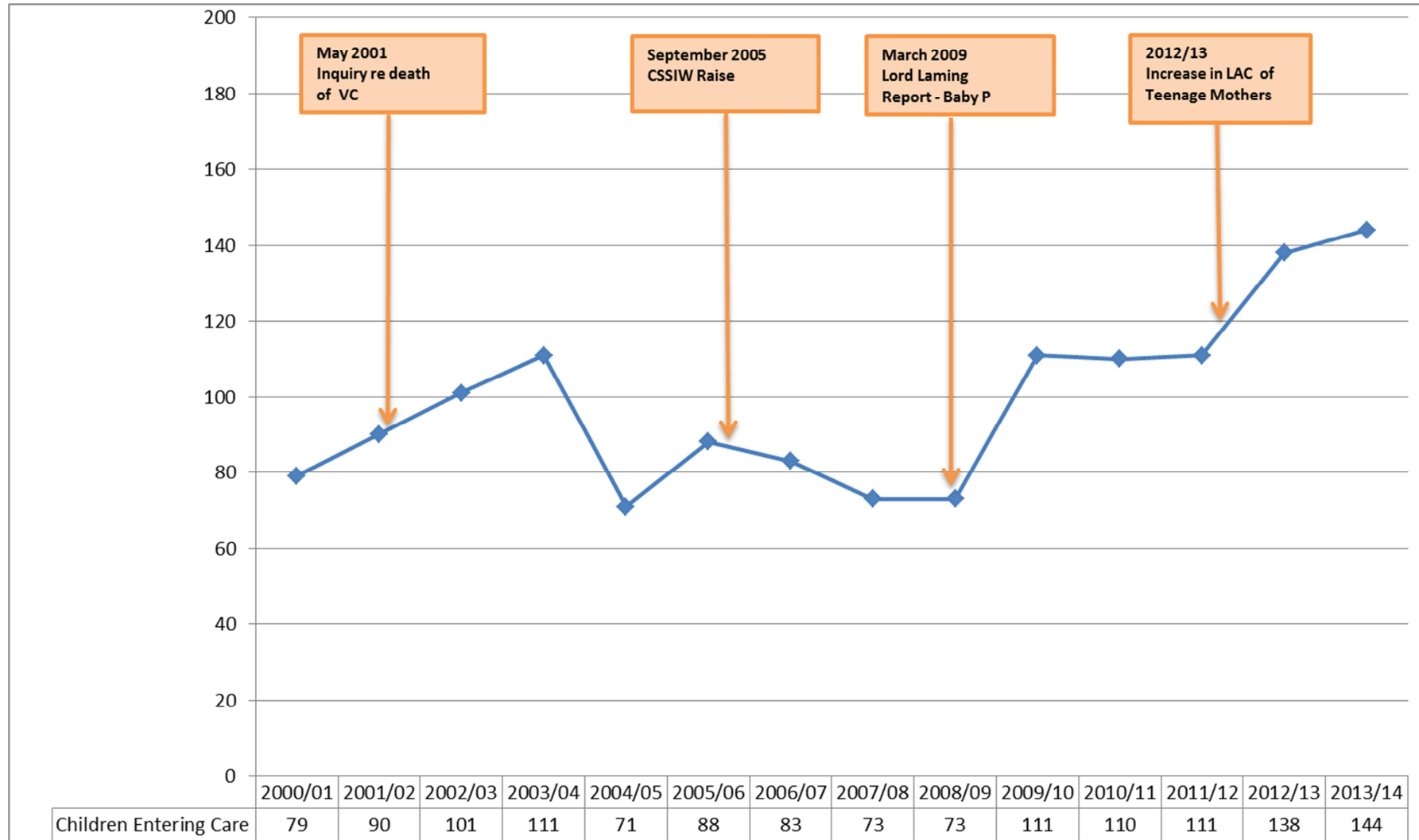


Figure 2: The number of children and young people that entered care (became looked after) between 1st April 2000 and 31st March 2014



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The increase within Bridgend can also be attributed to an increase in the level of complexity of the cases that are being accepted as referrals, with the majority of child protection concerns relating to more serious concerns such as substance misuse and poor parenting due to emotional or physical neglect.

Figures 3 and 4 show that for the six years since April 2008, 28% of the children and young people who became looked after were under 2 years old and 20% were over age 14, with 2% of the total being aged over 17. This is around 20% higher compared to the five years previous to 2008.

Figure 3: The total number of children and young people that entered care (became looked after), by age band, in the period 1st April 2008 and 31st March 2014

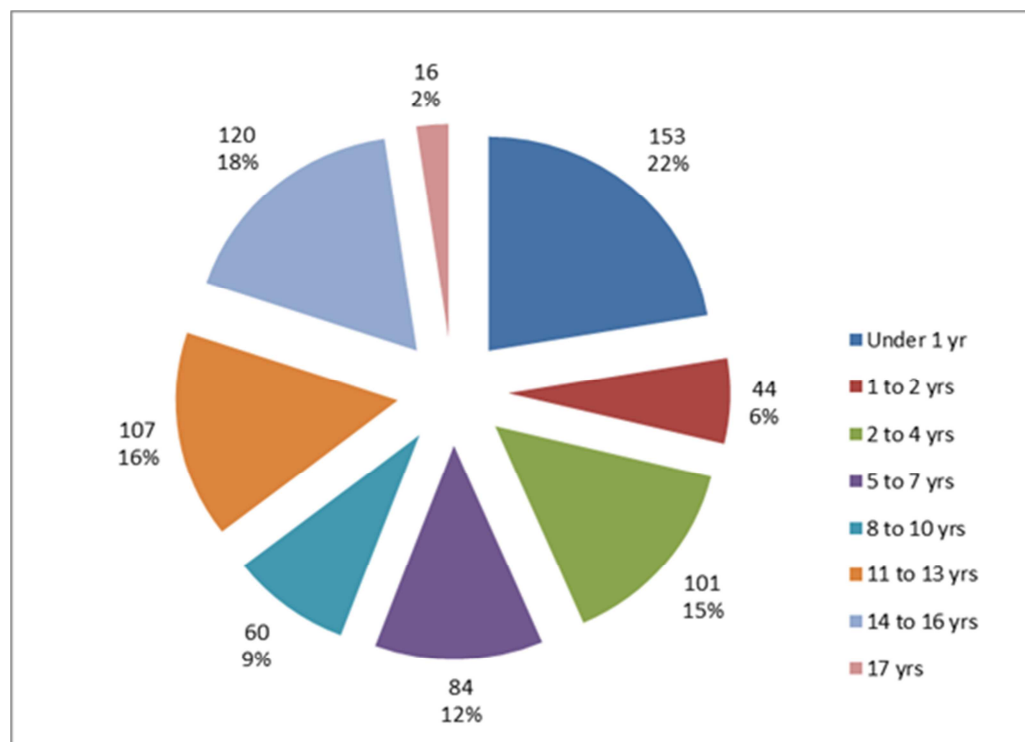
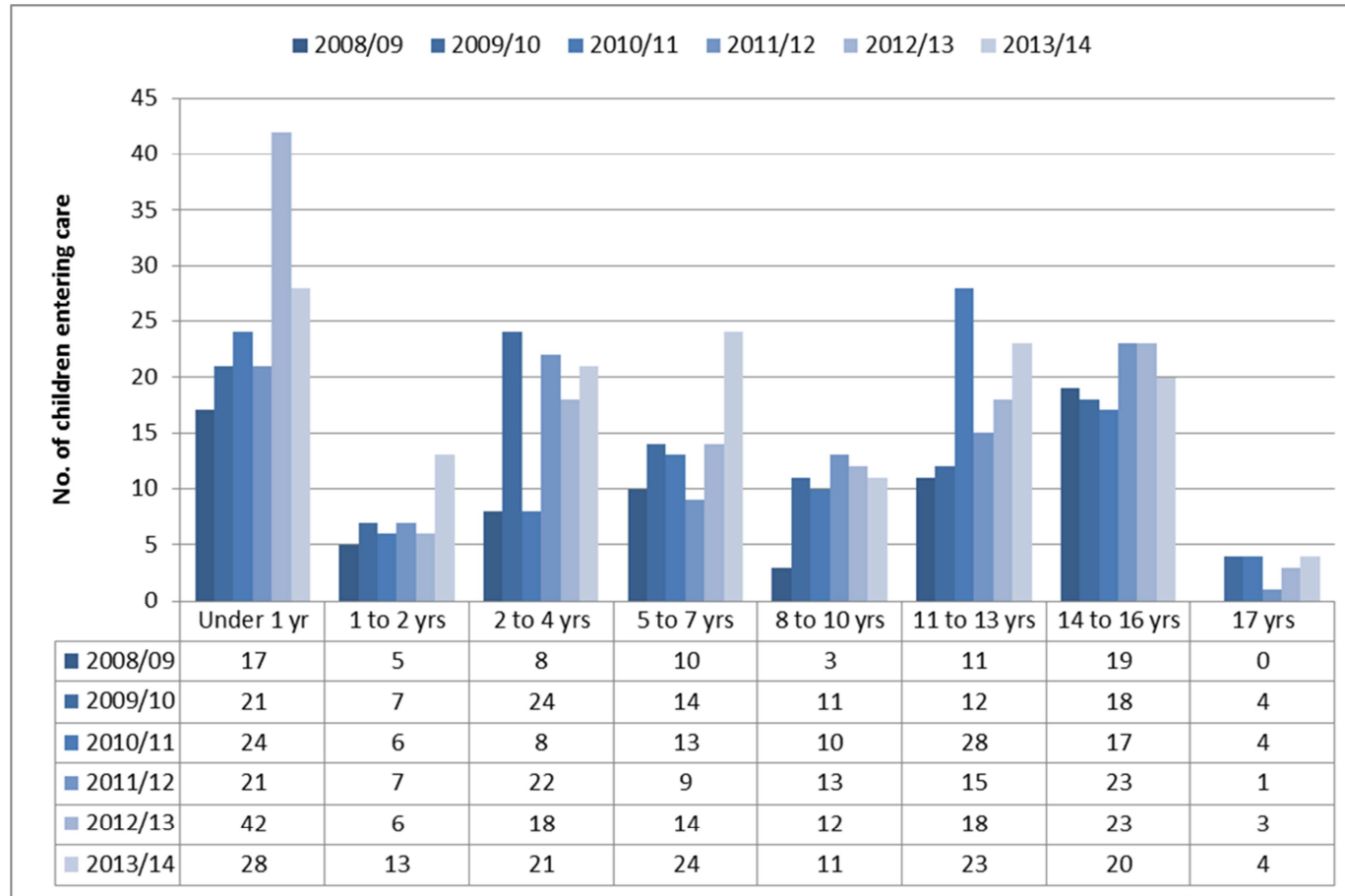


Figure 4: *The number of children and young people that entered care (became looked after), by year and age band, between 1st April 2008 and 31st March 2014*



Our data to 31 March 2013 indicated that children aged between 8 and 10 were statistically on average more likely to stay under the care of the authority for the longest period of time – 4 years and 8 months. The rise in the LAC population seen from 2009 had coincided with a rise in the average length of time that children have spent in care. Since 2007, there had also been an increase in the number of children that spent longer than a year in care.

Figure 5 shows that from 2007 to 2013, despite the increase across the age bands, the average age of children that entered care remained at around the aged 7 mark. The average age of children leaving care was reducing and dropped from an average age of 11.21 in 2010/11 to an average of 8.99 during 2012/13. This was indicative of a continuing improvement in enabling children to leave care at an earlier stage. Between 80 and 100 children and young people left care each year from 2007 to 2013.

Figure 5: Average age of children and young people entering and leaving care, 2000 – 2013

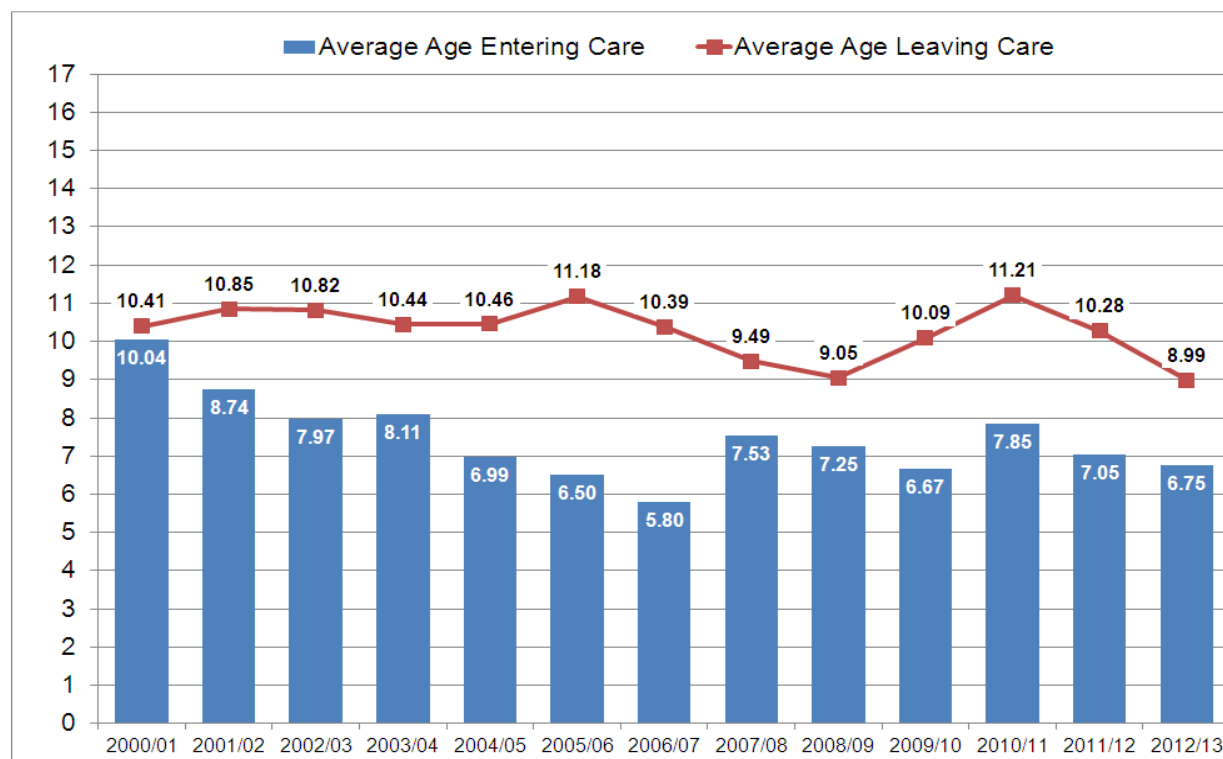


Figure 6 illustrates the exit strategy for all children and young people that ceased to be looked after over the past 6 financial years. This shows that from 2009 to 2013, the picture was one of the maintenance of historic patterns rather than increases which might help reduce the overall numbers. However, this changed in 2013/14.

Figure 6: Permanency Placement between 1st April 2008 and 31st March 2014

| Year Ending March | 2009 | 2010 | 2011 | 2012 | 2013 | 2014 | Total |
|---|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|------------|------------|
| Adopted | 18 | 15 | 11 | 12 | 15 | 25 | 96 |
| Special Guardianship Order | 9 | 10 | 2 | 13 | 10 | 15 | 59 |
| Returned home to Parents/Guardian - non SGO/Residence | 36 | 43 | 42 | 50 | 42 | 55 | 155 |
| Moved to Independent Living | 18 | 14 | 18 | 17 | 13 | 21 | 101 |
| Other (Died, other LA, Custody etc) | 10 | 4 | 8 | 6 | 3 | 7 | 38 |
| TOTAL | 91 | 86 | 81 | 98 | 83 | 123 | 562 |

Analysis in 2013 of the LAC population at the time, in Bridgend, evidenced that there were a significant number of children subject to Care Orders, who had been placed at home under the auspices of Placement with Parent Regulations. Many of these children had been living at home under these arrangements for in excess of 1 year, suggesting that risks had reduced and, therefore, their LAC status should be reviewed. Consequently, this cohort of children was reviewed to determine whether their care orders could be discharged. As at March 2014 the number of placements with parents had reduced from 37 to 30.

Should recent trends continue, we forecast that the LAC population of Bridgend will increase by some 14% over the next 6 years, rising to about 440 by March 2020. However, this forecast increase in LAC numbers would not be as drastic as rises in previous years. Key points are that:

- between 2014 and 2020, just to maintain the LAC population at current levels, an extra 14% of children will need to leave care on top of those already forecasted to move on;

Item 4

Appendix A1

- in order just to maintain the LAC population at current levels, over the next seven years, significant and greater impetus will need to be directed to children aged under 2 and young people aged between 14 and 16;
- in order to achieve, by 2020, a 20% reduction in the number of children forecasted to be in care, 800 children and young people will be required to leave the care of the authority over the next 7 years;

This is a challenging agenda but we know reductions are achievable. For example, the introduction and work of IFSS has helped Newport to reduce their LAC population by 8% over a three year period and, in England, Hammersmith and Fulham have been particularly effective at increasing the rate of successful Special Guardianship Orders granted.

2.4 Significant characteristics of looked after children and their families in Bridgend

As illustrated in Figure 4, the key characteristic of our looked after children cohort in the last two years has been the significant increase in the number of children that have entered care aged under 2.

In 2013, an examination of all cases of children under 1 that became looked after in the period April 2010 to March 2013 showed that:

- drug addiction affected 30% of the families, increasing to 60% when substance misuse problems including alcohol were also taken into account;
- domestic abuse by the father was present in 25% of the cases, with alcohol abuse identified as an underlying cause of the abuse in 43% of those cases. While the main area for concern here related to the father, there were also factors such as a mother's unwillingness to remove themselves and their children from an abusive relationship; and
- 33% of the children entered care due to the mother's mental illness/depression and challenging behaviour that impinged on proper and safe parental ability.

It is also significant that 29 (40%) of the babies had between 1 and 6 older siblings who had previously placed into care, as illustrated in Figure 7.

Figure 7: Breakdown of number of children previously taken into care:

| Age Band of Mother | Total No. of Mothers in Age Band | Number of Children previously placed into Care | | | | | | | No. of Mothers with previous Child in Care |
|--------------------|----------------------------------|--|----|---|---|---|---|---|--|
| | | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | |
| 41 to 45 | 1 | | | 1 | | | | | 1 |
| 36 to 40 | 8 | 3 | 1 | | 2 | 1 | | 1 | 5 |
| 31 to 35 | 6 | 2 | 1 | 2 | | | 1 | | 4 |
| 26 to 30 | 20 | 9 | 5 | 1 | 2 | 2 | | 1 | 11 |
| 22 to 25 | 18 | 11 | 4 | 2 | 1 | | | | 7 |
| 19 to 21 | 6 | 6 | | | | | | | |
| 16 to 18 | 12 | 11 | 1 | | | | | | 1 |
| 11 to 15 | 1 | 1 | | | | | | | |
| Total | 72 | 43 | 12 | 6 | 5 | 3 | 1 | 2 | 29 |

This would conform to BCBC adopting a more robust and rigorous response to Child Protection issues with families where previous children have entered care. Of particular note is that 8 out of the individual mothers had moved into the Bridgend area, after having had previous children taken into care by another Local Authority.

In total, 60% of the mothers of those babies taken into care had either been in care themselves as a child or have had previous children removed.

Between 2010 and 2013, around 50% of the babies entering care were born to mothers aged under 25, with age band 26-30 accounting for a further 30%. The number of teenage mothers of babies entering care increased during 2012/13 to 12 from 4 in 2011-12 and 2 in 2010/11

The statistical analysis suggests that there is a need to continue a strong inter-agency focus on parental alcohol and drug issues, but that we also need to prioritise reducing the number of babies at risk of poor parenting. This will require close working with health and education colleagues in relation to both parenting and more effective use of contraception.

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BRIDGEND COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL

REPORT TO CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

2 SEPTEMBER 2014

REPORT OF THE ASSISTANT CHIEF EXECUTIVE – LEGAL & REGULATORY SERVICES

IMPLEMENTATION OF A SINGLE YOUTH OFFENDING SERVICE ACROSS WESTERN BAY

1. Purpose of Report

- 1.1 To present the Committee with information relating to the implementation of the Western Bay Youth Justice and Early Intervention Service.

2. Connection to Corporate Improvement Objectives / Other Corporate Priorities.

- 2.1 The key improvement objectives identified in the Corporate Plan 2013-2017 have been embodied in the Overview & Scrutiny Forward Work Programmes. The amended Corporate Improvement Objectives adopted by Council on 3 April 2013 formally set out the improvement objectives that the Council will seek to implement between 2013 and 2017. The Overview and Scrutiny Committees engage in review and development of plans, policy or strategies that support the Corporate Themes.

3. Background.

- 3.1 The Children and Young People Overview and Scrutiny Committee have previously considered the subject of the Youth Offending Service in March 2012. At this time, Members expressed strong support for the YOS and its important work with young people, but expressed concern regarding future financial uncertainty.
- 3.2 Since this time the Authority has considered this area as part of its collaboration work in the Western Bay region. In 2013 each of the three Cabinets agreed to amalgamate the three Youth Offending Services in the WB region, subject to a supportive business case. In principle agreement was also given to Bridgend County Borough Council (BCBC) to host the WB YOS.
- 3.3 In terms of collaborative projects, Welsh Government have agreed that there is an important role for scrutiny and as a result commissioned an independent research study by the Centre for Local and Regional Government Research at Cardiff Business School, Cardiff University, titled 'Developing a culture of collaborative scrutiny: and evaluation of practice and potential'. This report

stated that bar a few exceptions, *'whilst councils have aspirations - and in some cases firm plans - for collaborative scrutiny, overall developments have been slow.'* Dr Downe, one of the researchers further explained: *'Our research concluded that public service collaborations in Wales are not currently being fully held to account. Given the funding at their disposal and their service responsibilities, this is a serious concern and needs to be remedied.'*

- 3.4 At the Cabinet meeting in April 2014, Cabinet Members received a report on the Western Bay (Health and Social Care) Collaboration, under which the subject of the YOS collaboration was also discussed. Cabinet were advised within this report of the importance of scrutiny and that Welsh Government strongly supported collaborative scrutiny. They subsequently agreed as part of their resolutions that *'future reports (as appropriate) will be referred to the Health and Wellbeing and Children and Young Peoples Overview and Scrutiny Committees to ensure that there are appropriate scrutiny arrangements in place at a local/regional level regarding the Western Bay programme.'*

4. Current Situation / proposal.

- 4.1 Attached at Appendix A is report from the Directorate detailing the progress being made with the creation of the Western Bay Youth Justice and Early Intervention Service.
- 4.2 When examining the report, Members may wish to consider the following points when formulating their questions to the invitees:
- a) Have the delays caused by negotiations with the trade unions and delays as a result of IT database mergers had any impact on the cost savings?
 - b) What is the Western Bay Governance Structure?
 - c) What Governance Structure is in place or planned for the YOS?
 - d) What actions are being taken to mitigate against potential changes to the local authorities funding position or any reductions to future grant funding?
- 4.3 Members may also wish to consider the future role of scrutiny in relation to the Youth Offending Service as well as other Western Bay projects relating to children and young people

5. Effect upon Policy Framework and 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. Equality Impact Assessment

6.1 The equalities implications are set out in the Officer's report at Appendix A.

7. Financial Implications

7.1 The financial implications are set out in the Officer's report at Appendix A.

8. Recommendation

The Committee is asked to:

- i. Consider and note the content of the Officer's report;
- ii. Explore issues consistent with its challenge and support role;
- iii. Decide how it wishes to progress future Scrutiny of this item.

Andrew Jolley,
Assistant Chief Executive – Legal & Regulatory Services
2014

Contact Officer: Rachel Keepins
Scrutiny Officer

Telephone: 01656 643613
Email: scrutiny@bridgend.gov.uk

Postal Address: Democratic Services - Scrutiny
Bridgend County Borough Council,
Civic Offices,
Angel Street,
Bridgend,
CF31 4WB

Background Documents:

None

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BRIDGEND COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL

REPORT TO CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

DATE 2 SEPTEMBER 2014

REPORT OF THE CORPORATE DIRECTOR CHILDREN

IMPLEMENTATION OF A SINGLE YOUTH OFFENDING SERVICE ACROSS WESTERN BAY

1. Purpose of Report

The purpose of this report is to update the Children and Young People Overview and Scrutiny committee as to the progress being made with the creation of the Western Bay Youth Justice and Early Intervention Service

2. Connection to Corporate Improvement Objectives/Other Corporate Priorities

The report links to the following corporate priorities:

- Working together to raise ambitions and to drive up educational achievements
- Working with children and families to tackle problems early
- Working together to help vulnerable people to stay independent
- Working together to tackle health issues and encourage healthy lifestyles

3. Background

- 3.1 Youth Offending Services/Teams (YOSs) are statutory multi-agency partnerships who have a legal duty to co-operate in order to secure youth justice services appropriate to their area. There is currently a YOT in each Western Bay (WB) council area (Swansea, Neath and Port Talbot and Bridgend). YOSs are funded from a variety of sources including UK Government, Welsh Government and the statutory partners. (i.e. the local authority, police, the probation trust and health).
- 3.2 During 2012 the three YOS Managers collectively agreed that to make the service more resilient in light of the falling levels of statutory work and to allow the services to focus more on early intervention and thus improve outcomes for young people who have or are “at risk” of offending; that amalgamation would be the sensible way forward.
- 3.3 This idea was proposed to each Management Board who met individually and then collectively and determined that regional collaboration should be taken forward for mutual benefit. In December 2012 an Interim Combined Western Bay Regional YOS Management Board (“NEWBO”) was established.

- 3.4 In 2013 each of the three Cabinets agreed to amalgamate the three Youth Offending Teams in the WB region, subject to a supportive business case. In principle agreement was also given to Bridgend County Borough Council (BCBC) to host the WB YOS.
- 3.5 Cabinets were advised in April 2013 of a desire to achieve amalgamation by April 2014 on the assumption that a supportive business case and all legal, human resources and financial requirements could be properly addressed within that timeframe. In October 2013 Cabinets were advised that if all the necessary elements were not achievable within this time scale the start of a new service would be delayed. Discreet work-streams (HR, Legal, ICT, Finance and Governance) were identified and work-stream leads from BCBC were nominated to ensure these areas of work were sufficiently undertaken to ensure that approval for amalgamation could be given within the desired time-frame.
- 3.6 In April 2014 all three Cabinets gave agreement for the amalgamation to take place. On 29th May 2014 the first Western Bay Youth Justice and Early Intervention Service Management Board was held and all local management boards ceased. The Management Board is chaired by the Neath Port Talbot Director of Social Services and has a membership in line with the requirements of the Crime and Disorder Act including Cabinet Members from all three Local Authorities. The amalgamation seeks to realise cost savings with no reduction in service delivery but actually seeks to improve service delivery with no increase in resource. This is to be achieved through restructuring the service across Western Bay, sharing resources and good practice.

4. Current situation.

- 4.1 The recruitment of the overall Group Manager and three Locality Managers has been delayed due to ongoing negotiations with the Trade Unions.
- 4.2 Negotiations were originally delayed as they cut across the wider Trade Union negotiations that BCBC was having. Once this was resolved negotiations recommenced.
- 4.3 Since then there have been further protracted negotiations with regards to Terms and Conditions. In order to address some of the Trade Union concerns the decision has been taken to second the Locality Managers to Bridgend. The result of the most recent meeting with unions on 29th July 14 was that the only way to resolve the issues we have to everyone's satisfaction was to enter into a process of TUPE for all YOS staff subject to the relevant approvals.
- 4.3 The three existing YOTs have their own ChildView databases that are provided by CACI. These will be merged into one Western Bay database in order for information sharing to easily take place and to aid with reporting to the Youth Justice Board (YJB). However the level of data cleansing that needed to be done prior to the databases being merged was greater than expected and has led to a slight delay. This is now on schedule for mid November 2014 and will not cause any delay to the full amalgamation.

- 4.6 The Youth Justice Plan for 2014/15 is being written and will be finalised by September as a transition plan for the Western Bay Youth Justice and Early Intervention Service. This will form the basis of the medium to long-term business plan for the service setting out the aims of the new service and the steps that are necessary to achieve these. It will be a single plan for the 3 areas although due to circumstances it will have to contain separate staffing structure and separate financial breakdowns. Failure to submit the plan by this date can result in the YJB grant not being released to the service.
- 4.7 Collaborative work between the three existing youth offending teams (YOTs) is already taking place with some staff already working across the Western Bay footprint. Neath Port Talbot and Bridgend in particular have started to access each other's programmes and specialist staff members, developing the ethos of a united service. Neath Port Talbot are accessing the Bridgend skills development project and parenting support whilst BCBC are having help from the NPT information officer.
- 4.8 The Youth Crime Prevention Fund already finances a Western Bay delivery plan and reporting is processed through Bridgend as the host authority. This Welsh Government grant brings together the pre-court work across Western Bay aligning practise and further developing restorative approaches which includes a new overarching Restorative Practice post funded through the grant.
- 4.9 Other grant funding is still held at local level as this financial year is seen very much as a year of transition. The Management Board is very aware that as the service progresses that partner agencies may also see the amalgamation as an opportunity to make savings and this will need to be carefully managed as the service moves forward.

5. Effect upon Policy Framework& Procedure Rules.

- 5.1 Local Authorities have the power to collaborate and there is a duty to consider collaboration contained in the Local Government (Wales) Measure 2009. YOTs are statutory partnerships that must be established for a local authority area or areas in accordance with the Crime and Disorder Act 1998 (CADA).

6. Equality Impact Assessment

There are no equal opportunity issues arising from this report.

7. Financial Implications

- 7.1 The combined net budgets for 2014-15 of the three Councils equates to £1.728 million. This is broken down over the three Councils as follows:

| Budget 2014/2015 | |
|------------------|--------|
| Expenditure | Income |

| | Staffing Budget | Total Non-Staffing | Total Gross Budget | Total Income | Net Controllable Budget |
|-------------------|------------------------|---------------------------|---------------------------|---------------------|--------------------------------|
| | £ | £ | £ | £ | £ |
| Bridgend | 813,553 | 183,822 | 997,375 | -606,182 | 391,193 |
| Neath Port Talbot | 784,454 | 287,824 | 1,072,278 | -664,988 | 407,290 |
| Swansea | 1,513,400 | 469,100 | 1,982,500 | -1,052,800 | 929,700 |
| TOTAL | 3,111,407 | 940,746 | 4,052,153 | -2,323,970 | 1,728,183 |

7.2 Of the £4.052 million gross cost, £2.085 million is met from grant funding, in particular Youth Justice grant (£1.056 million) and Youth Crime Prevention Fund (£788,000).

7.3 The budget for Bridgend takes into account the MTFs saving for 2014-15 of £77,000. No further savings are currently set out in the Medium Term Financial Plans of any of the three Councils, although it must be borne in mind that this may change as the funding position for local authorities becomes clearer. In addition, the services have experienced quite significant reductions in grant funding over recent years and any further reductions may impact on the level of service provision.

7.4 The WB Youth Justice and Early Intervention Service project was granted £375,000 from the Regional Collaboration Fund for 2013-14 and a further £75,000 for 2014-15. The funding for 2014-15 is planned to meet the cost of merging the three separate client databases, along with a small element of premises related costs. Cabinet has agreed that any ongoing project management costs associated with this project will be met from individual Council budgets during the transition phase, using the 10-17 population estimates as the basis for apportionment. This is currently estimated at £16,866. In Bridgend this cost will be met from the YOT budget. Based on current data, the percentage apportionments to each authority is set out in the following table:

| | % |
|-------------------|------|
| Bridgend | 28.1 |
| Neath Port Talbot | 27.4 |
| Swansea | 44.5 |

7.5 As the lead authority Bridgend will be responsible for managing a pooled budget, the financial details of which will be incorporated into the shared service legal agreement.

8. Recommendation.

8.1 That Committee note the content of this report.

Directorate Chief Officer's Name: Nicola Echanis
Directorate Chief Officer's JobTitle/Appointment: Head of Strategy, Partnerships and Commissioning
25th July 2014

Contact Officer: Catherine Powell
Project Manager

Telephone: (01656) 642509

E-mail: catherine.powell@bridgend.gov.uk

Postal Address <Full Postal Address>

Background documents

Cabinet Report, 1st April 2014 Managing Youth Offending Services across Western Bay
Cabinet Report, 15th October 2013, Establishment of the Western Bay Youth Justice and Early Intervention Service
Cabinet Report, 2nd April 2013 Western Bay Youth Offending Services

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BRIDGEND COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL

REPORT TO CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

REPORT OF THE ASSISTANT CHIEF EXECUTIVE – LEGAL AND REGULATORY SERVICES

2 SEPTEMBER 2014

ROTA VISITING

1. Purpose of Report

- 1.1 The purpose of the report is to provide information to the Committee on rota visiting in relation to the Council's Children's Social Care establishments.

2. Connection to Corporate Improvement Objectives / Other Corporate Priority

- 2.1 The key improvement objectives identified in the Corporate Plan 2013-2017 have been embodied in the Overview & Scrutiny Forward Work Programmes. The amended Corporate Improvement Objectives adopted by Council on 3 April 2013 formally set out the improvement objectives that the Council will seek to implement between 2013 and 2017. The Overview and Scrutiny Committees engage in review and development of plans, policy or strategies that support the Corporate Themes.

3. Background

- 3.1 Background information on the role of Members in undertaking visits to social care establishments is set out in the officer's report at appendix A.
- 3.2 A programme is developed of rota visits to social services establishments including three in relation to Children's Services as well as those for Adult Services. Members undertake visits in pairs and complete written reports which are submitted to the Director for noting or action.
- 3.3 At a Cabinet meeting in September 2003, it was resolved that "Rota visiting is continued as a method for monitoring standards of care in social service establishments".
- 3.4 A similar report on adult social services establishments has been presented to the Health and Wellbeing Overview and Scrutiny Committee in relation to adult social services establishments.

4. Current Situation

- 4.1 The officer's report and a schedule of visits carried out are attached at appendices A and A1 respectively.

- 4.1 Attached at Appendix A is an update report from the Children's Directorate on the Rota Visiting Scheme, together with the schedule of visits carried out to the three children's establishments between October 2012 and March 2013 and a summary of the comments made, (Appendix A1).
- 4.2 When considering the report, Members may wish to consider addressing the following questions to the invitees in order to help focus discussions:
1. *What is the current situation regarding numbers of elected Members who are engaged in the scheme? Have the number of visits improved due to the 1:1 training sessions and additional Members signing up to rota visiting on an ad hoc basis?*
 2. *How has the Directorate responded to the comments within the Annual Internal Audit Assurance Report, which noted that only a small number of Member rota visits are being carried out and highlighted this as an area for improvement?*
 3. *What are some of the reasons that are coming across from Members for their non-attendance? Is there anything that could be done to address these?*

5. Effect upon Policy Framework and 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 wellbeing in the County Borough of Bridgend.

6. Equalities Impact Assessment

- 6.1 The equalities implications are set out in the Officer's report at Appendix A.

7. Financial Implications

- 7.1 There are no financial implications.

8. Recommendations

The Committee is asked to:

- i. Consider and note the content of the Officer's report;
- ii. Explore issues consistent with its challenge and support role;
- iii. Decide how it wishes to progress future Scrutiny of this item.

Andrew Jolley,
Assistant Chief Executive – Legal and Regulatory Services

Contact Officer: Rachel Keepins, Scrutiny Officer

Telephone: 01656 643613

Email: scrutiny@bridgend.gov.uk

Postal Address: Democratic Services - Scrutiny
Bridgend County Borough Council,
Civic Offices,
Angel Street,
Bridgend,
CF31 4WB

Background Documents:

None

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BRIDGEND COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL**CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE****2nd SEPTEMBER 2014****REPORT OF THE CORPORATE DIRECTOR, CHILDREN****ROTA VISITING BY ELECTED MEMBERS****1. PURPOSE OF REPORT**

- 1.1 To provide information to the Committee on rota visiting to the council's children's social care establishments.
- 1.2 Members will be aware that the rota programme includes visits to council and independent adult social care establishments and a separate report was taken to the Health and Wellbeing Overview and Scrutiny Committee on the 14th July 2014.

2. CONNECTION TO THE CORPORATE IMPROVEMENT PLAN / OTHER CORPORATE PRIORITY

- 2.1 This report links to the following improvement priorities in the 2013-17 Corporate Plan:
 - Working together to raise ambitions and drive up educational achievement
 - Working with children and families to tackle problems early

3. BACKGROUND

- 3.1 It is important that Members contribute to the safeguarding of our vulnerable adults, children and young people and help to ensure that the quality of care provided is appropriate. It is essential that opportunities are presented for Members to meet with adults and children and young people who receive services from us to listen to their views.
- 3.2 Members will be aware that there is a programme of rota visits to the children's and adults' social care establishments. Members undertake visits in pairs and written reports are submitted by them for noting or action. Where Members have identified that an action is required, they will receive a formal response to their report. All comments received from Members are reported into the respective services.
- 3.3 The comprehensive guidance has been further developed through previous discussion with Members and provided to all Members involved in the programme of visits. Training sessions were arranged including some 1:1 sessions to ensure that any new Members were updated on the process. Also, to assist members

with the process, an email is sent to them on the first day of every month to remind them of the visits that are due that month.

- 3.4 Previous reports to the Corporate Parenting committee and Overview and Scrutiny committees noted that the importance of Member visits could not be over-emphasised as they provided a point of contact for service users that was over and above that of the staff. It is recognised that it gives service users an opportunity of expressing their feelings to persons outside the establishments.
- 3.5 This report will provide information on the 2013/14 rota programme and the latest situation in 2014/15.

4. CURRENT SITUATION

- 4.1 The 2013/14 rota commenced in May 2013 and, because of the success of the pilot of visits to independent sector homes for adults during 2012/13, the programme was expanded to include 13 independent sector homes. This figure equates to about 50% of the total number in the county borough.
- 4.2 Attached at **Appendix 1** is a schedule of visits carried out to the children's establishments between May 2013 and March 2014 together with a summary of the comments made. It is not possible to include every comment and the summary gives the main points relating to the welfare of the children and young people.
- 4.3 Out of a possible 33 visits to children's services, 14 visits were carried out during the year. This equates to about 42% of the visits that were due.
- 4.4 In May 2014, the Council received the annual Internal Audit Assurance Report in relation to the review work that Internal Audit carry out on inspection activity undertaken by others within and outside of the authority. In general the report was positive, however, the report noted that only a small number of Member rota visits are being carried out and highlighted this as an area for improvement.
- 4.5 The current rota visiting programme commenced in April 2014. 11 teams of Members have signed up to participate and the programme this year.

5. EFFECT UPON POLICY FRAMEWORK AND PROCEDURE RULES

- 5.1 There is no effect upon the Policy Framework and Procedure Rules.

6. Equality Impact Assessment

- 6.1 There is no negative impact relating to equality characteristics arising from this report.

7. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

7.1 There are no financial implications.

8. RECOMMENDATION

8.1 It is recommended that the Committee note the information provided in this report.

Deborah McMillan
Corporate Director, Children
August 2014

Contact Officer

Judith Brooks
Wellbeing Business Support
Email: Judith.brooks@bridgend.gov.uk
Tel: 01656 642082

Background Documents None.

**BRIDGEND COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL
Children's Social Care services**

**ROTA VISITING
PREMISES VISITED – May 2013 – March 2014**

| | May 2013 | June 2013 | July 2013 | Aug 2013 | Sept 2013 | Oct 2013 | Nov 2013 | Dec 2013 | Jan 2014 | Feb 2104 | Mar 2014 |
|---|-------------|--------------|--------------|-------------|--------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|
| Bakers Way Respite House: 2a Bakers Way, Bryncethin, Bridgend, CF32 9RJ | | X | X | | | X | X | | | | X |
| Newbridge House Transition Unit: Merthyr Mawr Road, Bridgend, CF31 3NY | X | | X | | | | | X | | | X |
| Sunnybank Complex Needs Unit: 31 Pant Morfa, Porthcawl, CF36 5EN | X | | | | X | | | X | X | | X |
| TOTAL | 2 | 1 | 2 | | 1 | 1 | 1 | 2 | 1 | | 3 |

| Establishment | Comments |
|--|--|
| Bakers Way Respite House: Bryncethin, Bridgend, | <p>We visited the home, and spoke to service users and staff. They had a good selection of activities for users, when we were there.</p> <p>Impressed with the beautiful hanging baskets and tranquil setting. The children were in school when we visited but it was evident from the photographs that they engage in various networks to promote life skills and leisure activities.</p> <p>We were told about the services provided which appear to be adequately funded.</p> <p>Very impressed with the happy atmosphere and the obvious rapport between staff and children. This is obviously a much needed facility that serves the needs of both parents and children very well.</p> <p>The cost of transporting the children to and from school during their respite is deducted from the Bakers Way budget despite the fact</p> |

| | |
|---|---|
| | <p>parents have free provision. We feel this is having a negative impact on the unit and taking away much needed resource. The onus should be on the education budget.</p> <p>Staffing levels accommodate the individual's needs.</p> <p>We were informed there is a lack of parking when meetings take place, i.e. four parking spaces when seven/eight are needed. We would like to request this be looked into as that street can become very congested during the day.</p> <p>A pleasant atmosphere and all areas spotlessly clean. Bedrooms well-equipped and decorated. Staff consider they have good relations with both parents and children, with a key worker allocated to each child. The home ensures that compatible children are accommodated together. The rooms have locks but we were assured they were never used.</p> <p>There is a well-equipped sensory room which is popular, as is the soft play area and outdoors play area.</p> <p>Only two downstairs bedrooms and no lift so this limits the no. with physical disability.</p> <p>The minibus can only accommodate one wheelchair user which is a problem.</p> <p>Spoke to service users and staff. Good selection of activities.</p> |
| <p>Newbridge House Transition Unit: Bridgend,</p> | <p>Given a very warm welcome and guided tour. There is access to communal kitchen/lounge and TV, computers and job seeking, male and female bathrooms and toilets. Viewed one of the private rooms but not the flat as it was occupied. Zero tolerance attitude to violent behaviour.</p> <p>Warm and cheerful atmosphere. We introduced ourselves to the staff and spoke to two of the four clients currently in residence. Both said they were happy and enjoying their stay, adhering to the rules and learning how to be independent, cooking for themselves and travelling to Cardiff for example, which raised their aspirations for the future.</p> <p>As usual, Newbridge House was immaculate and we believe the staff are doing a very good job to help youngsters 'on their way'.</p> <p>It was encouraging to note that the unit was operating to near capacity and that admissions were all planned rather than emergency.</p> <p>Evidence of a planned approach to developing the wellbeing of young people clearly emerged from our conversations with two teenage residents who were being encouraged to take the step towards vocational training and independent living and felt happy, secure and optimistic for the future.</p> |

| | |
|---|--|
| <p>Sunnybank Complex Needs Unit: Porthcawl,</p> | <p>We received a detailed explanation of the home's policy and how it's run. Highly impressed with the facilities/ décor. Met two of the three currently resident who appeared relaxed and enjoying their environment. The guest bedroom, lounge, bath and shower rooms and dining room are all newly refurbished and immaculate. The unit made us proud to be Bridgend councillors.</p> <p>A warm and friendly welcome on arrival. The facility looked as a family home should, tastefully decorated, in immaculate condition, well maintained by the staff. Provision for high standard home schooling.</p> <p>We were quickly impressed with the very happy environment and were greeted warmly by staff and children alike. The children were confident, relaxed and at ease with the staff and with us.</p> <p>Very impressive facilities – bathroom, kitchen, living room and classroom all recently refurbished. The unit is clean and well-resourced and the staff, who have consistently developed their skills and knowledge while in post, clearly work hard.</p> <p>This is an excellent facility for young people in BCBC and our visit proved to be an uplifting and very reassuring experience.</p> <p>We looked around and spoke to one of the residents whose room we then visited. Residents are encouraged and supported to be independent, helping with food, cleaning their rooms, loading the dishwasher and doing their own washing with supervision if necessary. Residents and staff socialise at mealtimes.</p> <p>The unit prepares residents for independent living and encourages co-operative living, with staff able to enforce appropriate boundaries.</p> <p>The premises were extremely clean and tidy with a homely feel and well-equipped bedrooms and communal rooms. There is internet access with library protocols and the service runs a vehicle.</p> |
|---|--|

BRIDGEND COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL

REPORT TO CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

2 SEPTEMBER 2014

REPORT OF THE ASSISTANT CHIEF EXECUTIVE – LEGAL & REGULATORY SERVICES

LEARNER TRAVEL POLICY

1. Purpose of Report

- 1.1 To inform the Committee of the current position with regard to learner travel arrangements in Bridgend.

2. Connection to Corporate Improvement Objectives / Other Corporate Priorities.

- 2.1 The key improvement objectives identified in the Corporate Plan 2013-2017 have been embodied in the Overview & Scrutiny Forward Work Programmes. The amended Corporate Improvement Objectives adopted by Council on 3 April 2013 formally set out the improvement objectives that the Council will seek to implement between 2013 and 2017. The Overview and Scrutiny Committees engage in review and development of plans, policy or strategies that support the Corporate Themes.

3. Background.

- 3.1 The Committee has considered the issues around the provision of learner transport on a number of previous occasions. The most recent of these was at its meeting on the 30 September 2013, where the Committee made a number of recommendations, which were reported to the Cabinet meeting on 12 November 2013.
- 3.2 The recommendations were as follows:
 1. The Committee were supportive of Proposal (a) in relation to Rationalisation of SEN Transport and commented that strong management in terms of implementation and monitoring would be key.
 2. Further to this, Members requested that as part of the rationalisation of SEN Transport, Officers explore whether the Authority is double funding for SEN pupils who receive a Disability Living Allowance at the highest rate for mobility, as this includes an allowance/(car) for transport for their child.

3. The Committee commented on the lack of clear definitive guidelines from Welsh Government for Learner Transport provision for Welsh Medium and Voluntary Aided Schools. The ambiguity of the statutory guidelines had led to various interpretations and understanding between both Officers and Members, which was unhelpful.

Recommendations:

- A. The Committee recommend that Home to School Transport provision for Voluntary Aided Schools remain in line with the proposals for Welsh Medium Schools whereby transport is provided irrespective of whether there are alternative non-faith or non-welsh schools being closer.
- B. The Committee recommend that should any reductions be made to Home to College Transport, they would strongly support mitigation measure 3 in the report, which is to 'provide free transport for those students in receipt of an Education Maintenance Allowance (EMA) and who live outside the qualifying distance criterion of 3 miles.'
- C. The Committee expressed concerns that the proposal for charging for post-16 transport did not treat all learners equally as it proposes partially subsidising transport for school learners, with no similar proposals for college learners. The Committee therefore recommend that if this proposal is taken forward, in order to treat all learners equally, a similar provision should be made such as a comparable contribution towards bus passes for post-16 college learners.
- D. The Committee recommend that any proposals for changes to school transport need to consider a phased in approach whereby they are introduced incrementally. The Committee recommend that a phased approach is particularly important in relation to proposal (c); to remove all provision for Home to College transport; as well as proposal (e); to remove provision for Voluntary Aided schools where the school is not the nearest available school and beyond the statutory distance.
- E. The Committee recommend that termly payments for 'paying places' (as opposed to annual payments) be more widely promoted to parents in order to assist and encourage parents to take up these places.
- F. The Committee recommend that further discussions are held with FE providers to determine whether they can assist in contributions towards transport for their learners.

The Committee further highlighted the following as areas that still need to be considered for any proposed changes to Learner Transport:

- Road Safety Issues;
- All routes need to be risk assessed;
- Impact of increases in cars outside schools as a result of proposed changes to Learner Transport;

- Impact on attendance as a result of proposed changes to Learner Transport;
- Potential risks to children as there is no legal requirement for parents to accompany children to school, which could lead to an increase in children of a young age walking to school unaccompanied;
- Impact of proposed changes on the Authority's NEETs figures;
- Impact on the 14-19 Collaboration Agenda – Members highlighted this as a risk given the uncertainty of future grant funding for pupils' transport under this project. If grant funding were to be removed, these pupils would fall under the same transport policy as other learners and could therefore be greatly affected by the proposed changes to Learner Transport.

The Committee concluded by requesting that they receive the firm proposals, once they have been developed further following consultation, as a pre-scrutiny item, prior to any final decision being made by Cabinet.

4. Current Situation / proposal.

- 4.1 The officers' report is attached at Appendix A. It sets out the actions that have been undertaken since the Committee last considered this item and sets out the planned way forward.
- 4.2 When considering this item, it is the role of the Committee to note the progress that has been made and to consider whether it wishes to consider this item again during the three month consultation process.

5. Effect upon Policy Framework and 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. Equality Impact Assessment

- 6.1 The equality implications are outlined in the officer's report attached as Appendix A.

7. Financial Implications

- 7.1 The financial implications are outlined in the officer's report attached as Appendix A.

8. Recommendation

The Committee is asked to:

- i. Consider and discuss the information within the attached report;
- ii. Explore issues consistent with its challenge and support role;
- iii. determine whether it wishes to make any comments or recommendations relating to these reports.

Andrew Jolley,
Assistant Chief Executive – Legal & Regulatory Services
2014

Contact Officer: Rachel Harries
Scrutiny Officer

Telephone: 01656 643696
Email: scrutiny@bridgend.gov.uk

Postal Address: Democratic Services - Scrutiny
Bridgend County Borough Council,
Civic Offices,
Angel Street,
Bridgend,
CF31 4WB

Background Documents:

None

BRIDGEND COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL**REPORT TO CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY
COMMITTEE****DATE 2nd SEPTEMBER 2014****REPORT OF THE CORPORATE DIRECTOR CHILDREN****LEARNER TRAVEL POLICY****1. Purpose of Report.**

The purpose of this report is to inform the Children and Young People Overview and Scrutiny committee of the work that has been completed in relation to reviewing learner travel arrangements in Bridgend and to state our intention to seek Cabinet approval to begin a public consultation in September 2014.

2. Connection to Corporate Improvement Objectives/Other Corporate Priorities

The report links to the following corporate priority

- Working together to make the best use of resources

3. Background.

3.1 The Council's approved medium term financial strategy (MTFS) 2013/14 to 2016/17 seeks to achieve potential revenue savings in the home to school/college transport budget through amendments to the Learner Travel Policy.

3.2 The Council's statutory responsibilities in relation to home to school/college are set out in the Learner Travel (Wales) Measure 2008. This stipulates that free transport must be available for:

- all learners receiving primary education living **two** miles or further from home to the nearest suitable school;
- all learners receiving secondary education (aged 11-16) living **three** miles or further from home to the nearest suitable school

3.3 There is no statutory duty to provide free transport for learners:

- who are not of statutory school age and this includes nursery aged children as well as post 16 students;
- Who, by parental preference, attend a voluntary aided (VA) school, where the school is not the nearest available school.

3.4 The Measure also provides guidance on circumstances in which local authorities may choose to make their own discretionary arrangements. Bridgend County Borough Council currently uses its discretionary powers to provide free transport for:

- primary and nursery aged children, residing more than 1.5 miles from the nearest suitable school (normally defined as their catchment area school);
- secondary aged children residing more than 2 miles from the nearest suitable school (normally defined as their catchment area school);
- post 16 learners, subject to the 2 mile limit;
- all learners attending VA schools, regardless of whether the school is the nearest available school.

3.5 The Learner Travel Statutory Provision and Operational Guidance 2014 was published in June 2014. This guidance includes statutory provisions which local authorities must consider in undertaking their responsibilities under the Learner Travel (Wales) Measure 2008. This guidance includes statutory guidance on risk assessing walked routes to school.

3.6 A consultation on proposed changes to the Learner Travel Policy was previously undertaken in December 2013. This consisted of the following six proposals:

- Proposal 1: Home to School transport: Change to statutory minimum distances
- Proposal 2: Home to School/College transport: Cease to provide transportation for post 16 learners
- Proposal 3: Home to School transport: Cease to provide transport to Voluntary Aided Schools
- Proposal 4: Home to School transport: Charging for post 16 transport
- Proposal 5: Home to School transport: Increase the cost of a 'paying place'
- Proposal 6: Home to School transport: Rationalisation of SEN transport

3.7 As a result of views expressed during the consultation, and the announcement that Welsh Government were due to start consulting on their Learner Travel Operational Guidance, it was felt prudent to cease the consultation and to undertake further detailed analysis on the following:

- The potential impact of withdrawing free post 16 transport on schools and colleges and the impact on post 16 learners
- The potential impact in terms of parental choice of schools and therefore the potential effect on pupil numbers at individual schools if statutory minimum distances are applied
- The potential impact on highway safety outside schools and college sites; on local communities; and on carbon footprint as a result of changes to the way that learners travel to school/college
- Further work to be undertaken following the consultation on safe routes to school and taking expert road safety advice
- Analysis of current routes to school using existing software to ensure all routes are efficient and transport providers are making most efficient use of routes and bus capacity

- Rationalisation of SEN transport

3.8 In light of the volume of work that this further analysis would necessitate a dedicated project manager was appointed in April 2014 to oversee the completion of the work outlined in 3.7 and a number of workstreams were project managed.

4. Current situation / proposal.

4.1 The first phase of work as stated in 3.7 has now been completed and final analyses are taking place. An overview of the work to date is given below.

- **The Analysis of the potential impact on schools, colleges and learners of withdrawing free post 16 transport;**

Research has been undertaken on the position that other Welsh authorities have taken with regards to Post-16 learner transport. Most Welsh councils are either in the position of amending their policies or have already amended them. An analysis of national research on the factors that influence the choices that post-16 learners make has also been undertaken and these have helped to develop a range of options that can be submitted to Cabinet in September 2014 that will realise financial savings whilst mitigating against the risk of increasing the number of NEETs.

- **The potential impact in terms of parental choice if statutory distances were introduced and the potential impact this would have on pupil numbers at individual schools;**

This has looked at school capacity analysis in respect of pupil admission numbers (PAN). It has also included a Welsh Medium/VA School analysis and the chance of there being parental choice on changing to non- Welsh Medium/VA from Welsh Medium/VA. Distance analysis was included to the next nearest school(s) with risk evaluation on parental choice. Furthermore there has been a financial impact analysis of the worst case scenario on schools most likely to lose pupils. This information will be used to determine what (if any) risk is posed by changing to statutory distances and will be presented to Cabinet on 16th September.

- **The potential impact on highway safety outside schools & college sites and on local communities and on carbon footprint as a result of changes to the way that learners travel to schools; and**
- **Further work to be undertaken following the consultation on safe routes to school and taking expert road safety advice**

Capita was commissioned to undertake the expert work around highway safety, carbon footprint and safe routes to school and this piece of work has been completed and we are awaiting their final report. The draft Capita report has recently been received by colleagues in the Communities Directorate to evaluate. The final report will be shared with members at cabinet on the 16th September 2014.

4.2 Work has also been undertaken to ensure that our current Learner Travel routes are maximising their efficiency and that we are not over-providing on our current applied distances. Staff have been trained in the use of a specific software package and work is ongoing to ensure that each transport route is accurately recorded and does not overlap with a safe walking route.

- 4.3 Work has also been undertaken to ensure that our provision of SEN transport is more efficient whilst still keeping the needs of the learner paramount. This work is on-going and will benefit from the taxi procurement exercise that the Communities directorate will undertake next year.
- 4.4 The corporate communications team has been actively involved throughout and are producing a consultation proposal and methodology to ensure that good practice, clear principles and guidelines are adhered to and that the consultation is a meaningful process, fair and clearly understood by all. A copy of the consultation plan is at Appendix A1.
- 4.5 Work to complete the workstreams outlined in section 4 is in its final stages and we believe that we will be in a much stronger and more informed position to approach Cabinet on September 16th with a view to commence a new 3 month public consultation starting in late September.
- 4.6 Any changes to the Learner Travel Policy need to be in line with statutory timescales in relation to consultation and implementation. The Learner Travel Policy is set in line with BCBC's Policy and Admission arrangements which are governed by Welsh Governments School Admissions Code. This sets out that admission arrangements must be consulted on for each maintained school between 1st September and 1st March and set by 15th April of the school year (the "determination year") beginning two years before the school year in which the arrangements will apply. With this in mind we would be looking at any change to the existing policy being implemented from the academic year 2016/17.
- 4.7 It is important to note that any changes that reduce discretionary provision of free school transport can only apply to pupils reaching compulsory school age or changing school. Changes cannot be made to existing pupils who have already been awarded the discretionary provision. As such will take a number of years to fully implement. It is also to be noted that the Learner Travel Information Regulations 2009 require the publication of information on the general transport policy before 1 October of the year preceding the academic year in which the changes will come into force. This means that changes for the academic year 2016/17 must be published before 1 October 2015. This dovetails with the timescales set out in paragraph 4.6 above so that the earliest time at which any amended learner transport provision could be implemented (in whatever form is finally settled upon) is the academic year 2016/17.
- 4.8 Changes cannot be made that would result in a lower provision than that which is permitted by statute (as set out in paragraph 3.2 above) and those pupils to whom discretionary provision at the current level has already been awarded are entitled to retain that level of provision until they either change schools or reach an age at which it is no longer compulsory for them to attend school.

5. Effect upon Policy Framework & Procedure Rules.

There are no implications for the Council's policy framework or procedure rules.

6. Equality Impact Assessment

No Equality Impact Assessment has been carried out to date. The consultation will invite stakeholders to raise equality issues and an EIA will be produced to accompany the report back to Cabinet on the outcome of the consultation.

7. Financial Implications.

7.1 The cessation of the original consultation in January 2014 has meant that the original savings identified for 2015/16 could no longer be realised and the MTFS for the Children's directorate has therefore been re-profiled as shown below in Table 1.

Table 1: Re-profiled MTFS – Learner transport (July 2014)

| MTFS Ref. | Savings Proposals | 2014-15 £000 | Indicative 2015-16 £000 | Indicative 2016-17 £000 | Indicative 2017-18 £000 | Comments |
|-----------|--|-----------------|-------------------------------|-------------------------------|-------------------------------|---|
| CH4 | Retender Learner Transport contracts | 250 | 400 | 100 | | |
| CH5 | Rationalise Special Education Needs transport | 200 | 200 | 50 | | |
| CH8 | Change to statutory distances | | | 250 | 240 | Requires consultation and Cabinet approval |
| CH11 | Charging for post 16 transport | | | 50 | 25 | Requires consultation and Cabinet approval |
| CH14 | Increase charges for paid places on home to school transport | | | 25 | | |
| CH37 New | Cease provision of non-statutory free post-16 transport | | | 300 | 600 | Requires consultation and Cabinet approval |
| CH38 New | School transport route efficiencies | | 200 | 200 | 200 | |

7.2 The failure to realise these savings would have a significant impact on the Children's Directorate capacity to deliver savings identified in the MTFs, and the savings would have to be found from core services from within the Directorate.

8. Recommendation.

8.1 The committee is asked to note the work that has been undertaken to date .

Directorate Chief Officer's Name: Deborah McMillan

Directorate Chief Officer's JobTitle: Corporate Director Childrens Services

July 29th 2014

Contact Officer: Catherine Powell
Project Manager

Telephone: (01656) 642509

E-mail: Catherine.powell@bridgend.gov.uk

Appendix A1: Consultation Plan

Background documents

Cabinet Report, 17th September 2013, Learner Transport Policy

Report to the Children and Young People Overview and Scrutiny Committee, 12th November 2013, Learner Transport Policy

Cabinet report, 10th December 2013, Learner Transport Policy

Learner travel consultation proposal

Version: 1.4
Date: 19/08/14

Document status: Draft
Author: Andrew Harris

0. Document control

| Version | Status | Date | Author | Details |
|---------|--------|----------|--------|----------------------------------|
| 1.0 | Draft | 18/07/14 | AH | First draft submitted |
| 1.1 | Draft | 31/07/14 | AH | Inc. Robin Davies alterations |
| 1.2 | Draft | 08/08/14 | AH | Consultation process alterations |
| 1.3 | Draft | 14/08/14 | AH | Section 3.4 and Section 4 |
| 1.4 | Draft | 19/08/14 | AH | Includes BREP suggestions |

| Key stakeholders | Focused meetings | Public meetings | Consultation document and questionnaire |
|--|------------------|-----------------|---|
| School: heads, teachers, governing bodies etc. | Y | Y | Y |
| School councils* | Y | Y | Y |
| School students (10-18) | | Y | Y |
| College students (16+) | | Y | Y |
| BCBC Youth Council | | Y | Y |
| Parents and general public | | Y | Y |

1. Overview

*School councillors from all XX schools will be invited to represent the views of 11-18 year olds at the focus group

2. Promotional tools overview

| | Stakeholders | Date | Information |
|---|--|-----------------------------|---|
| Council website | Online users | 29 Sept to 15 Dec | Press releases, web page and consultation documents. |
| School websites | | | Including Bridgend College's student web portal. |
| Social media | Online users | 29 Sept to 15 Dec | Used regularly to signpost to the council website, press releases and consultation updates. |
| Press release/Intranet article/local media | All (via website, intranet, and sent to all local media) | 29 Sept 24 Nov 26 Mar | Informative piece on consultation exercise Consultation reminder Report feedback Also include information throughout in Cabinet member's columns in local media. |
| Customer service screens | Civic visitors | 29 Sept to 15 Dec | Consultation information |
| Message of the day | Internal staff | 29 Sept to 15 Dec | Informative piece on consultation to staff. Used regularly. |
| Email to councillors | Councillors | 29 Sept | Informative email to all elected members to encourage their constituents to share views. |
| Bridgemembers | Councillors | 15 Oct | Informative/update article |
| School texting service | Students' parents | 29 Sept 24 Nov 26 Mar | Text sent to students' parents with link to consultation document. |
| Partners | All | 29 Sept to 15 Dec | LSB and key partners to receive link to promote the consultation page. |

3. Methods of engagement

3.1 Focus groups

| Venue | Date | Meeting - attendees |
|----------------|-----------|--|
| Newbridge room | Sept 2014 | Consultative panel (e.g. Unison, ATL, NASUWT, ASCL, ATL, NAHT, GMB and USAC) |
| - | Oct 2014 | Federation of primary head teachers' meeting |
| - | Oct 2014 | Secondary heads' meeting or BASH |
| - | Oct 2014 | School councils |
| - | Oct 2014 | BCBC Youth Council |
| - | Oct 2014 | Pre council presentation |

These dates with primary and secondary heads could be combined into regular meetings between the primary and secondary school heads. The next primary school heads meeting would be 1 Oct (the consultation will be live at this point). Due to the term time holidays through the learner travel preparation it is suggested that the interactions with these groups should be conducted during the consultation period itself. The consultative panel are due to meet 25th September, this group was used during the nursery consultation also.

3.2 Community engagement workshops

| Venue | Date | Attendees |
|---|-------------|-----------|
| Bridgend College | Day 1 – 6pm | All |
| Porthcawl Comprehensive School | Day 2 – 6pm | All |
| Pencoed Comprehensive School | Day 3 – 6pm | All |
| Coleg Y Dderwen School | Day 4 – 6pm | All |
| Maesteg Comprehensive | Day 5 – 6pm | All |
| Archbishop Mcgrath Catholic High School | Day 6 – 6pm | All |

The public meeting schedule is subject to Deborah McMillan's preference. It has been suggested that the meetings are conducted on separate days (not necessarily simultaneously). Bridgend College, Archbishop McGrath, Brynteg Comprehensive and Bryntirion Comprehensive will ideally meet at Bridgend College or Archbishop McGrath. This will also be the location for engagement of the aforementioned comprehensive's feeder primaries.

Porthcawl Comprehensive will be used for Porthcawl Comprehensive, Cynffig Comprehensive and their respective feeder primaries. Pencoed Comprehensive due to its geographical location and nature of the consultation would have a workshop to include the comprehensive and the associated feeder primaries.

Coleg Y Dderwen will be used as a location to represent the Ogmere and Blaengarw valleys including the primary schools within the area. Maesteg Comprehensive will be used to represent the Llynfi valley including YGG and the primary schools within the area.

3.3 Youth Council meeting

Cllr. Huw David has requested that learner travel consultation be an agenda item as part of the Youth Council's Cabinet meeting on Monday 13 Oct 2014 or Monday 10 Nov 2014. Cllr. David has requested the attendance of the consultation officer. It is recommended someone from the service involved in the project also attends this meeting.

3.4 Equalities support event

A one-off afternoon event held in November will be held designed to support citizens who may need assistance in completing the questionnaire. This will require the support of the equalities officer as well as use of laptops and the 'BrowseAloud' software already running on our website. The location currently proposed is Bridgend Life Centre due to its accessibility and transportation links.

4. Consultation process

Available bilingually online and by post including alternative formats if requested. A link should be sent to all key stakeholders and promoted on all promotional items such as press releases, posters etc.

Two versions of the questionnaire should be created one targeting students and one for the general public. It is suggested the student questionnaire features specific questions regarding commuting.

Key question topics for consideration:

- Removal of post 16 transport – phasing.
- Reverting to statutory minimum from two to three miles for secondary, and one and a half miles to two miles for primary.
- Safe walking/cycling routes
- Alternative forms of travel
- Paying for travel

Health and wellbeing benefits should be promoted where possible.

4.1 Draft questionnaire.

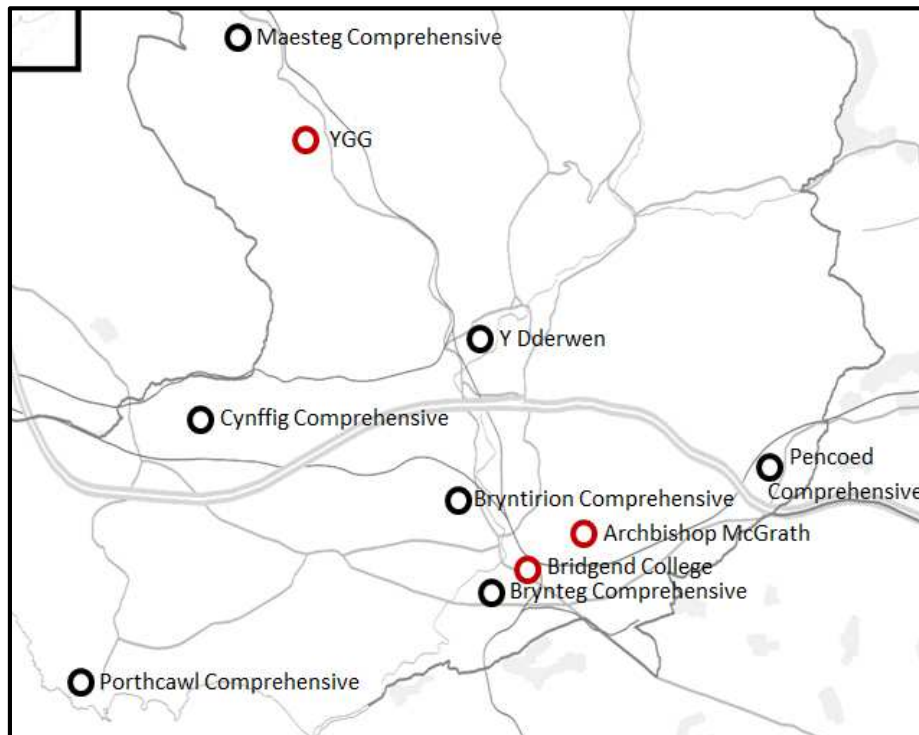
See appendix.

6. Limitations

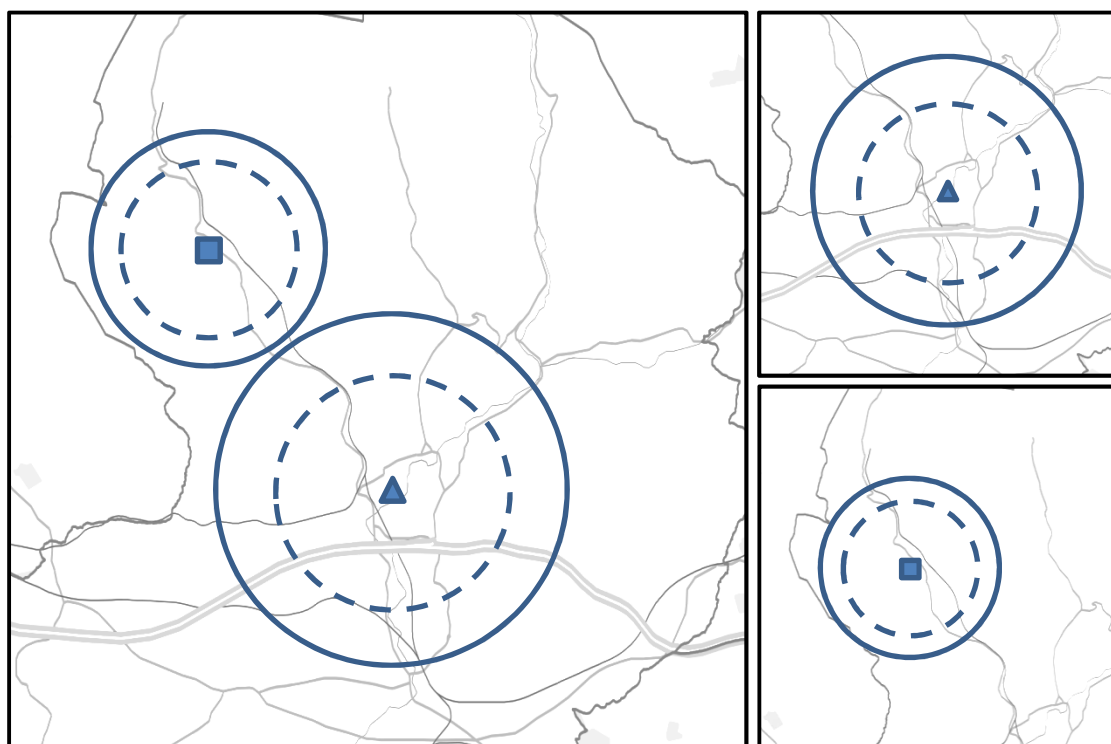
Local bus and taxi companies will not be targeted individually however their opinion can be segregated from the responses in the questionnaire.

7. Appendix

Comprehensive schools and college map



Representation of schools' free travel boundary movement.



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BRIDGEND COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL

REPORT TO THE CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

2 SEPTEMBER 2014

REPORT OF THE ASSISTANT CHIEF EXECUTIVE – LEGAL & REGULATORY SERVICES

INFORMATION REPORT - PERFORMANCE

1. Purpose of Report

- 1.1 The purpose of the report is to inform the Committee of the 2013/14 year end performance relating to its area of responsibility.

2. Connection to Corporate Improvement Objectives / Other Corporate Priorities.

- 2.1 The key improvement objectives identified in the Corporate Plan 2013-2017 have been embodied in the Overview & Scrutiny Forward Work Programmes. The amended Corporate Improvement Objectives adopted by Council on 3 April 2013 formally set out the improvement objectives that the Council will seek to implement between 2013 and 2017. The Overview and Scrutiny Committees engage in review and development of plans, policy or strategies that support the Corporate Themes.

3. Background.

- 3.1 At the Committee's meeting on 10 June 2014, Members agreed through the adoption of the Annual Forward Work Programme, to receive performance reports on the service areas within its remit. The purpose of Members receiving the performance reports is to ensure Committees are able to provide a critical overview of Directorate performance based on timely and relevant financial and performance data. It is the role of the Committee to consider the service provision, planning, management and performance of service areas within the Children's Directorate. The Committee's role for this report is to examine the improvements and monitor performance and risk.
- 3.2 Performance reports are presented twice a year; in November/December, Members receive data from quarter 2 and in February/March the Committee is provided with quarter 3 data. In addition the Committee agreed to receive year end performance data in June/July by way of an information report.

4. Current Situation / proposal.

- 4.1 The Corporate Director Children has provided an information report to the Committee outlining year end performance for the Children's Directorate, deta

These are available electronically and are set out below:

| | Title |
|-------------|---|
| Appendix A | Council's Performance against its Corporate Plan in 2013-14 |
| Appendix A1 | 2013-14 Performance indicators |

5. Effect upon Policy Framework and 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 wellbeing in the County Borough of Bridgend.

6. Equality Impact Assessment

6.1 There are no equalities impact issues arising from the report.

7. Financial Implications

7.1 There are no financial implications.

8. Recommendation

The Committee is asked to note the content of the report and appendices.

Andrew Jolley,
Assistant Chief Executive – Legal & Regulatory Services

Contact Officer: Rachel Keepins
Scrutiny Officer

Telephone: 01656 643613
Email: scrutiny@bridgend.gov.uk

Postal Address: Democratic Services - Scrutiny
Bridgend County Borough Council,
Civic Offices,
Angel Street,
Bridgend,
CF31 4WB

BRIDGEND COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL
REPORT TO CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY
COMMITTEE

2nd September 2014

REPORT OF THE CORPORATE DIRECTOR – CHILDRENS

Council's Performance against its Corporate Plan 2013-17

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

This report provides the Committee with an overview of the Council's progress in delivering its improvement priorities identified by the Corporate Plan 2013-17. It covers performance of services relevant to this Committee as of the end of year 13-14, focusing on:

- Commitments;
- Performance Indicators;
- Human Resource Information (sickness absence and appraisals); and
- Finance.

2. CONNECTION TO CORPORATE IMPROVEMENT PLAN / OTHER PRIORITIES

- 2.1 The information in this report relates directly to the Council's Corporate Plan 2013-17 which sets out the Council's improvement priorities and identifies actions to realise those priorities.

3. BACKGROUND

- 3.1 In April 2013, the Council published its Corporate Plan 2013-17. The Plan set out the Council's six improvement priorities and identified its 2013-14 commitments to deliver those priorities and associated performance indicators.
- 3.2 The Council also published a four-year Mid-Term Financial Strategy (MTFS), which identified how it would use its resources to support the delivery of the improvement priorities and statutory duties, with an emphasis on delivering more for less.
- 3.3 Directorate business plans set out the contribution that each directorate would make to the delivery of the six improvement priorities. The business plans specified the directorate's resources, service actions to carry out the Council's commitments for 2013-14 and indicators for monitoring performance.
- 3.4 In line with the Council's Performance Management Framework, performance by directorates against the commitments and performance indicators in the Corporate Plan is monitored throughout the year by directorate management teams and quarterly by the Council's Corporate Performance Assessment meetings, attended by Cabinet, the Corporate Management Board and heads of service.

4. CURRENT SITUATION / PROPOSAL

Commitments

- 4.1 The Council has made 61 commitments for 13-14 in its Corporate Plan. Sixteen of these commitments are relevant to this committee. At the end of the year 13-14 12 (75%) of these commitments have been fully completed and 4 (25%) have been partially completed.

4.2 Appendix A provides more detail against each commitment.

Performance Indicators

4.3 There are 62 performance indicators relevant to this committee. At the end of the year 13-14 35 (56%) of these performance indicators have met their target and 10 (16%) have missed the target by less than 10% and 15 (24%) have missed the target by more than 10%. There are two performance indicators without a target that cannot therefore be allocated a performance (RAG) status.

4.4 Appendix A provides details for each performance indicator broken down by broad themes. The table below provides a summary and shows trend in performance against the year end 2012-13 where comparison is available.

| Performance Indicators (including Outcome Agreement PIs) | | | | |
|--|-------|-----|-------|-------|
| <i>RAG – current performance vs target</i> | Total | Red | Amber | Green |
| End of Year 2013-14: Actual against Target | 62* | 15 | 10 | 35 |
| <i>Trend – year end 2012-13 vs year end 2013-14</i> | Total | ↓ | ↔ | ↑ |
| 13-14 Actual against 12-13 Actual (where comparison available) | 61 | 22 | 0 | 39 |

4.5 In 2013-14, we saw considerable improvement compared to previous years' performance for the following key performance indicators.

| Performance Indicator | 2011-12 | 2012-13 | 2013-14 | 2013-14 Target |
|---|---------|---------|---------|----------------|
| Improvement Priority Two | | | | |
| NSI – EDU/002ii The percentage of all pupils in local authority care in any local authority maintained school, aged 15 as at the preceding 31 August that leave compulsory education, training or work based learning without an approved external qualification | 5.88% | 6.25% | 0% | 5% |
| CP Year 11 Leavers for Schools in the Authority known to be not in education, employment or training (NEETs) | 4.4% | 6.4% | 3.7% | 4% |
| Improvement Priority Three | | | | |
| NSI – SCC/002 Percentage of children looked after at 31 March who have experienced one or more changes of school, during a period or periods of being looked after, which were not due to transitional arrangements, in the 12 months to 31 March | 14.4% | 15.2% | 11.8% | 14% |
| PAM – SCC/045 Percentage of reviews of Looked After Children, children on the Child Protection Register and Children In Need carried out in line with the statutory timetable | 89.6% | 85.8% | 91% | 70% |

In 2013-14, there are some concerns over the following key performance indicators:

* There are two PIs without a target, and so cannot be awarded a 'RAG' status

| Performance Indicator | 2012-13 Wales avg | 2012-13 | 2013-14 | 2013-14 Target |
|--|----------------------|---------|---------|-------------------|
| Improvement Priority Two | | | | |
| NSI – EDU/006ii Percentage of pupils assessed, in schools maintained by the local authority, receiving a Teacher Assessment in Welsh (first language) at the end of Key Stage 3 | 16.8% | 5.9% | 5.1% | 6.2% |
| NSI – EDU/015a Percentage of final statements of special education need issued within 26 weeks: (a) Including exceptions | 71.3% | 10.7% | 6.1% | 60% |
| NSI – SCC/037 Average external qualifications point score for 16 year old Looked After Children in any local authority maintained learning setting | 221 | 273 | 202 | 300 |
| Improvement Priority Three | | | | |
| NSI – SCC/033(d) The percentage of young people formerly looked after with whom the authority is in contact at 19 | 93.4% | 100% | 82.6% | 100% |
| NSI – SCC/033(f) The percentage of young people formerly looked after with whom the authority is in contact, who are known to be engaged in education, training or employment at age 19 | 56.4% | 73.3% | 31.6% | 85% |
| NSI – SCC/041a Percentage of eligible, relevant and former relevant children that have pathway plans as required | 89.5% | 100% | 86.5% | 100% |

Finance

- 4.6 The net budget for Childrens directorate for 13-14 is 127,426,000. At year end there has been an underspend of £75,000. An overspend of over £691,000 on Looked After Children has been offset by underspends across other services in the directorate. This is broken down by service areas on the table below.

| Budget | 2013-14 Net Budget £ '000 | Projected Outturn £ '000 | Variance | |
|-------------------------------------|---------------------------------|--------------------------------|-------------|--------------|
| | | | £'000 | % |
| Learning | 8,931 | 9,006 | 75 | 0.8% |
| Strategic Partnerships & Commission | 99,034 | 97,999 | (1,035) | -1.0% |
| Safeguarding & Family Support | 19,395 | 20,288 | 894 | 4.6% |
| Contingent provision | 67 | 58 | (9) | -13.0% |
| TOTAL CHILDRENS | 127,426 | 127,351 | (75) | -0.1% |

- 4.7 The most significant variances are detailed below:

Learning

Schools Additional Learning Needs Services

- The underspend of £204,000 relates to senior management vacancies in respect of services for pupils with additional learning needs, both in centrally provided services and resource bases. These vacancies were held pending the

restructure that was completed by March 2014, and were subsequently deleted from the structure.

-

Out of County Placements

- There is a total overspend of £540,000 in relation to inter-authority recoupment and out of county education expenditure. An overspend of £346,000 arose on the education budget for Out of County Placements, which is used to fund placements for Bridgend children in independent or mainstream schools in other local authorities. Some of these pupils are looked after pupils and others have named placements as set out in a pupils statement of education needs. For some places the cost of the place is part-funded by ABMU health board, but for others the local authority meets the full cost. The overspend arose due to the need for additional placements in-year, with 40 children occupying out of county placements during the year.

There was also a reduction in income from other local authorities of £194,000 as a result of a reduction in the number of children from other authorities occupying places at Bridgend special schools, falling to 30 places from the 33 places that were budgeted for.

School Improvement

- The underspend of £114,000 relates to vacancies held in the service, along with general efficiencies made on miscellaneous materials and resources following the transfer of staff to the Joint Education Service. These posts were subsequently deleted from the structure.

Strategic Partnerships and Commissioning

Prudential Code Repayments

- Savings from school amalgamations are used to fund prudential borrowing to support the School Modernisation Programme, in particular the new Coleg Cymunedol y Dderwen. Due to adjustments to funding requirements for 2013-14, and slippage in the capital programme into 2014-15 there was an underspend of £450,000, which is being used to offset overspends in other parts of the budget.

Business Strategy / Strategic Management

- There is an underspend of £214,000 due to the decision to delay recruitment to vacant posts in the Business Strategy and Support service, and short term vacancies in relation to strategic management.

Home to School / College Transport

- An overspend has arisen on the home to school and college transport budgets of £239,000 due to increased transport requirements for pupils with additional learning needs and looked after children. The overspend is also partly attributable to rising transport costs with those providers.

Catering Service

- The underspend on the catering service was £430,000. A substantial amount of this was due to the higher number of trading days for the service, arising from the lack of inclement weather and its usual impact on school opening days.

This resulted in 1,186,951 primary meals being served in 2013-14 compared to 1,155,488 in 2012-13, although income from secondary schools was lower than in the previous year. Investment in kitchens to enable the Council to meet the Appetite for Life agenda was delayed due to problems fitting in works with school holidays, resulting in an underspend on this budget. Works will be progressed in the new financial year.

School Delegated Budgets

- School balances reduced from £3.737 million at the end of 2012-13 to £2.467 million at the end of March 2014, representing 2.7% of the funding available. Schools were required to draw down £1.27 million from their carried forward balances in order to balance their 2013-14 budget.

In 2013-14, there were 11 schools (1 nursery, 9 primary, 1 secondary) with deficit budgets and 17 schools (9 primary, 6 secondary, 2 special) with balances in excess of the statutory limits (£50,000 primary, £100,000 secondary and special schools) in line with the School Funding (Wales) Regulations 2010. The council clawed back surplus balances.

Safeguarding and Family Support

Looked After Children (LAC)

- An overspend of £691,000 has arisen on the budget for Looked After Children (LAC). This is a continuous pressure and although additional funding was allocated in the Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS), the increase in the placement numbers continues to exceed the budget in the current financial year. As at the end of March 14 the Council had 412 looked after children, an increase of 25 since March 2013. Additional funding has been provided in the Council's MTFS 2014-15 to 2016-17. A strategy is in place to predict, manage and prevent demand to ensure that the costs can be managed within the MTFS.

Family Support Services

- The underspend of £164,000 has arisen through a combination of events – claw-backs of direct payments (£33,000), reduced residence orders (£40,000) maximisation of grant income (£28,000) and efficiency savings on volunteer drivers (£37,000).

Youth Justice

- There is an overspend of £284,000 on the Resolutions fostering service as a result of reduced take up by partner authorities. This has been partially offset by an underspend on the Youth Offending Service of £65,000 due to tight vacancy management.

Commissioning and Social Work

- The overspend of £142,000 is mainly due to the high costs associated with the temporary backfilling of social work posts through employment agencies to cover vacancies. A newly formed Workforce group is working on recruitment and retention issues.

Human Resources Information (sickness absence and appraisals)

- 4.8 The average days lost due to sickness across the Childrens Directorate at the end of year 13-14 was 11.4 days, missing its target of 9.1 days. The average days lost for the

Council as a whole was 9.80 days. This was an improvement on 12-13 figures but did not meet the target for 13-14 of 8.5 days.

- 4.9 The directorate completed 76% of staff appraisals in 2013-14, missing its target for completion of 80%. Overall the Council completed 85% of appraisals which exceeded the target of 80%.

5. EFFECT UPON POLICY FRAMEWORK & PROCEDURE RULES

- 5.1 Monitoring the Council's performance against its Corporate Plan forms part of the Council's Performance Management Framework.

6. EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT

- 6.1 This report provides performance management information and has no negative equality implications.

7. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 7.1 There are no financial implications.

8. RECOMMENDATION

- 8.1 The Committee consider this report.

Deborah McMillan – Corporate Director - Childrens

Contact Officer: Helen Hammond, Corporate Improvement Officer, x3383

Appendix A – full report against each commitment and performance indicator

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KEY:

| Commitments | | Performance Indicators (RAG) | | Performance Indicators (Trend) | | Performance Indicator types |
|--------------|--|------------------------------|---|--------------------------------|---|---|
| Red | Most key milestones are missed | Red | Performance is worse than target by 10% or more | ↑ | Performance improved vs same quarter of previous year | NSI: National Strategic Indicator |
| Amber | Most key milestones are on track, but some are at risk | Amber | Performance is worse than target by under 10% | ↔ | No change in performance vs same quarter of previous year | PAM: Public Accountability Measure |
| Green | All key milestones are on track. No reason for concern | Green | Performance is equal to or better than target | ↓ | Performance declined vs same quarter of previous year | OA: Outcome Agreement |

PRIORITY TWO – Working together to raise ambitions and drive up educational achievement

| Commitments for 2013-14 | Q2 RAG (vs target) | Q3 RAG (vs target) | End of Year RAG | RAG Analysis (why this status?) | Proposed corrective action (red/amber only) |
|---|--------------------|--------------------|-----------------|---|---|
| Raise aspirations among all young people and their families | - | | | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> We have made significant progress in addressing issues around non-attendance and have put in place a new process to support the 'team around the school' approach to target poor attendance in any given school. A draft attendance strategy has been produced and aligns to the strategy prepared by the Central South Consortium (CSC). The Post (Estyn) Inspection Action Plan (PIAP) is continuing to focus our work on improving attendance, in particular the strengthening of our challenge mechanisms. | |
| Ensure that head teachers, school staff and school governing bodies act more effectively to improve their performance | - | | | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> We are confident that the new structure of the CSC will support clearer mechanisms of support for schools in order to focus on improving performance. We recently arranged training sessions for Councillors on the use of data within schools to allow for greater challenge in respect of school performance. This training is now to be delivered by the CSC to all governing bodies in BCBC schools. Challenge advisors will focus on providing good quality information to governing bodies and head teachers on school performance. | |
| Ensure that we support more able children and young people who, overall, are currently underachieving | - | | | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The restructure of the Inclusion Service has now concluded with clearer identification of the roles and responsibilities of service areas and their associated leads. This includes the support for more able and talented pupils. | |
| Reduce class sizes and pupil-to-teacher ratios in our primary schools | - | | | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Our 21st century school modernisation programme continues on schedule. The opening of Coleg Cymunedol Y Dderwen highlights the strength of the programme. | |

| Commitments for 2013-14 | Q2 RAG (vs target) | Q3 RAG (vs target) | End of Year RAG | RAG Analysis (why this status?) | Proposed corrective action (red/amber only) |
|--|--------------------|--------------------|-----------------|---|---|
| Support schools to meet pupil's additional learning needs (ALN) | - | | | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The recent restructure of the Inclusion and Educational Psychology Service under the single Inclusion service banner has provided us with the opportunity of clearly identifying the support mechanisms in place for pupils with additional learning needs (ALN). Furthermore there is renewed activity to develop service and department planning and self-evaluation processes to improve the focus of ALN activity within each school. | |
| Offer 14-19 year olds the right type of qualification for them, for example, school based or job related | - | | | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> We are offering more opportunities for pupils aged 14-19 to gain qualifications in a wider range of subjects, with all secondary schools offering the Welsh Baccalaureate Qualification. We are leading on the integration of regional 14-19 services within the Central South Consortium and provide 14-19 year olds with the advice they need to ensure they engage in the right type of qualification for them. We have identified the need to utilise a specific post within the Just @sk+ service to target looked after children and care leavers to access education, employment and training opportunities. | |
| Ensure that all young people feel included and that their wellbeing and sense of worth is promoted | - | | | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> There has been significant improvement this year on our statutory obligations in respect of advocacy for children and young people. Tros Gynnal Plant has recently been awarded a two year contract to provide both Independent Professional Advocacy and Independent Visiting services for vulnerable children and young people who are involved with Children Services in Bridgend County Borough. Our capital build developments are supporting the needs of children and young people, including significant improvements for disabled children to access education facilities in the school of their choice. | |

| Performance Indicators (PIs) | 2013-14 Target | Q2 Actual & RAG | Q3 Actual & RAG | End of Year RAG | Trend (vs 12-13) | Analysis – why off target? (red/amber only) | Proposed corrective action (red/amber only) |
|---|----------------|-----------------|-----------------|----------------------|----------------------|--|--|
| (OA) Percentage of annual school performance reports (APR) completed | 100% | - | - | 100% | N/A | | |
| (OA) Percentage of schools inspected graded as good or excellent by Estyn | 82% | - | - | 88% | ↑ 82% | | |
| EDU/006ii (NSI) Percentage of pupils assessed, in schools maintained by the local authority, receiving a Teacher Assessment in Welsh (first language) at the end of Key Stage 3 | 6.2%* | - | - | 5.14%* [‡] | ↓ 5.9% [‡] | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The cohort of KS3 pupils in Welsh medium education in the county decreased by 20% in the 2011-12 academic year and by a further 15% in 2012-13, whilst decreases in the overall pupil cohorts were 7% and 3% respectively in these periods. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Our Welsh Education Strategic Plan for 2014-17 has been submitted to Welsh Government and was considered by Cabinet on 29th March 2014. An 8-week consultation with stakeholders is currently underway. |
| Theme: Educational Attainment | | | | | | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Attainment levels have shown an improvement on Key Stage Two, Three and Four, however many missed their targets for the 2012-13 academic year. Are the targets realistic/attainable or does more need to be done to help pupils increase their attainment, and therefore mean that we meet the challenging targets that we set ourselves? Preliminary results released from the WG indicate that our improvements, whilst welcome, are not enough. We remain below the Welsh average for pupils achieving the level two threshold at GCSE (national average for 2012-13 is 52.7). In the Corporate Plan we state that by September 2015 we want at least 60% of pupils to achieve the level expected of them at GCSE. Is this still possible given the slow rate of progress being demonstrated? | |
| EDU/003 (NSI, PAM, OA) Percentage of pupils assessed at the end of Key Stage 2, in schools maintained by the local authority, achieving the Core Subject Indicator, as determined by Teacher Assessment | 80.6%* | - | - | 82.56%* [‡] | ↑ 80.6% [‡] | | |
| EDU/004 (PAM) Percentage of pupils assessed at the end of Key Stage 3, in schools maintained by the local authority, achieving the Core Subject Indicator as determined by Teacher Assessment | 74.9%* | - | - | 73.54%* [‡] | ↑ 67.1% [‡] | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Core Subject Indicator result for Key Stage 3 missed the target set by less than 2%. The result represents an improvement on the 2011-12 academic year of 6.4% points, compared to an improvement in the Wales Average of 4% points. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> We are using performance data and individual pupil data to strengthen the rigour and consistency in the challenge to schools, set more robust targets and identify where targeted support and interventions need to be commissioned. |
| EDU/011 (NSI, PAM, OA) Average points score for pupils aged 15, at the preceding 31 August, in schools maintained by the local authority | 425.2* | - | - | 442.1* [‡] | ↑ 425.2 [‡] | | |
| EDU/017 (NSI, OA) Percentage of pupils aged 15, at the preceding 31 August, in schools maintained by the local authority who achieved the Level 2 threshold including a GCSE grade A* - C in English or Welsh first language and mathematics | 55.0%* | - | - | 52.3%* [‡] | ↑ 50.7% [‡] | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Results have improved in each of the last two academic years and in each of these years, the result varied only negligibly from the Wales average (50.7% last year, 52.7% this year). Underneath the overall improvement in there was variability in outcomes between schools - in four schools performance increased and in four schools performance decreased. One school only has data for one year. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Level 2 and Level 2 (inclusive) are the subject of school improvement strategies. The schools that decreased in performance have been targeted with appropriate support and interventions. |
| EDU/002i (NSI, PAM) Percentage of: i) All pupils (including those in local authority care) in any local authority maintained school, aged 15 as at the preceding 31 August that leave compulsory education, training or work based learning without an approved external qualification | 0.5%* | - | - | 0.45%* [‡] | ↓ 0.33% [‡] | | |
| Theme: Attainment of Looked After Children (LAC) | | | | | | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The success story of this area is that no pupils in local authority care in this particular cohort left compulsory education, training or work based learning without an approved external qualification. This is primarily due to the LACE team (looked after children in education) working with partners to enhance | |

| Performance Indicators (PIs) | 2013-14 Target | Q2 Actual & RAG | Q3 Actual & RAG | End of Year RAG | Trend (vs 12-13) | Analysis – why off target? (red/amber only) | Proposed corrective action (red/amber only) |
|--|--|-----------------|-----------------|----------------------|-----------------------|--|--|
| | and improve educational and recreational support to looked after children (LAC), and the LAC element of the School Improvement Grant (SEG) being used effectively to support and promote educational opportunities. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> However, there are widening gaps in attainment between LAC and non-LAC. Last year, the difference in external qualifications point score was 152.2 points; this widened to 240.1 for the 2012-13 academic year. The performance also represents a 26% drop in year-on-year performance. | | | | | | |
| EDU/002ii (NSI) Percentage of: ii) pupils in local authority care in any local authority maintained school, aged 15 as at the preceding 31 August that leave compulsory education, training or work based learning without an approved external qualification | 5.0%* | - | - | 0%* [‡] | ↑ 6.25% [‡] | | |
| SCC/037 (NSI) Average external qualifications point score for 16 year old Looked After Children (LAC) in any local authority maintained learning setting | 300* | - | - | 202* [‡] | ↓ 273 [‡] | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> There were 29 young people in the cohort. Of these, 20 were additional learning needs (ALN) pupils - seven having a Statement of Special Need and 13 on School Action or School Action Plus. A small number of pupils in the cohort did not sit any examinations or sat only entry level examinations Nine of the 29 pupils in the cohort achieved average point scores of 300+. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> In September 2013 WG provided an element of the Pupil Deprivation Grant (PDG) specifically 'to facilitate enhanced educational support for looked after children that serve to improve educational outcomes'. The allocation was fully delegated to schools that had LAC on roll as at 3 September 2013. For this financial year the amount allocated per eligible LAC will be at the higher rate of £918. Schools will use this additional funding to create the conditions for sufficient challenge, encouragement and opportunity, to allow these pupils to succeed at high levels. |
| Theme: Supporting pupils with Special Educational Needs | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The PIs show that within primary schools the gap in attainment between pupils with special educational needs (SEN) and those without is narrowing slightly, however at GCSE level the gap has widened significantly: between the 2011-12 and 2012-13 academic year there was a 26.8% decline in performance. EDU/015 has been identified as a problem indicator and results were amended by audit in 2013. Significant work has been carried out by the directorate this year to ensure that the data collection and reporting is more robust. Improvements are expected. | | | | | | |
| The gap between Special Educational Needs (SEN) and non-SEN pupils measured by the percentage of pupils achieving the Core Subject Indicator (level 4 or above in English/Welsh, maths and science) at the end of Key Stage 2 in mainstream schools | No target set | - | - | 47.31%* [‡] | ↑ 48.41% [‡] | | |
| The gap between special educational need (SEN) and non-SEN pupils measured by the percentage of pupils achieving the Level 2 Threshold (at least 5 GCSE's Grade A*-C or equivalent) including English or Welsh and Maths in mainstream schools | No target set | - | - | 43.34%* [‡] | ↓ 35.14% [‡] | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The raw data shows the number of children classified as having special educational needs (SEN) achieving the level two threshold has increased from 35 (13.83%) in 2011-2012 to 53 (16.77%) in 2012-2013. This improvement is not reflected in the gap result, as the number of non-SEN pupils achieving the Level 2 threshold increased at the same time. Different SEN needs will impact on GCSE achievement. For example, a cohort including a large number of pupils with severe learning difficulties would be predicted to achieve lower results than a cohort including a large | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The effect of the Bridgend Inclusion Programme is to increase the number of children with complex learning needs who are educated in their local mainstream school rather than a special school. Their results will, therefore, be included in this PI calculation in future and this may impact on the performance result. |

| Performance Indicators (PIs) | 2013-14 Target | Q2 Actual & RAG | Q3 Actual & RAG | End of Year RAG | Trend (vs 12-13) | Analysis – why off target? (red/amber only) | Proposed corrective action (red/amber only) |
|---|---|---------------------------------------|-----------------|-------------------------------------|-----------------------|--|--|
| | | | | | | number of children with sensory difficulties. | |
| EDU/015a (NSI) Percentage of final statements of special education need issued within 26 weeks (a) Including exceptions | 60% (2013 calendar year) | 3.8% cumulative for Jan to Sept 2013 | - | 6.1% cumulative for Jan to Dec 2013 | ↓ 10.7% [¥] | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The calendar year result was significantly worse than target and the 2012 calendar year result. Specific actions were taken during July-Dec 2013 to finalise and close historic cases, which is reflected in the rise of Final Statements issued for the calendar year of 2013 (49 compared to 28 in 2012). As many of the cases were historic, it was not possible to finalise within the 26 week deadline. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Further work is underway, which includes a new monitoring system to support achievement of these deadlines in the future. From 1/4/14, management of SEN Statementing moved to the Business Strategy and Performance Group, under the new Children's Directorate structure. The Draig ICT system will also be used to manage client records and processes have been leaned and refined to ensure accuracy and efficiency. |
| EDU/015b (NSI) Percentage of final statements of special education need issued within 26 weeks b) excluding exceptions | 100% (2013 calendar year) | 12.5% cumulative for Jan to Sept 2013 | - | 100% cumulative for Jan to Dec 2013 | ↑ 50% [¥] | | |
| Theme: Free School Meals | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> None of the four PIs under this theme achieved target. As with Special Educational Needs pupils, the results are showing an improvement at primary school level but a decline at secondary school. However uptake within secondary schools of FSM has increased on 2012-13. | | | | | | |
| Percentage of pupils eligible for free school meals who achieve the Core Subject Indicator at KS2, compared to pupils who are not eligible for free school meals (FSM) | 18% gap* | - | - | 19.26% gap* [¥] | ↑ 22.57% [¥] | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The result is 7% worse than target but represents an improvement on the 2011-12 academic year result of almost 15%. Whilst the result is above the Wales average (18.29%), the authority's rate of improvement in the last two academic years is better than the average rate of improvement for Wales for the same period (11.4%). | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Performance data for free school meals (FSM) pupils is analysed at school levels by Central South Consortium (CSC) and discussed with schools as part of the annual school performance reviews. We will continue to support schools in the use of the Provision Mapping tool to track progress of vulnerable groups of pupils, and identify suitable intervention measures where necessary that may contribute to improving attainment. |
| Size of the gap in educational attainments between pupils 15+ entitled to free school meals (FSM) and those who are not (measured by Level 2 inclusive indicator) | 24%* | - | - | 31.7%* [¥] | ↓ 31.1% [¥] | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The result is above target and almost 2% above the previous year. The gap increased as attainment of Level 2 inclusive by FSM pupils improved by almost 1% point, whilst attainment by non-FSM pupils improved by 1.58% points. Overall, our result was better than the Wales average of 32.65% In the last 4 years, the progress of FSM compared with those who do not has improved in six of our eight comprehensive schools. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Performance data for free school meals (FSM) pupils is analysed at school levels by Central South Consortium (CSC) and discussed with schools as part of the annual school performance reviews. We will continue to support schools in the use of the Provision Mapping tool to track progress of vulnerable groups of pupils, and identify suitable intervention measures where necessary that may contribute to improving attainment. |
| Percentage of half day sessions (overall absence) missed by pupils of compulsory school age attending maintained primary schools and eligible for free school meals compared to those pupils who are not eligible for free school meals | 3% gap* | - | - | 3.24% gap* [¥] | ↓ 3% [¥] | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The result is above target and represents 8% deterioration on the 2011-12 result. Performance against this PI fell for | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Education Welfare Service (EWS) is now better placed to be able to analyse attendance data in respect of FSM children. |

| Performance Indicators (PIs) | 2013-14 Target | Q2 Actual & RAG | Q3 Actual & RAG | End of Year RAG | Trend (vs 12-13) | Analysis – why off target? (red/amber only) | Proposed corrective action (red/amber only) |
|---|----------------|---------------------------------------|---------------------------------------|----------------------|--------------------------|---|---|
| | | | | | | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> both FSM and non FSM, with the FSM deterioration being the greater of the two. The all-Wales result was better than BCBC, with a 2.94% gap. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The service continues to work closely with schools, families and other agencies to help reduce the attendance gap between FSM children and others |
| Percentage of half day sessions (overall absence) missed by pupils of compulsory school age attending maintained secondary schools and eligible for free school meals compared to those pupils who are not eligible for free school meals | 4.5% gap* | - | - | 5.97% gap** | 6% [‡] ↑ | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The result is above target and represents 0.5% deterioration on the 2011-12 result. Both FSM and non-FSM attendance improved slightly, with the FSM improvement being marginally better. We were worse than the Welsh average - 5.6% gap against the BCBC gap of 5.97%. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The EWS is now better placed to be able to analyse attendance data in respect of FSM children. The service continues to work closely with schools, families and other agencies to help reduce the attendance gap between FSM children and others. |
| Theme: School attendance and exclusions | | | | | | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> School attendance is known to affect academic performance and, has been identified as essential for the Council to achieve Outcome Agreement two – improving school attainment. We have introduced a successful initiative in C.C. Y Dderwen with intensive support from the Educational Welfare Service and an action plan having been developed to support raising attendance. The attendance figures for autumn term 2013 showed a 3.7% improvement on the Autumn term 2012 at C.C. Y Dderwen. Of particular note are the high levels of permanent and fixed term exclusions in secondary schools. However, the decision to exclude is made by headteachers, not by the local authority. | |
| EDU/016a (PAM, OA) Percentage of pupil attendance in primary schools | 94.49%* | 93.49%* [‡] (provisional) | 93.49%* [‡] (provisional) | 93.49%* [‡] | 93.7% [‡] ↓ | | |
| EDU/016b (PAM, OA) Percentage of pupil attendance in secondary schools | 92%* | 92.46%* [‡] | 92.46%* [‡] | 92.46%* [‡] | 88.12% [‡] ↑ | | |
| EDU/008a The number of permanent exclusions during the academic year per 1,000 pupils from a) primary schools | 0.0* | 0.0* [‡] (provisional) | 0.0* [‡] (provisional) | 0.0* [‡] | 0.3 [‡] ↑ | | |
| EDU/008b The number of permanent exclusions during the academic year per 1,000 pupils from b) secondary schools | 0.2* | 1.6* [‡] (provisional) | 1.6* [‡] (provisional) | 1.496* [‡] | 0.4 [‡] ↓ | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Twelve pupils were permanently excluded from our secondary schools in this academic year, whereas in 2011-12 there were only two. This placed Bridgend as the third highest in Wales, after RCT (16) and Newport (14). The total number of permanent exclusions in Wales was 89, therefore, Bridgend accounted for 13.5% of the Wales total. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Data is shared and considered termly by secondary schools behaviour network. This is being used to help identify pupils who are at risk of further exclusion and enable support to be provided to the pupil and school through the Pastoral Support Programme. A new protocol for the consideration of transfers is in place and the Transfer Panel established. Review of transfer application procedures will be ongoing. Managed moves, where appropriate, are considered by the Transfer Panel. |
| EDU/010a The percentage of school days lost due to fixed-term exclusions during the academic year, in: a) primary schools | 0.01%* | 0.0%* [‡] (provisional) | 0.0%* [‡] (provisional) | 0.008%* [‡] | 0.011% [‡] ↑ | | |
| EDU/010b The percentage of school days lost due to fixed-term exclusions during the academic year, in: b) secondary schools | 0.06%* | - | - | 0.07% | 0.095% [‡] ↑ | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The result is higher than target but represents an improvement on last year's result. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Data is shared and considered termly by secondary schools behaviour network. This is being used to help |

| Performance Indicators (PIs) | 2013-14 Target | Q2 Actual & RAG | Q3 Actual & RAG | End of Year RAG | Trend (vs 12-13) | Analysis – why off target? (red/amber only) | Proposed corrective action (red/amber only) |
|---|--|-----------------|-----------------|-----------------|------------------|--|--|
| | | | | | | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 275 secondary school pupils were subject to fixed-term exclusion for a total of 486 occasions. The total school days lost was 1068.5. Of the 486 occurrences, 450 were for between 0.5 and 5 days; 36 were for periods greater than 5 days, with the longest being for a period of 21 days. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> identify pupils who are at risk of exclusion and enable support to be provided to the pupil and school through the Pastoral Support Programme. Exclusion information is shared with colleagues in our Inclusion service, to enable them to identify those pupils who have been the subject of multiple exclusions and consider interventions. |
| Theme: Post-16 education and school leavers | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The percentage of leavers in the authority known to be NEET (not in education, employment or training) has fallen significantly and we have also seen an increase in students completing key stage four and remaining in education, training or work based learning. In 2012, BCBC had the second highest NEET rate. This has improved to the 11th in Wales (joint with Anglesey) and means that we are in line with the Welsh average. In spite of the targets, the two results will not total 100% as the survey also identifies leavers who have left the area and those who did not complete and return the survey (i.e. the unknowns). For 2013, this figure was 0.9%. Significant work was undertaken in the directorate over the last year to identify and reduce the number of 'not knowns' | | | | | | |
| Year 11 school leavers in the Authority known not to be in education, employment or training | 4%* | - | - | 3.7%* | ↑ 6.4% | | |
| Percentage of students completing Key Stage 4 and remaining in education, training or work based learning | 96%* | - | - | 95.4%* | ↑ 90.1% | | |

PRIORITY THREE – Working with children and families to tackle problems early

| Commitments for 2013-14 | Q2 RAG (vs target) | Q3 RAG (vs target) | End of Year RAG | RAG Analysis (why this status?) | Proposed corrective action (red/amber only) |
|--|--------------------|--------------------|-----------------|---|--|
| Join up different services so that everyone knows what support is being given and is working to the same ends | N/A | | | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The restructure of the Children's Directorate is now complete. The clear delineation between the roles and responsibilities/functions under each manager will significantly improve service delivery and accountability of the Directorate's services. | |
| Put systems in place that mean families need only tell their stories once | N/A | | | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> We continue to maximise the use of 'DRAIG' - our social care case management system - to support the joint assessment family framework (JAFF) and team around the family (TAF) processes. Furthermore through procurement of a new system to replace 'DRAIG' (which Bridgend is currently leading the procurement of at an all Wales level) we have positive assurances that all the systems currently being evaluated are capable of offering improved functionality to support this important work. | |
| Establish a Multi-Agency Community Team in each of the three localities within the Borough, so that support is closer to those who need it | N/A | | | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Porthcawl Safeguarding team will move into the West locality first. This will be followed by moves for the remaining Safeguarding teams to the North and East hubs. However, work on the Eastern Hub is unlikely to commence until later in 2014. The Health Visiting Service has different requirements and it will not be possible for a move to take place until the issues have been resolved by ABMUHB. The Families First re-commissioning is almost complete and discussions have taken place regarding the co-location of those partners whose bids have been successful to date. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Corrective actions are dependent on corporate accommodation project. Plans for the moves of the Safeguarding teams are in place. There will be ongoing communications with ABMUHB on resolution of the Health Visiting Service issues. |
| Work with partner agencies on sharing information, making best use of available funding and communicating effectively | N/A | | | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> A number of information sharing protocols (ISPs) have been recently completed and are awaiting approval through the Council's Information Governance Board. Legal have supported the development of the Data Protection training and the Directorate has led a number of good practice initiatives which have been used corporately e.g., data protection risk logs. | |
| Put more money towards employing family support workers and train them to help families make the decisions that are right for them | N/A | | | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Families First programme has successfully been retendered. The end of year status is amber due to uncertainty and concerns regarding future | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Four new family support workers are currently being recruited (three new and one replacing a leaver). As an interim measure, school clusters have |

| Commitments for 2013-14 | Q2 RAG (vs target) | Q3 RAG (vs target) | End of Year RAG | RAG Analysis (why this status?) | Proposed corrective action (red/amber only) |
|--|--------------------|--------------------|-----------------|--|--|
| | | | | funding of the service to support schools with the management of Family Engagement Officers (FEOs) and associated clusters due to delays with grant funding and pressures on school budgets. | <p>agreed to fund the support service for three months (April 14 to June 14) to enable contracts to be extended and funding streams to be confirmed.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The number of clusters signing up to the Service will impact on the number of FEOs employed but early indications have been positive as all clusters signed up to the interim arrangements. However, funding for the Learning Communities Co-ordinator role is still uncertain, and if this post is made redundant it will affect the capacity of the team to maintain the same level of work. |
| Support the extension of the Flying Start programme to benefit as many families as possible | N/A | | | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Some capital build issues remain at Lewistown although planning consent for the scheme has now been granted. The project and the expansion of the service at Lewistown is therefore considered at risk given that this is now considerably delayed. | <p>Retendering of Lewistown provision is ongoing but a funding shortfall is likely.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The scheme has already been subject to a detailed cost engineering exercise before going back out to revised tender. The scheme has already received additional funding due to the complications with the site identified for development (which was the only site in BCBC ownership in the area) but Welsh Government has confirmed that if a robust case is made for further funding, then they will consider it favourably. If the additional bid is not successful, we would need to consider the practicalities involved in transporting children and families to the setting in Blackmill. |
| Improve the way we and other agencies help families address the root cause of their problems | N/A | | | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> There is continued emphasis on partnership working with the creation of a number of joined-up services across a range of agencies, increasing the support available from our early intervention services. | |
| Provide parenting support to those who ask for help | N/A | | | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> We are putting in place parenting programmes to help parents manage their children's difficult behaviour. | |
| Continue our implementation of the Children and Young People's Emotional Wellbeing Strategy | N/A | | | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The recent restructure of the Inclusion service has provided clarity in respect of support for the wellbeing of children and young people. A Young Carers Coordinator Post has been advertised to improve the undertaking of Young Carers Assessments. The aim is to have the post filled by the end of May 2014. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The budget identified to support Emotional Health and Behaviour is set to remain at £1.376m annually between '14-15 & '17-18. To support pupils with specific needs we are constructing an Emotional Behavioural and Social Difficulties (EBSD) Specialist Provision at the former Ogmre Comprehensive School Site to be ready by December 2014. |

| Performance Indicators (PIs) | 2013-14 Target | Q2 Actual & RAG | Q3 Actual & RAG | End of Year RAG | Trend (vs 12-13) | Analysis – why off target? (red/amber only) | Proposed corrective action (red/amber only) |
|--|----------------|------------------|------------------|------------------|------------------|---|---|
| Theme: Multi-agency working | | | | | | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The directorate is increasingly working to join up different services, avoiding duplication and making it easier for those who need it to get help. Changes to the directorate structure and the recent completion of the business plan will support this. More people are benefiting from the team around the family approach and, through establishing a multi-agency team in each of the three localities; support is closer to those who need it. This is making the experience better and easier for those using it and leading to better efficiencies as there is less duplication in services and work carried out. | |
| The number of families benefiting from intensive family support provided by Connecting Families (CF) and Intensive Family Support Services (IFSS) that adopt a 'team around the families' (TAF) approach | 140 | 85 [†] | 157 [†] | 184 | ↑ 133 | | |
| Number of appropriate referrals to the Multi Agency Team (MAC) | 300 | 108 [†] | 177 [†] | 263 [†] | ↑ 226 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> There was an increase in appropriate referrals but target was not achieved. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Families First specification requires all partners to make a joint assessment family framework (JAFF) referral when two or more additional needs are identified. In 2014-15 we are training all MAC teams in the developments of the JAFF and team around the family (TAF) process. |
| Percentage of families reporting satisfaction with the service they received | 100% | 100% | 100% | 100% | ↑ 100% | | |
| Percentage of children and young people reporting satisfaction with the service they received | 100% | 100% | 100% | 100% | ↑ 100% | | |
| Theme: Social work | | | | | | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The rising number of LAC, CPR, CiN and increasing numbers of children being referred with concerns about neglect or abuse place greater burden on our social workers and resources. In spite of these pressures, five of the indicators in this theme achieved their target for 2013-14 and showed an improvement on the previous year including the percentage of reviews carried out within the statutory timetable and percentage of young carers assessed. As mentioned, it could be argued that higher numbers of children referred to social services – whilst being an increased pressure on the service – can mean a better outcome for the child and is therefore a positive result. | |
| A reduced number of children referred to Social Services with concerns about neglect or abuse | 290 | 222 [†] | 371 [†] | 448 [†] | ↓ 302 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> It is possible to argue that an increased number is positive. There have been campaigns to raise awareness of children who may be at risk and to increase the reporting of concerns. Ongoing awareness sessions have also been carried out. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The latest NSPCC campaign was from Sept to Dec 2013. We are currently analysing the amount of referrals in this period compared to normal. Early intervention and prevention activity means we are highlighting concerns earlier and then acting to prevent a family moving to higher tiers of need. |
| Assessment/Safeguarding teams' social workers average case-loads | 18 | 16 [†] | 17 [†] | 16 [†] | ↑ 18 | | |
| Assessment/Safeguarding teams' senior social work practitioners' average case-loads | 10 | 14 [†] | 14 [†] | 13 [†] | ↓ 10 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> A large percentage our current social workers being either newly-qualified or in their 2nd year of post-qualifying practice. The impact of this has been that senior practitioners within teams have had to carry higher caseloads than we would wish, which are additionally more complex. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> A joint Safeguarding and HR forum has been established It will take forward the examination of options and the development of actions aimed at maintaining our child social care workforce. |

| Performance Indicators (PIs) | 2013-14 Target | Q2 Actual & RAG | Q3 Actual & RAG | End of Year RAG | Trend (vs 12-13) | Analysis – why off target? (red/amber only) | Proposed corrective action (red/amber only) |
|--|---|---------------------|--------------------|--------------------|------------------|---|--|
| SCC/030a (PAM) Percentage of young carers known to Social Services who were assessed | 100% | 100% | 100% | 100% | ↑ 100% | | |
| SCC/045 (PAM) Percentage of reviews of Looked After Children, children on the Child Protection Register and Children In Need carried out in line with the statutory timetable | 70% | 83.7% (provisional) | - | 91% | ↑ 85.8% | | |
| SCC/016 Percentage of reviews carried out in accordance with the statutory timetable (children in need) | 70% | 60.2% (provisional) | - | 82.1% | ↑ 68.7% | | |
| SCC/034 Percentage of reviews carried out in accordance with the statutory timetable: child protection | 99% | 98.5% [†] | 99% [†] | 99% [†] | ↑ 98.7% | | |
| SCC/041a (NSI) Percentage of eligible, relevant and former relevant children that have pathway plans as required | 100% | - | - | 86.5% | ↓ 100% | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The final result is significantly below target and the 2012-13 figure. Whilst this result is disappointing there were only 16 exceptions. Of the 119 young people in the cohort, 103 had a current pathway plan at 31 March 14. Pathway plans for these are in progress as they are only just passed the age requirement of 16yrs 3mths. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The recent restructure of the Safeguarding senior management team (SMT) will result in greater management oversight and ensure more frequent monitoring of performance at SMT. |
| SCC/011a (PAM) Percentage of initial assessments that were completed during the year where there is evidence that the child has been seen by the Social Worker | 80% | 71.2% [†] | 73.6% [†] | 74.2% [†] | ↓ 74.4% | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The final result has missed the target is below 2012-13 figure. This indicator only includes children seen by a qualified social worker. However, a further 15.1% of children were seen by Social Work Assistants. There were 154 children not seen at initial assessment with the main reasons given as: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Child not present (85 of 154) Child refused to be seen (18 of 154) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Data is current subject to being analysed at present and will be discussed at Senior Management Team with a view developing further actions. |
| SCC/011b (NSI) Percentage of initial assessments that were completed during the year where there is evidence that the child has been seen alone by the Social Worker | 60% | 47.9% [†] | 50.3% [†] | 51.8% | ↓ 54% | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The final result has missed the target by 13.7%. This indicator only accounts for children seen by a qualified social worker. However, there was an additional 8.8% of children seen by Social Work Assistants. There were 566 children not seen alone at initial assessment with the main reasons given as: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Child deemed to be too young/non-verbal/has limited understanding of situation/requires advocate (301/566) Child refused to be seen or requested parent/care to be present (107/566) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Data is current subject to being analysed at present and will be discussed at Senior Management Team with a view developing further actions. |
| Theme: Looked After Children | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The rate of LAC increase in Bridgend is higher than the Welsh average and this could have a potential long lasting impact for the children, their families and the county borough as a whole as studies show that LAC often face diminished life chances. The council has taken an early intervention approach, working to tackle problems early and prevent the situation becoming more serious (e.g. children being taken into the care of the authority). | | | | | | |

| Performance Indicators (PIs) | 2013-14 Target | Q2 Actual & RAG | Q3 Actual & RAG | End of Year RAG | Trend (vs 12-13) | Analysis – why off target? (red/amber only) | Proposed corrective action (red/amber only) |
|--|----------------|--------------------|--------------------------------|--------------------------------|------------------|--|---|
| | | | | | | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> In 2014-15 there is a commitment to specifically target LAC and implement the placements and permanency strategy. As a result of scrutiny feedback, the business plan also contains information on work being carried out by the fostering service. The improvements to fostering and adoption, it is hoped, will result in better outcomes for those children who are already looked after. | |
| Looked After Children as a percentage of children aged 0-17 | 1% | N/A | N/A | 1.43% | ↓ 1.34% | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The result is 43% worse than target. We continue to experience increasing number of looked after children (LAC). Whilst this trend is not unique to us, the rate of increase in Bridgend is the second greatest of all our profiled statistical neighbours (NPT, Wrexham, Flintshire and Pembrokeshire), with only NPT experiencing a higher rate of increase. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> There is significant focus on early intervention and provision of support to families with a view to preventing deterioration and the need for children to be taken into care. A LAC Placement and Permanence Board has been established, chaired by the Corporate Director - Children, which meets monthly. This board is driving forward the finalisation and implementation of the LAC Placement and Permanence Strategy. |
| SCC/021 Percentage of looked after children reviews carried out within statutory timetables during the year | 99% | 96.4% [†] | 96.2% [†] | 96.6% [†] | ↓ 97.6% | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> A total of 37 out of 1,078 looked after children (LAC) reviews were held outside of compliance during the year. There are multiple reasons for this figure which range from no report being completed by the Social Worker, sickness of the Independent Reviewing Officer (IRO) and Social Worker to parent being admitted to hospital. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Service Manager is visiting all Safeguarding team meetings to reinforce the importance of completing documentation three days prior to the review and that of using the correct process to cancel/rearrange reviews to ensure compliance and good practice. Monitoring forms continue to be utilised to establish reasons for reviews being held out of compliance. |
| SCC/025 (PAM) Percentage of statutory visits to Looked After Children due in the year that took place in accordance with regulations | 80% | 62.6% [†] | 65% [†] (provisional) | 64% [†] (provisional) | ↓ 71.5% | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> This PI result is a provisional figure as it can change on a daily basis, as Records of Visits are retrospectively written up and recorded in DRAIG. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The DRAIG replacement will give opportunity to revise forms and improve processes |
| SCC/001a (PAM) Percentage of first placements of Looked After Children during the year that began with a care plan in place | 96.5% | 87.5% [†] | 88.8% [†] | 93.9% [†] | ↓ 95.7% | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Of the 148 new placements during the year, nine failed to have a written and approved care plan in place before the start of the placement. Six had not been completed by the social worker within timescales whilst a further two were completed but not approved within timescales. One was undertaken by the Emergency Duty Team but no plan was completed. All nine children had approved plans in place shortly following the start of their placement. Often these circumstances occur as a consequence of children and young people needing to be accommodated in an emergency and, therefore, in an unplanned manner. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The necessary performance and actions will continue to be scrutinised at senior management team, recognising that there will always be occasions when emergency, unplanned placements will occur. |

| Performance Indicators (PIs) | 2013-14 Target | Q2 Actual & RAG | Q3 Actual & RAG | End of Year RAG | Trend (vs 12-13) | Analysis – why off target? (red/amber only) | Proposed corrective action (red/amber only) |
|--|---|--------------------|--------------------|--------------------|------------------|--|--|
| SCC/002 (NSI) Percentage of children looked after who have experienced one or more changes of school, during a period or periods of being looked after, which were not due to transitional arrangements, in the 12 months to 31 March | 14% | - | - | 11.8% | ↑ 15.2% | | |
| SCC/004 (NSI, PAM) Percentage of children looked after on 31 March who have had three or more placements during the year | <10% | 12.5% [†] | 10.1% [†] | 10% (provisional) | ↑ 10.6% | | |
| Theme: Supporting former Looked After Children | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> As this can relate to a small group of people, any non-compliance on the part of the identified former LAC can have a big impact on the final result regardless of the work undertaken by the service to ensure that contact is maintained; they are in suitable accommodation and are engaged in education, training or employment. | | | | | | |
| SCC/033d (NSI) Percentage of d) young people formerly looked after with whom the authority is in contact at the age of 19; | 100% | 88.9% [†] | 92.3% [†] | 82.6% [†] | ↓ 100% | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> During 2013-14 there were 23 care leavers in the cohort. Of these, the local authority was in contact with 19. Despite many attempts to contact them, a small number of young people would not engage in services and despite many attempts to contact them via telephone, home visits and written correspondence, they have chosen not to respond. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Our processes are robust but there will always be exceptional circumstances where young people do not engage, despite being an allocated Personal Advisor. |
| SCC/033e (NSI) Percentage of e) young people formerly looked after with whom the authority is in contact, who are known to be in suitable, non-emergency accommodation at the age of 19; | 97% | 100% [†] | 100% [†] | 89.5% [†] | ↓ 93.3% | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> There were 19 young people in this cohort, of which a small number were deemed to be in unsuitable accommodation around the time of their 19th birthday. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> those young people continue to receive packages of aftercare support. |
| SCC/033f (NSI) Percentage of f) young people formerly looked after with whom the authority is in contact, who are known to be engaged in education, training or employment at the age of 19 | 60% | 25% [†] | 34.3% [†] | 31.6% [†] | ↓ 73.3% | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The final result was significantly worse than target and last year's performance. The outcomes for this particular group of young people were very disappointing. This was primarily down to the individual circumstances of each young person and their complex needs. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> There are a significant number of actions aimed at improving the engagement of all young people and identifying and supporting those who are at risk of becoming NEET (not in education, employment or training). These are detailed in documents such as the Post Inspection Action Plan updates. Implementation of the Youth Engagement and Progression Framework (YEPF) is key. |
| Theme: Improving outcomes for children in local authority care | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Each of the indicators in this theme achieved target and all but one showed an improvement on last year. Improving work on this area will, it is hoped, improve the prospects for children in local authority care. This, in turn, will reduce the risk of diminished life chances and increased costs of high numbers of looked after children. | | | | | | |
| Number of prospective adopters approved | 16 | 12 | 16 | 20 | ↓ 22 | | |
| Number of children adopted | 16 | 10 | 19 | 25 | ↑ 17 | | |
| Number of Residence Orders granted | 7 | 14 | 16 | 22 | ↑ 7 | | |
| Number of Special Guardianship Orders (SGOs) granted | 15 | 10 | 20 | 29 | ↑ 10 | | |

| Performance Indicators (PIs) | 2013-14 Target | Q2 Actual & RAG | Q3 Actual & RAG | End of Year RAG | Trend (vs 12-13) | Analysis – why off target? (red/amber only) | Proposed corrective action (red/amber only) |
|--|---|--------------------|--------------------|--------------------|------------------|---|---|
| Number of care orders discharged | 4 | 7 | 11 | 17 | ↑ 2 | | |
| Number of first-time entrants into the Youth Justice System | 40 | 23 [†] | 29 [†] | 34 [†] | ↑ 46 | | |
| Theme: Flying Start | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> This is an outcome agreement area and the directorate has achieved all of its targets for 2014-15. New Flying Start programmes have been opened in x, x and x and building works have been undertaken in x, x, and x to allow further expansion of the service and provide more children across the county borough with the best possible start to life. | | | | | | |
| (OA) Number of children benefiting from the Flying Start programme (Flying Start Welsh Government set minimum number of children receiving FS services (CAP)) | 1,190 (CAP) By Mar 14 | 1,185 [†] | 1,178 [†] | 1,171 [†] | ↑ 950 | | |
| (OA) Percentage of offers of Flying Start provided childcare taken up as a percentage of offers made to newly eligible children | 88% | - | - | 96.4% | ↑ 87.3% | | |
| (OA) Percentage of children in the Flying Start programme that are fully immunised at 47 months | 80% | - | - | 80% | ↑ 76% (11-12) | | |
| (OA) Overall childcare attendance rate at Flying Start settings is above 70% | 73% | - | - | 74% | ↑ 70% | | |
| (OA) Percentage of children in the Flying Start areas reached, exceeding or within one age band of their development milestone at age two years | 50% | - | - | 71% | ↑ 42% | | |
| (OA) Percentage of children in the Flying Start areas reached, exceeding or within one age band of their development milestone at age three years | 70% | - | - | 72% | ↑ 66% | | |
| (OA) Percentage of children reporting that their child's skills have improved following attendance at Flying Start childcare | 96% | - | - | 96% | ↑ 95% | | |

Abbreviations

| | |
|------------|---|
| NSI | National Strategic Indicator. This type of indicator is statutory, set by the Welsh Ministers under the Local Government (Wales) Measure 2009. Local authorities have a legal duty to collect and report on these. |
| PAM | Public Accountability Measure. The Public Accountability Measures consist of a small set of "outcome focused" indicators. They reflect those aspects of local authority work which local authorities across Wales agree are considered to be important in terms of public accountability. |
| OA | Outcome Agreement. Outcome Agreements exist between each individual local authority and the Welsh Government with specific measures linked to the Councils' priorities. |

BRIDGEND COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL

REPORT TO CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

2 SEPTEMBER 2014

REPORT OF THE ASSISTANT CHIEF EXECUTIVE – LEGAL AND REGULATORY SERVICES

SOCIAL SERVICES ANNUAL REPORTING FRAMEWORK

1. Purpose of Report

- 1.1 To provide Members with an update on the work of the Joint Research and Evaluation Panel held on the Social Services Annual Reporting Framework in June 2014.

2. Connection to Corporate Improvement Objectives/Other Corporate Priorities

- 2.1 The key improvement objectives identified in the Corporate Plan 2013–2017 have been embodied in the Overview & Scrutiny Forward Work Programmes. The Corporate Improvement Objectives were adopted by Council on 19 February 2014 and formally set out the improvement objectives that the Council will seek to implement between 2013 and 2017. The Overview and Scrutiny Committees engage in review and development of plans, policy or strategies that support the Corporate Themes.

3. Background

- 3.1 At its meeting in November 2009, the Committee considered a report from the Corporate Director – Wellbeing on the Social Services Annual Reporting Framework. This outlined the arrangements put in place by the Chief Inspector of the Care and Social Services Inspectorate, Wales (CSSIW) for the inspection, evaluation and review of local authority social services.
- 3.2 The report explained that this framework would involve formal engagement with Scrutiny on an annual basis, through the following three stages:
- As an essential element of the “challenge” groups judging the accuracy of the initial judgements on our effectiveness
 - Agreeing a statement of findings over the year that should be considered by the Director
 - Providing comments on the final draft report prior to reporting to Cabinet and publication.

3.3 The Committee agreed that this work should be undertaken through a Research and Evaluation Panel established jointly with the Children and Young People Overview and Scrutiny Committee, which subsequently also agreed to this approach.

3.4 This year, the following eight Members were appointed to the Joint Panel from the two Committees:

| | |
|------------|--|
| N Clarke | C Westwood |
| P A Davies | D B F White |
| P N John | Kevin Pascoe (Co-opted Member Representative) |
| CE Rees | William Bond (Special School Parent Governor Representative) |

3.5 The suggested Terms of Reference for the Panel's investigation were:

- To consider and examine the content of the Director of Social Services Annual Report 2013 – 14 prior to submission to CSSIW;
- To formulate comments, questions and lines of enquiry upon the draft reports;
- To engage with the Director of Social Services and representative Officers regarding the comments and questions.

3.6 It was considered that the above approach would result in the following positive outcome:

- Demonstrate self critically how effective social services activities are rather than just describing their activities to CSSIW and other stakeholders.

4. Current Situation

4.1 The Panel met on two separate occasions; the first was on 6 June 2014 at which Members considered the report and formulated questions and lines of enquiry together with Scrutiny Officers. The second meeting was held on 9 June 2014 where the Panel further explored the Director of Social Services Annual Report and offered comments and recommendations upon it.

4.2 This approach allowed the Panel to examine the draft report in a systematic way to identify issues to raise and discuss at their next two meetings with officers from both Directorates.

4.3 Some of the Panel's main points are summarised below:

- Overall, Members were positive about the content and format of the report and recognised it as an improvement on previous years' reports;
- The report contains a lot of description of processes but very little about outcomes and Members queried whether this was the nature of what is required/specified by CSSIW or whether it should be rebalanced;

- Members did recognise the need for the report to be comprehensive, but did comment that it was long and therefore not an easy read. There was some discussion around the possibility of producing a shorter/simplified version which could be more widely distributed and read. Linked to that, Members were not clear about the extent to which the format of the report is prescribed by CSSIW, and therefore the flexibility that the Council does or does not have to vary the format.

4.4 The interaction with officers during the meeting was reported as being positive by Members, as was the feedback received from them. Officers were very receptive to the Panel's comments and reported the process as being extremely useful.

4.5 The Panel were advised that their comments and views, would be taken on board, and the report would be revised to reflect these and incorporate appropriate changes proposed. The finalised report was then submitted to Council at its meeting on 16 July 2014 for approval.

5. Effect upon Policy Framework and 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 wellbeing in the County Borough of Bridgend.

6. Equalities Impact Assessment

6.1 There are no equalities implications arising from this report.

7. Financial Implications

7.1 None.

8. Recommendations

The Committee is asked to note the work of the Joint Research and Evaluation Panel and identify any proposed ways the process may be improved for the next year.

Andrew Jolley,
Assistant Chief Executive – Legal and Regulatory Services

Contact Officer: Gail Jewell

Telephone: (01656) 643695

Postal Address: Overview & Scrutiny Unit
Bridgend County Borough Council,
Civic Offices,
Angel Street,
Bridgend,
CF31 4WB

scrutiny@bridgend.gov.uk

BRIDGEND COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL

REPORT TO CHILDREN & YOUNG PEOPLE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

2 SEPTEMBER 2014

REPORT OF THE ASSISTANT CHIEF EXECUTIVE LEGAL & REGULATORY SERVICES

FORWARD WORK PROGRAMME UPDATE

1. Purpose of Report.

- 1.1 The report presents the items due to be considered at the Committee's meeting to be held on 13 October 2014 and seeks confirmation of the information required for the meeting to be held on 25 November 2014.

2. Connection to Corporate Improvement Objectives / Other Corporate Priorities.

- 2.1 The key improvement objectives identified in the Corporate Plan 2013-2017 have been embodied in the Overview & Scrutiny Forward Work Programmes. The amended Corporate Improvement Objectives adopted by Council on 3 April 2013 formally set out the improvement objectives that the Council will seek to implement between 2013 and 2017. The Overview and Scrutiny Committees engage in review and development of plans, policy or strategies that support the Corporate Themes.

3. Background.

- 3.1 At its meeting on 10 June 2014, the Children and Young People Overview and Scrutiny Committee determined its Annual Forward Work Programme for 2014-15

4. Current Situation / Proposal.

Meetings of the Children and Young People Overview and Scrutiny Committee from October to November 2014

- 4.1 In relation to the Committee's next meeting, scheduled 13 October 2014 the table below lists the items to be considered and the invitees due to attend.

| Topic | Invitees | Specific Information Requested | Research to be Undertaken by the Overview & Scrutiny Unit |
|------------------------------------|---|--|---|
| Social Services Workforce Plan | Deborah McMillan, Corporate Director - Children's Services Cllr Huw David, Cabinet Member Children & Young People Colin Turner, Head of Safeguarding and Family Support Susan Cooper, Corporate Director – Wellbeing Debra Beeke, Workforce Development Manager | Due to ongoing issues with the recruitment and retention of experienced social workers, the Committee has requested that they see the Workforce Plan that is being developed. It is understood that the plan will address recruitment and retention issues, including an analysis of reasons given for leaving the employment of BCBC. | |
| Early Intervention and Prevention | Deborah McMillan, Corporate Director - Children's Services Cllr Huw David, Cabinet Member Children & Young People Colin Turner, Head of Safeguarding and Family Support | A report on the current early intervention and prevention strategies in place and the impact they are having on numbers of children becoming looked after/ at risk. | |
| Member and School Engagement Panel | Deborah McMillan, Corporate Director - Children's Services Cllr Huw David, Cabinet Member Children & Young People | Revised project plan for next stage of Member School Engagement Panel following pilot | |

4.2 The table below lists the items to be considered and the invitees due to attend in respect of the subsequent meeting of the Committee provisionally due to be held on 25 November 2014.

| Topic | Invitees | Specific Information Requested | Research to be Undertaken by the Overview & Scrutiny Unit |
|---|---|---|---|
| Annual Report of the Regional Safeguarding Children's Board | Deborah McMillan, Corporate Director - Children's Services Cllr Huw David, Cabinet Member Children & Young People Colin Turner, Head of Safeguarding and Family Support | Annual Report of the Regional Safeguarding Children's Board as well as information on governance arrangements and how process for Quality Assurance | |
| Children's Directorate Change Programme | Deborah McMillan, Corporate Director - Children's Services Cllr Huw David, Cabinet Member Children & Young People | Report detailing the Directorate Change Programme to inform Members <i>(provisional)</i> | |
| Fostering Placements REP Final Report | None | Findings of the Fostering Placements REP | |

5. Effect upon Policy Framework and 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. Equality Impact Assessment.

- 6.1 There are no equality impacts arising from this report.

7. Financial Implications.

- 7.1 None.

8. Recommendations.

The Committee is asked to:

- (i) Note the topics due be considered at the meeting of the Committee scheduled for 13 October 2014 and confirm if it requires any additional specific information to be provided by the invitees listed or the Overview & Scrutiny Unit;
- (ii) Determine the invitees to be invited to attend, any specific information it would like the invitees to provide and any research that it would like the Overview & Scrutiny Unit to undertake in relation to its subsequent meeting, scheduled to be held on 25 November 2014.

**Mr P A Jolley,
Assistant Chief Executive – Legal & Regulatory Services**

Contact Officer: Rachel Keepins
Scrutiny Officer

Telephone: 01656 643613
Email: scrutiny@bridgend.gov.uk

Postal Address: Democratic Services - Scrutiny
Bridgend County Borough Council,
Civic Offices,
Angel Street,
Bridgend,
CF31 4WB

Background Documents

Bridgend County Borough Council Constitution

Part II of the Local Government Act 2000: Executive Arrangements