

Legal and Regulatory Services /
Gwasanaethau Cyfreithiol a Rheoleiddiol
Direct line / Deialu uniongyrchol: 01656 643147
Ask for / Gofynnwch am: Andrew Rees

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

Date / Dyddiad: 7 October 2014

Dear Councillor,

CHILDREN & YOUNG PEOPLE OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

A meeting of the Children & Young People Overview & Scrutiny Committee will be held in Council Chamber, Civic Offices Angel Street Bridgend CF31 4WB on **Monday, 13 October 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. Early Intervention and Prevention Strategy 3 - 24
Invitees
Deborah McMillan, Corporate Director – Children
Cllr Huw David, Cabinet Member Children & Young People
Colin Turner, Head of Safeguarding and Family Support
4. Recruitment and Retention of Social Workers 25 - 40
Invitees
Deborah McMillan, Corporate Director - Children
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

- | | | |
|----|--|---------|
| 5. | <u>Member and School Engagement Panel Invitees</u>
Cllr Huw David, Cabinet Member Children & Young People
Colin Turner, Head of Safeguarding and Family Support | 41 - 52 |
| 6. | <u>Appointment of Registered Representative to the Children and Young People Overview and Scrutiny Committee</u> | 53 - 54 |
| 7. | <u>Forward Work Programme Update</u> | 55 - 58 |
| 8. | <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:

P A Davies
D K Edwards
E P Foley
C A Green
D M Hughes

Councillors

P N John
M Jones
D G Owen
G Phillips
R L Thomas

Councillors

H J Townsend
C Westwood
D B F White
R E Young

Registered Representatives:

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

Co-opted Members:

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

BRIDGEND COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL

REPORT TO CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

13 OCTOBER 2014

REPORT OF THE ASSISTANT CHIEF EXECUTIVE – LEGAL & REGULATORY SERVICES

EARLY INTERVENTION AND PREVENTION STRATEGY

1. Purpose of Report

- 1.1 To provide the Committee with the new overarching strategy for all early intervention and prevention work within the Directorate, as well as details of the impact this work is having on reducing the number of children becoming looked after.

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 meetings in April and May 2013, Members received reports from the Children's Directorate on Preventative Services and Strategies. The purpose of these reports was to receive information in relation to the various preventative services and strategies that were being provided by the Children's Directorate and also determine the extent to which this preventative work was having a positive impact on children and young people. Obviously, Members were also keen to determine how these services and strategies were having an impact on reducing the numbers of LAC.
- 3.2 Some of the conclusions from these meetings have been highlighted below:

Whilst understanding that some of the services identified within the report have only recently been implemented, the Committee was concerned that there was still no indication of expected outcomes. Other Services had been in place for over 12-18 months and therefore Members proposed that some form of analysis and evaluation of outcomes should be available and therefore form part of the report to the Committee.

Members expressed concern over the slow progress of Integrated Working in relation to the establishment of the multi-agency hubs and some of the delays associated with the Health Boards IT arrangements. The Committee expressed the importance of the hubs in dealing with children, young people and families in Tier 1 and 2 to prevent them from moving into Tiers 3 and 4. Members asked that some indication be provided as to when Officers will be able to report to Scrutiny that all the hubs have been completed.

The Committee expressed concern over the grant funding that is due to cease for many of the preventative services and that nothing has yet been identified to replace them in the medium term financial plan. Members requested that this be raised with the Standing Budget Research and Evaluation for consideration.

The Committee expressed concerns over the sustainability of the Connecting Families Project given the uncertainty over its funding for the future. Welsh Government has focused funding towards the Integrated Family Support Service, which is a statutory requirement, whilst the Connecting Families Project is not. Given the fact that the IFSS has already had its budget reduced before it has even had a chance to produce any outcomes, the future of both services seemed very uncertain. The Committee agreed that the sustainability of the Connecting Families Project was particularly important as it is a much broader and flexible project covering a much wider range of services. The evidence provided in the report indicates that the project has also led to numerous positive outcomes for families, as well as a significant amount of cost avoidance for public sector agencies since its introduction. Such preventative services are essential for the future to ensure both financial savings and sustainability and better support for families. The Committee therefore recommend that this be considered and incorporated into the medium term financial plan.

The Committee expressed positive comments over the engagement with the voluntary sector over the new TAF and JAFF frameworks, however, did express some concern over too much reliance on the voluntary sector to take forward actions under these preventative services due to the uncertainty over future funding for the voluntary sector.

- 3.3 In addition to this Members also expressed concerns over the sustainability of the Connecting Families Project given the uncertainty over its funding for the future. The evidence provided in the report indicated that the project had led to numerous positive outcomes for families, as well as a significant amount of cost avoidance for public sector agencies since its introduction. Such preventative services were felt essential for the future to ensure both financial savings and sustainability and better support for families.
- 3.4 This led to the Committee's request for the independent researcher's formal evaluation report on the Connecting Families Project, which they received in November 2013. Their conclusions from this meeting are set out below:

The Committee expressed concerns regarding future funding of the Connecting Families project and welcomed the Corporate Director's assurances that funding would continue, either from an invest to save proposal or from the reallocation of core budget. The Committee noted that it looked forward to seeing evidence of reducing numbers of Looked After Children.

The Committee expressed disappointment that the full report had not yet been completed, and noted the importance of robust statistical evaluation and evidence in ensuring that projects such as these continued to have the support of the Local Authority and partner organisations.

- 3.5 Since November last year, the Committee has been advised of the development of a strategy to link all the various preventative strategies and services.
- 3.6 The Committee then received the finalised Placements and Permanency Strategy at its last meeting in August 2014, under which they were informed that the Permanency Strategy and the Early Intervention Strategy would work in parallel to 'form a multi-agency response to driving improved outcomes.' The Permanency and Placement Strategy stated that:

Children's Services are driving a 'whole system' approach to supporting Looked After Children and keeping families together.

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. Current Situation / proposal.

- 4.1 Attached at Appendix A is a report from the Children's Directorate detailing the progress made to develop a Strategy to define the activity around early intervention and prevention services in Bridgend, now known as the 'Early help in Bridgend'.
- 4.2 When examining the report, Members may wish to consider the following points when formulating their questions to the invitees:
- a) *What impact have the preventative services that have been in place over 12 months had on reducing the number of LAC?*
 - b) *The report makes reference to achieving financial savings in relation to streamlining management, but does not make reference to any savings realised directly as a result of preventative work with families. What savings does the Directorate anticipate it will make as a result of increased and better coordinated early intervention and prevention activities?*
 - c) *What timescales are associated with the outcomes identified within the strategy?*

d) *What reassurance can be given as to the success of the Strategy and sustainability of the services within it, in light of the current climate, future budget cuts and the reliance on grant funding?*

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

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Background Documents:
None

BRIDGEND COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL**REPORT TO CHILDEN & YOUNG PEOPLE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE****DATE 13 OCTOBER 2014****REPORT OF THE CORPORATE DIRECTOR – CHILDREN****EARLY INTERVENTION AND PREVENTION STRATEGY****1 Purpose of Report**

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to update Committee on the progress made to develop a Strategy to define the activity around early intervention and prevention services in Bridgend, now known as the 'Early help in Bridgend'.

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 Historically investment in prevention and early intervention initiatives in Bridgend has been un-coordinated. Many services are still relatively new and they need time to embed and to develop robust links with other provision. There is a hope that, in time, these initiatives will impact positively on the lives of children and young people and their families but in order to achieve this we recognise that there is a need to co-ordinate services better and to make more rigorous links between our approaches to children at different tiers of need. In recent years there has been some significant investment and commitment to prevention and early intervention within Bridgend, i.e. Connecting Families, the Intensive Family Support Service, Rapid Response Team, and Families First. In addition, some services have been re-organised with the aim of increasing skills and capacity within the team. The local authority has increased its focus on developing integrated approaches to supporting families and supporting social workers and other practitioners. It is acknowledged that there needs to be a strategy in place to ensure that the range of prevention and early intervention initiatives in place are joined-up, coherent and have a common purpose and that children's needs do not escalate. The council intends to publish its "Early help in Bridgend Strategy". This strategy defines the council's whole systems approach to preventing the needs of children and their families becoming more acute.

4 Current situation/proposal

- 4.1 Attached at Appendix 1, is the Council's "Early help in Bridgend Strategy". It recognises that in order to be effective in developing services that co-ordinate effectively and provide a wraparound service for children and families we require a strategy that is continually reviewed, has sound leadership and rigorous approaches to prevention and early intervention. The strategy describes 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 children and families at all levels of need.
- 4.2 This strategy describes the way in which we want to provide our services in the future, and focuses on how we will improve our current arrangements to improve outcomes for children. Key elements of this strategy are that Children's Services are driving a 'whole system' approach to supporting children and keeping families together. Together with the looked after children and placement Strategy, these will form a multi-agency response to driving improved outcomes for children.
- 4.3 The focus in the strategy is on describing what will change in relation to our work with children at all levels of the continuum of need. The strategy contains an action plan for the future rather than an attempt to cover every detail of our current services and support.

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 14/15 gross budget for early intervention and prevention is £7.975 million. Of this £6.311 million is funded by grants and £130k from the Bridgend Change Programme.
- 7.2 There will be budget savings linked with the strategy, which will be achieved by streamlining the management of our current support service portfolio. The value of these savings is unknown at present.

8 Recommendations

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

Deborah McMillan
Corporate Director - Children

Date: 13th October 2014

Contact Officer: Nicola Echanis

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E-mail: nicola.echanis@bridgend.gov.uk

Background documents:

None

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Early Help in Bridgend

*A strategy laying out how children and young people in
Bridgend County Borough Council can access support as
soon as they need it.*

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INTRODUCTION

The desire to improve outcomes for children, young people and their families is what underpins Children's services in Bridgend and we know that by working in partnership we can make a big difference.

We are also united in our thinking around early intervention; we know that if our services identify the needs of children, young people and their families as soon as possible and take swift action to address those needs we could stop problems starting, getting worse or becoming entrenched. If problems worsen for children and young people they can start to influence every aspect of their lives. It is therefore important that every service and every professional has an interest in effective early intervention being in place.

Serious Case Review learning nationally and indeed locally has taught us that the more swiftly we recognise a child has problems, the quicker we take action. Furthermore, the better we work together and share information the more likely we are to avoid disastrous consequences for children. We know intervening early is the right approach to take.

We accept that orienting services towards early intervention is not easy, particularly during tough financial times, but there is evidence that it can be done. Some suggest that under the current economic circumstances early intervention is a luxury that cannot be afforded, but when early intervention is embedded it can relieve the pressure on services so a given level of resource is used to better effect. When the high costs of 'non-intervention' are compared to the significantly lower costs of intervening early, it becomes clear that early intervention is often the better approach. In the long term early intervention can yield significant savings. Moreover, all the evidence suggests that no children's services system can be efficient unless early intervention is a significant part of the mix. With this in mind we have laid out in this Early help Strategy the principles and processes that we, the Children's directorate have agreed to keep at the heart of our services and will be willing to be held to account to in doing so.

DEFINITIONS

Prevention: where services or interventions are intended to build skills and resilience and thus prevent problems arising. Prevention includes advice, support and anticipatory guidance at key life stages or transitions. This is a key role for universal services.

Early Intervention: means taking action as soon as possible to tackle problems that have already emerged for children, young people and their families.

Early Years: is a phrase used to describe the initial years of a child's life.

WHAT IS EARLY INTERVENTION?

It is important to recognise that early intervention is not a single, one-off event but a process whereby:

- Children, young people and families' difficulties are identified before they have reached a point at which a child's development and well-being is seriously compromised.
- Having been identified early on, the scale and nature of these problems are properly understood and a plan for offering help is developed through a process of high quality assessment, and
- Children, young people and families are then offered the help they need, in line with those assessments, accept it, and then either overcome their difficulties or they are offered and accept longer term support to help manage them.

Early intervention is a key part of a wider continuum of services and will work alongside universal services. For early intervention to be successful each stage of the process must be carried out well and followed through by every person who works with children, young people and families and has individual responsibility for early intervention.

Early help in Bridgend is about professionals working in an integrated and multi-agency way and delivering services in the right locations based on the needs of that local area.

WHERE ARE WE NOW?

Historically investment in prevention and early intervention initiatives in Bridgend has been un co-ordinated. Many services are still relatively new and they need time to embed and to develop links with other provision. There is a hope that, in time, these initiatives will impact positively on the lives of children and young people and their families but in order to achieve this we recognise that there is a need to co-ordinate services better and to make more rigorous links between our approach to children at different tiers of need. In recent years there has been some significant investment and commitment to prevention and early intervention within Bridgend, i.e. Connecting Families, the Intensive Family Support Service, Rapid Response Team, and Families First. In addition, some services have been re-organised with the aim of increasing skills and capacity within the team. The local authority has increased its focus on developing integrated approaches to supporting families and supporting social workers and other practitioners.

It is acknowledged that there needs to be a strategy in place to ensure that the range of prevention and early intervention initiatives in place are joined-up, coherent and have a common purpose.

Connections with other services, including universal services and statutory (e.g. child protection) services, could be improved. Stakeholders feel that this would help to deliver a more coherent spectrum of support for vulnerable families.

Existing prevention and early intervention initiatives risk being too short-term. Families face challenges that are longstanding and can't be resolved with (for instance) six months of support. Services need to be better at understanding need and providing support and intervention of a type and length that would meet the family's needs.

There is a degree of confusion across teams about which service or team a family should sit with. This is particularly the case for families that don't fully fit eligibility criteria. It is inevitable therefore that some families 'slip through the net'.

There is a concern that prevention and early intervention services are not fully equipped to support families at the cusp of entering statutory services. Stakeholders comment that there is a core of families who face significant challenges but who do not meet the threshold for statutory child protection services. This results in some services supporting families with whom they are not sufficiently skilled or experienced to work. On other occasions, it is also resulting in families not getting any support, resulting in their needs having to escalate further before getting support.

WHERE DO WE WANT TO BE?

Early identification in Bridgend is underpinned by the following key principles. All services in the partnership have agreed to embed these principles into their organisational culture.

- **Children, young people and their families are at the centre of everything we do and interventions and services are shaped and delivered around them. To ensure this we will:**
 - help all children and young people to:
 - thrive and make the best use of their talents;
 - live healthy and safe lives;
 - be confident and caring individuals and know and receive their rights.

The Children's Directorate will ensure that we will provide greater opportunities for us to work closer with partners across the public, voluntary and private sectors to work together in a fully integrated way. However, the impact of the wider public sector financial cuts will clearly impact on services for children, young people and their families. We are therefore making some difficult decisions about what we can maintain, reduce or stop delivering in line with the budget reductions. Where we can, we are committed to protecting front line children's services, especially those that support early intervention and the safeguarding of children, protecting them from harm. What is important is the quality of outcomes for our families. Value for money is our key measure, not who provides the service. Therefore, the renewed focus of our business plan is on the transformation of children's services, with a strong focus on early intervention and prevention and the development of a whole system approach to ensure that the needs of all our children and young people will be met at the earliest opportunity.

- **Any service or individual presented with a child's unmet need should take action or invoke the help of others; everyone has a responsibility to act and to ensure this we will:**

- Use the Joint Assessment Family Framework (JAFF) to provide a one-model, one-process way of working which should be at the heart of all other assessments.
- Safely share information between services to avoid duplication where appropriate and purposeful to do so.
- Use interventions which are based around what we know works and have a proven evidence base ensuring the right person is available at the right time.
- Provide good, clear information about services to help families access advice and guidance about emerging difficulties at the appropriate level.
- Work in a co-ordinated and integrated way.

- **Early intervention is core to the work of every mainstream service and as such investment and resource should be reoriented into early intervention. To ensure this happens we will:**
 - Shift services to early identification and intervention to improve safeguarding.
 - endeavour to make the children's workforce skilled in identifying, assessing and swiftly responding to unmet need.

- **Success is measured based on outcomes achieved for young people. To ensure this happens we will:**
 - Transform the way we deliver children's services to improve outcomes for children, young people and their families and to meet the demands of the medium term financial strategy
 - We will adopt a whole system approach to improving outcomes for children
 - We will ensure that the whole systems approach has a joint assessment framework at its heart.
 - Ensure there is a common understanding of need by all agencies and a consistent response to levels of need
 - Work in a holistic way to meet the needs of the whole family
 - Target the families who need our help and tackle the 'referral' culture
 - Ensure we meet the needs of children and their families as earlier as possible to ensure we prevent need from becoming more complex.

HOW ARE WE GOING TO GET THERE?

In Bridgend we talk about a 'Continuum of Need Assessment and Action' as illustrated in Appendix 1. The 'Continuum' represents a seamless approach to service delivery which meets the changing needs of children, young people and their families. There are four segments of the continuum:

Level	Need	Descriptor of need (for a full guide of indicators see appendix 1)	Example of typical service response	Example of assessment
1	Universal need	Children who are enjoying general well-being, accessing education and health services and maintaining good overall progress in all areas of development.	Universal services including: Schools Children's Centre's Youth Clubs / Youth Projects	Screening tools SATs Health screening
2	Additional need	Children who have an identified, singular need whose health, development and / or learning are starting to be adversely affected as a result.	Family Support Targeted Youth Support Behaviour Support Autism Outreach Portage Workers Education Welfare Parent Support Workers Flying start Integrated working teams	JAFF
3	Multiple need	Children who have numerous needs, who as a result are not maintaining satisfactory health, development and/or learning and who are increasingly vulnerable. <i>(including Children in Need as defined by S17 of the Children Act 1989)</i>		JAFF TAF
4	Acute need	Children in crisis, with complex, acute and often long term need, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Where parents refuse or are consistently not able to co-operate • Children who have complex disabilities • Parental resistance and lack of support mechanisms which results in children suffering or likely to be suffering significant harm • Children who are offending and subject to a court order • Children who have serious unmet enduring health, development and /or learning needs <i>(including Children in Need as defined by S17 of the Children Act 1989)</i>	Youth Offending Service Disability Services Safeguarding Teams Attendance Prosecution IFSS Connecting families Edge of care project	Initial Assessments Core Assessments SEN Assessments

Level 2 and 3 represent early intervention in response to an individual need. To enable children, young people and families to receive a seamless service all partners have agreed to operate the following processes to make early intervention happen in practice.

The JAFF is a key part of delivering frontline services that are integrated and are focused around the needs of children and young people. The JAFF is a standardised approach to conducting an assessment of a child's additional needs and deciding how these should be met. The JAFF promotes more effective, earlier identification of additional needs particularly in universal services. It aims to provide a simple process for a holistic assessment of child's needs and strengths, taking account of the roles of parents, carers and environmental factors on their development. Practitioners are then better placed to agree with children and families about appropriate modes of support. The JAFF also aims to improve integrated working by promoting coordinated service provisions.

Where a multi-agency response is required, the formation of a Team around the Family (TAF) is needed. A TAF brings together practitioners from across different services that work together to co-ordinate and deliver an integrated package of solution focused support to meet the needs identified during the common assessment process. It is important that the child or young person and parents/carers are also included as part of the TAF. Our vision of the TAF is that it is a multi-agency panel convened regularly to discuss the needs of children in a given locality.

The Lead Professional is the person responsible for co-ordinating the actions identified in the assessment process. They act as a single point of contact for children and young people with additional needs who are supported by more than one practitioner within a TAF.

The JAFF Plan is regularly reviewed by the TAF to monitor progress towards agreed outcomes. The review identifies any unmet or additional needs for the child or young person's smooth transition between universal, targeted and specialist services. In the case of multi-agency responses, this will involve further multi-agency meetings and liaison between the members of the TAF.

The objective of the Information Sharing Protocol is to facilitate sharing of all personal, sensitive and non-personal data between the public, private and voluntary sectors so that members of the public receive the services they need.

The Critical Pathway is a process that ensures children, young people and families have the appropriate support at the appropriate time against the Continuum of Need Framework, including the escalation and de-escalation protocols.

OUTCOMES

By adopting these principles and processes across all of our services in the Children's Directorate we expect children, young people and families to receive the right support at the right time. There will be:

- Fewer children, young people and families needing expensive high tier services (measured by the number of referrals to specialist services)
- Fewer severe problems (measured by the number of referrals with a primary need; the number of families in acute distress or family dysfunction)
- A narrowing of the gap between populations of children, young people and families (measured by Bridgend's Child Poverty Indicators, the proportion of children in poverty)
- Improved uptake and engagement with universal and targeted services (tier 1, 2, 3 and 4, measured by the number of JAFFs)
- A reduction of Children in Need of Child Protection measured by the number voluntarily accommodated under Section 20 of the Children's Act 1984
- Improved satisfaction about services (measured by the number of related customer compliments and complaints and service evaluations)
- Empowered and self-reliant communities (measured by re-referral rates)

As part of this protocol each of the services that form the Children's Directorate will embed these principles and processes into the culture of their service and be willing to be held to account by other services in doing so.

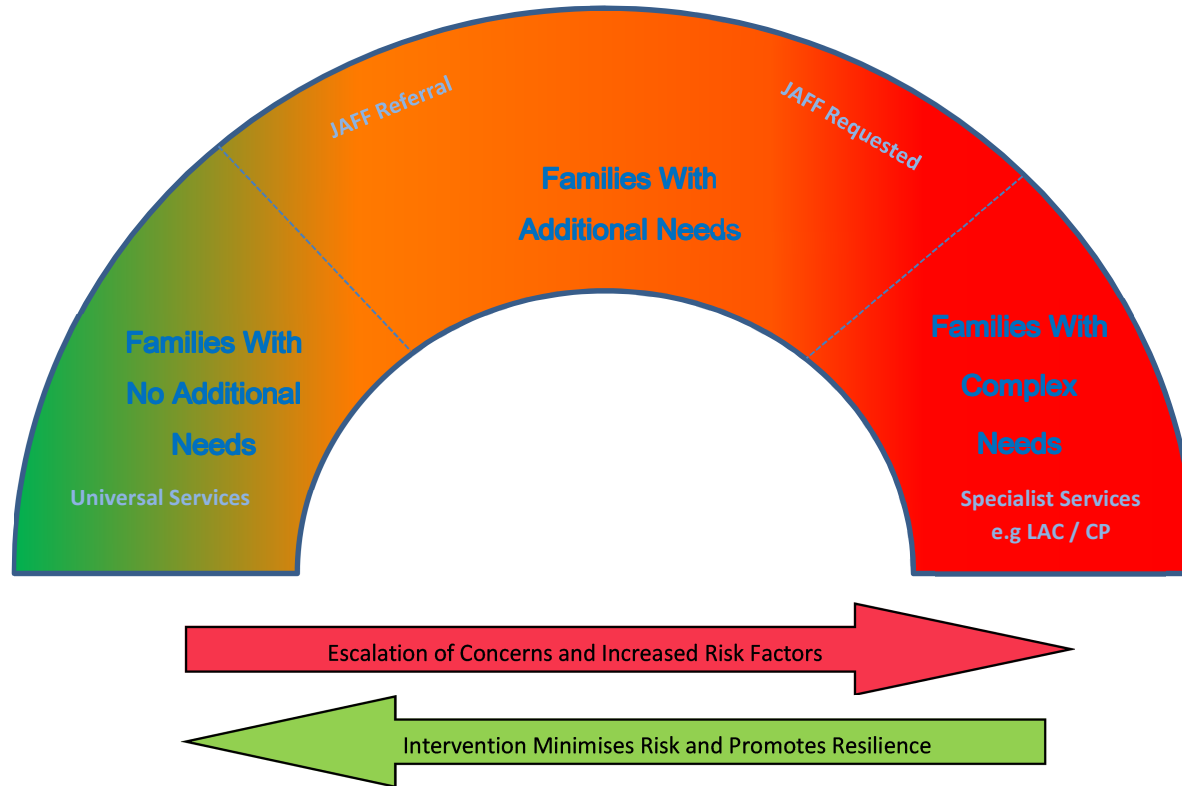
ACTION PLAN

Work stream	Actions	Lead	By when	Savings attributed
1.				
	Re-structure all family support services including youth services	Mark Lewis	Dec 14	150K
	Create support hubs in communities aligned with safeguarding teams	Mark Lewis	Dec14	
	Re launch JAFF to provide single form of entry for the support hubs	Mark Lewis	Jan 15	
	Re-locate safeguarding teams to hubs	Colin Turner	Dec14	
	Explore the options to develop a full MASH model of service delivery	Colin Turner/Nicola Echanis	Dec 14	
2.				
	Develop a multi-agency programme of parenting	Mark Lewis	March 15	

	education and skills			
	Develop a mechanism for identifying and assessing young carers within the borough	Mark Lewis	Dec14	
	Develop a programme of interventions to meet the needs of young carers	Mark Lewis	March 15	
3.				
4.				

APPENDICES

Appendix 1 - Integrated Working Procedures



BRIDGEND COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL

REPORT TO CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

13 OCTOBER 2014

REPORT OF THE ASSISTANT CHIEF EXECUTIVE – LEGAL & REGULATORY SERVICES

RECRUITMENT AND RETENTION OF SOCIAL WORKERS

1. Purpose of Report

- 1.1 To provide members with an update on the work being undertaken in relation to the recruitment and retention of social workers.

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 December 2013, the Committee received the quarter 2 performance report for 2013-14, from which they made the following conclusions:

In view of the deterioration of a range of performance indicators around child protection, the Committee was very concerned regarding the destabilisation of the social work workforce – particularly in relation to the ‘poaching’ of experienced social workers by neighbouring authorities via ‘golden hello’s’ and similar incentives. The Committee recommended that the Lead Officer engage with ADSS to address these practices and that the Cabinet Member – Children and Young People should link up with the appropriate WLGA networks. The Committee further recommended that it be provided with a report in relation to the Workforce Plan, currently being developed by Officers, which should also include an analysis of exit reasons.

The Committee was also very concerned at the high levels of newly qualified Social Workers involved in safeguarding work (60 to 70%) as a consequence of the loss of some experienced staff. The decision to reduce numbers ‘grow your own’ type programmes for developing existing staff to become Social Workers was viewed by the Committee as false economy.

- 3.2 As a result the Committee agreed at its meeting in June 2014 to include the Social Services Workforce Plan as an item on their Annual Forward Work Programme.

4. Current Situation / proposal.

4.1 Attached at Appendix A is a report from the Head of Safeguarding and Family Support providing information in relation to the recruitment and retention of Social Workers and the actions undertaken and planned to address these issues, including the Project Brief for the Recruitment and Retention Project.

- a) *Given the large number of newly qualified social workers employed by the Authority, how far are we meeting our own 'model' in protecting them in their first year in practice, as outlined in the Care Council for Wales guidance?*
- b) *What are the timescales associated with the Recruitment and Retention Project?*
- c) *Does the work of the Recruitment and Retention Project expand upon the work which has already been undertaken by the Workwise project? Are there any risks of duplication?*
- d) *The report states at point 4.5.5 that 'The current salaries for the Social Work job family are comparable to other Local Authorities in Wales'. Why then is one of the objectives of the project to 'Gain a clear understanding of BCBC's pay position in relation to other Welsh Local Authorities'?*
- e) *In relation to Exit Interviews, could the process be improved to ensure a higher response rate?*
- f) *Many of the products identified in the Project Portfolio are standard working practices, for example, training managers in sickness absence process or meeting with team Managers to understand agency staffing levels. How then, are these put forward as actions or workstreams for a project, which by its nature should have an end, whereas these practices should be continuous?*

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

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Background Documents:

None

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BRIDGEND COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL**REPORT TO CHILDREN & YOUNG PEOPLE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY
COMMITTEE****13 OCTOBER 2014****REPORT OF THE CORPORATE DIRECTOR CHILDREN****RECRUITMENT AND RETENTION OF SOCIAL WORKERS****1. Purpose of Report**

- 1.1 To provide Committee with information in relation to the recruitment and retention of Social Workers and the actions undertaken and planned to address these issues

2. Connection to Corporate Improvement Objectives/Other Corporate Priorities

- 2.1 Having a qualified, stable and appropriately experienced workforce in place will contribute directly to two Corporate Improvement Priorities:

- Working with children and families to tackle problems early
- Working together to make the best use of our resources

3. Background

- 3.1 Recruitment and retention of Social Workers in Children's Services continues to challenge many local authorities in Wales. While this is not a new issue, the situation will vary for each local authority over time and will even vary across different areas within the service.
- 3.2 There have been a range of national reports on this matter and recommendations have been taken forward at a local and national level. However, it is recognised that there is no one solution and there are a wide range of factors contributing to the situation at any one time.
- 3.3 Of concern at present is the significant number of newly qualified Social Workers employed in this Authority who are in their first or second year of practice. Managers are required to protect newly qualified social workers workload and time during their first year in practice and as a result are challenged in their ability to allocate the high number of child protection and looked after children cases currently faced.

4. Current situation / proposal

- 4.1 A recruitment and retention project has been established to develop strategies to tackle this agenda. The project board, comprising managers from the Safeguarding and Family Support service, Social Care Workforce and Development team and corporate functions such as Human Resources and Communications and Marketing, has been established. Sponsored by the Head of Safeguarding and Family Support, the project reports to the Children's Strategic Improvement Board,

chaired by the Corporate Director Wellbeing (in her capacity as Director of Social Services).

- 4.2 The aim of the project is to establish a stable, confident and competent social work workforce with an appropriate mix of skills and experience which is able to meet statutory responsibilities and achieve positive outcomes for children and young people.
- 4.3 The focus of this work has been on the front line safeguarding social work teams; however it is acknowledged that the work of the project will be of benefit to other social workers in Safeguarding and Family Support and in some cases Adult Social Care.
- 4.4 The project brief at Appendix 1 sets out the project objectives and the project board, chaired by the Head of Safeguarding and Family Support. This board monitors the progress made against the objectives and reviews the overall staffing situation to make key decisions about the deployment of staff.
- 4.5 The main features of the work undertaken through the project workstreams and progress made is set out below:

4.5.1 **Vacancy Rates**

An immediate priority was to address the vacancy position to ensure arrangements were in place, through appointments, secondments and agency workers, to cover all permanent positions. Additionally, meetings were arranged with hosted students who were in their final year of training and were seeking employment. At the time of writing this report there were 5 permanent vacancies (3 Social Workers, 1 Senior Practitioner and 1 Team Manager) of which, 3 have been recruited to.

4.5.2 **Recruitment**

Recruitment practices have been improved which promote working in Bridgend as a Social Worker, for example the professional development opportunities available. Recruitment timescales are now more responsive to service needs. A rolling advertising campaign has been implemented. This has included targeted recruitment for social workers with more than 2 years post qualifying service. This is proving successful in attracting applicants, with 3 experienced social workers recently shortlisted for interview.

4.5.3 **Agency Workers**

There are improved monitoring arrangements for the engagement of Agency workers. At the time of writing this report there were 6 agency social workers engaged in the Social Work teams. While exit plans are in place for these, their departure will depend on the success of recruiting experienced social worker staff.

4.5.4 **Exit Interviews**

Exit interviews can provide direct indications as to how to improve staff retention, through questions relating to reasons for leaving, comments about BCBC as an employer and any additional information to improve retention.

Since October 2013, 20 exit questionnaires have been issued to Social Workers who have left employment since April 2013. 7 questionnaires have been returned and 3 exit interviews have been undertaken. Based on these 10 responses and interviews the following themes emerged:-

- 'To work in another service area' and 'Job Dissatisfaction' are the most common reasons for leaving identified.
- Other reasons for leaving included 'Dissatisfaction with the work environment', 'Health' and 'Need for a change'.
- Some staff referred to caseloads being too high, resulting in unrealistic expectations being placed upon them. Some staff felt that they required additional supervision and support, while others cited the need for better communication between management and practitioners.
- Notwithstanding the above, many staff reported that they had had a positive experience whilst working in Bridgend acknowledging that many of the issues they identified were systemic of Social Work as a profession.

4.5.5 Pay and Conditions

The Authority has implemented the All Wales Career Pathway Structure and this is reflected in the Council's Pay and Grading structure. The current salaries for the Social Work job family are comparable to other Local Authorities in Wales. There is no indication from the exit interview data that employees are leaving employment solely for higher salaries.

There have, however, been indications from staff that they are leaving to take advantage of different flexible working arrangements in other Local Authorities, such as working condensed hours, more part time opportunities and or increased flexible working. The Council is currently updating its Flexible Working policy and part time opportunities will be advertised in order to respond to these issues.

4.5.6 Marketing

As part of the recruitment and retention board marketing and communications issues have been considered. A microsite is being developed to promote Social Work vacancies and increase the profile of Bridgend as an employer. The microsite will include testimonials of social workers and managers, detailing the positives of working as a social worker in Bridgend. The site will also promote other benefits to prospective social workers such as; training and development opportunities, career progression opportunities, mentoring and other support arrangements. The microsite will go live in the autumn

4.5.7 Workforce Development

Learning and development activities play a key part in developing a Social Worker's performance and the contribution that they make to the organisation. The Social Care Workforce Development Programme offers a range of continuing professional development opportunities for Social Workers and Social Work Team Managers. Specific examples include:

- An induction programme for newly appointed Social Workers and Social Work Managers.
- Newly qualified social workers entering their first year of in practice are supported through a model which is line with the Care Council for Wales and Welsh Government guidance (2008). 10 social workers who qualified in 2014 will be accessing the programme.
- During 2014/15 17 social workers entering their second year of practice will be supported to access the Consolidation Programme which is part of the Care Council for Wales Continuing Professional Education & Learning Framework for Social Workers.
- A programme of mentoring support for Social Work Team Managers and Senior Practitioners.

A qualification and skills audit is to be undertaken which will support the realignment of the Safeguarding Teams, with the aim of ensuring that when allocating social workers to teams there is an appropriate mix of knowledge, skills, experience and professional autonomy.

5. Effect upon Policy Framework& Procedure Rules.

5.1 None

6. Equality Impact Assessment

6.1 This report is for information purposes only and does not therefore need an Equality Impact Assessment (EIA).

7. Financial Implications

7.1 There are no additional financial implications arising from this report as the costs associated with the activities outlined will be contained within existing resources.

8. Recommendation

8.1 It is recommended that Committee note the content of this report.

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Background documents:

None



Bridgend County Borough Council

Recruitment and Retention Project

Project Brief

Version: 1.0

Date: 16 June 2014

Status: Final

Author: Project Manager

Project Roles:

Senior Responsible Officer	Head of Safeguarding and Family Support
Project Manager	HR Officer

Document Control

Version Control

Version	Status	Date	Author	Amendment Details
0.1	Draft	12.02.2014	Project Manager	Initial Draft
0.2	Draft	31.03.2014	Project Manager	Amendments - CT
0.3	Draft	07.04.2014	Project Manager	Additions – Project Board
1.0	Final	16.06.2014	Project Manager	Additions – Project workstreams

Strategic Context

1. The Safeguarding and Family Support Service is currently facing challenges in relation to the recruitment and retention of qualified and experienced social workers. It is acknowledged that this is a national problem, with all authorities facing particular issues in this area.
2. Having a qualified, stable and appropriately experienced workforce in place will contribute to the quality of services provided and the achievement of the below Improvement Priorities identified in the Corporate Plan 2013-2017;
 - Working together to make the best use of our resources
 - Working with Children and Families to tackle problems early.

Aim of the project

3. The aim of the project is to establish a stable, confident and competent workforce with an appropriate mix of skills and experience within the Safeguarding and Family Support service which is able to meet statutory responsibilities and achieve positive outcomes for children and young people.

Project Objectives

4. The objective of the project is to develop strategies to tackle issues affecting the recruitment of social workers in Children's Social Services, as well as improving our ability to retain those social workers already working for the Authority.

In achieving this, the Project will:

- Identify the key factors that are contributing to the current issues experienced in recruiting and retaining Children's Social Services Social Workers e.g. Candidate attraction, turnover levels, absence levels.

- Increase Bridgend County Borough Council's presence within the labour market, promoting BCBC as an employer of choice.
- Develop a range of targeted recruitment campaigns aimed at ensuring that applicants have the correct skills and experience levels to meet service requirements.
- Gain a clear understanding of BCBC's pay position in relation to other Welsh Local Authorities.
- Take appropriate actions to fill vacancies through deployment of workforce and a range of temporary solutions, including internal and external secondment opportunities.
- Review working arrangements with Agency providers to ensure that the Safeguarding and Family Support service requirements are met.
- Identify best practice strategies employed across sector to assist with both the recruitment and retention of staff.
- Improve the provision of workforce information (and comparative data) to ensure that accurate, meaningful information is available to assist with developing teams.
- Ensure that Recruitment and Selection policies and procedures reflect the specific requirements of the service.
- Establish effective internal communication arrangements to ensure that staff are informed and engaged.
- Establish arrangements to support and develop less experienced and knowledgeable social workers.
- Review existing management practices and procedures, including Induction, Supervision and Appraisal arrangements.
- Ensure that Managers are suitably equipped to manage the sickness absence process.
- Ensure that the skills mix in each Team is balanced and caseload levels are manageable.

Benefits/dis-benefits

5. The benefits of the project will be:
 - Reduced turnover and vacancy rates
 - Improved retention rates
 - Balanced skills and experience mix
 - Improved position in the labour market and public profile.

- Improved staff morale within Teams and Services

Constraints/Assumptions/Dependencies

6. This project may be constrained by;

- Certain market forces which are beyond the control of this project
- The Council's pay and grading structure defines the salaries for all levels of the Social Worker job family
- Capacity to meet project requirements within the defined timescales
- The need for additional resource investment to meet project objectives.

Project Governance

7. The Recruitment and Retention project will report to the Director of Social Services in her capacity as Chair of the Strategic Improvement Board – Children's (SIB).

8. It is proposed that there should be a Project Board comprising:

- Safeguarding and Family Support Group Managers
- HR Officer
- HR Business Partner
- SCWDP Manager
- Communication and Marketing Officer
- Business Support Officer

Other Officers can be co-opted on to this board as required.

9. The following work streams have been created to progress the Project Products identified (see attached);

- Human Resources – HR Officer/Workforce Development Manager
- Workforce Development – Social Care Workforce Development Manager
- Service Development – Group Manager – Assessment and Case Management/Disability Transition and Case Management
- Marketing – Marketing Officer

Project Portfolio

10. The following products are required and the product owners are shown below as being the officers who will take responsibility for the product, drawing others in as required.

Product Name	Product Owner (s)	Stage
Develop arrangements to ensure exit information is gathered and analysed	HR Workstream	IP
Engage with staff teams to identify areas of concern and good practice and develop	Service Development Workstream	S

mechanisms for engaging consistently.		
Review internal communication arrangements to ensure smooth flow of information throughout the Service.	Service Development Workstream	S
Review current Team structures and assess skills mix in relation to current caseload levels.	Service Development Workstream	IP
Research current best practice in relation to recruitment of Social Workers, both in Local Government and cross-sector.	HR Workstream	IP
Develop specific website resources to promote S&FS service to prospective applicants, including exploring the use of modern technology to support recruitment.	Marketing Workstream	IP
Undertake a benchmarking exercise on social work pay and conditions	HR Workstream	IP
Consider options available for encouraging current workforce to remain in employment with BCBC, including options for promoting continuing professional development.	Workforce Development Workstream	IP
Offer secondment opportunities, both internally to suitably qualified Social Workers in ASC and externally with partner organisations, in order to allow staff development opportunities in the short term.	HR Workstream	IP
Liaise with Team Managers to understand current Agency staffing levels.	HR Workstream	C
Meet with Agency provider to ensure service provided meets requirement and agree set of service and operating standards.	HR Workstream	IP
Ensure that staffing structures on HR Trent system match operational structures and budget arrangements to ensure that accurate management information is available at all times to assist with Project actions/recommendations	HR Workstream	C
Obtain information about workforce composition in other LA's.	HR Workstream	S
Review existing Recruitment and Selection Policy and associated procedures to ensure that they meet service and safeguarding requirements.	HR/Service Development Workstream	IP
Train Recruiting Managers to ensure that they are fully conversant with Recruitment and Selection practices and operate within these.	HR Workstream	S
Train Team Managers and Senior Practitioners to ensure that they are able to manage sickness absence process.	HR Workstream	S
Identify actions needed to ensure that management practices are being fully utilised: Induction; Probation; Supervision and	Service Development/HR Workstream	IP

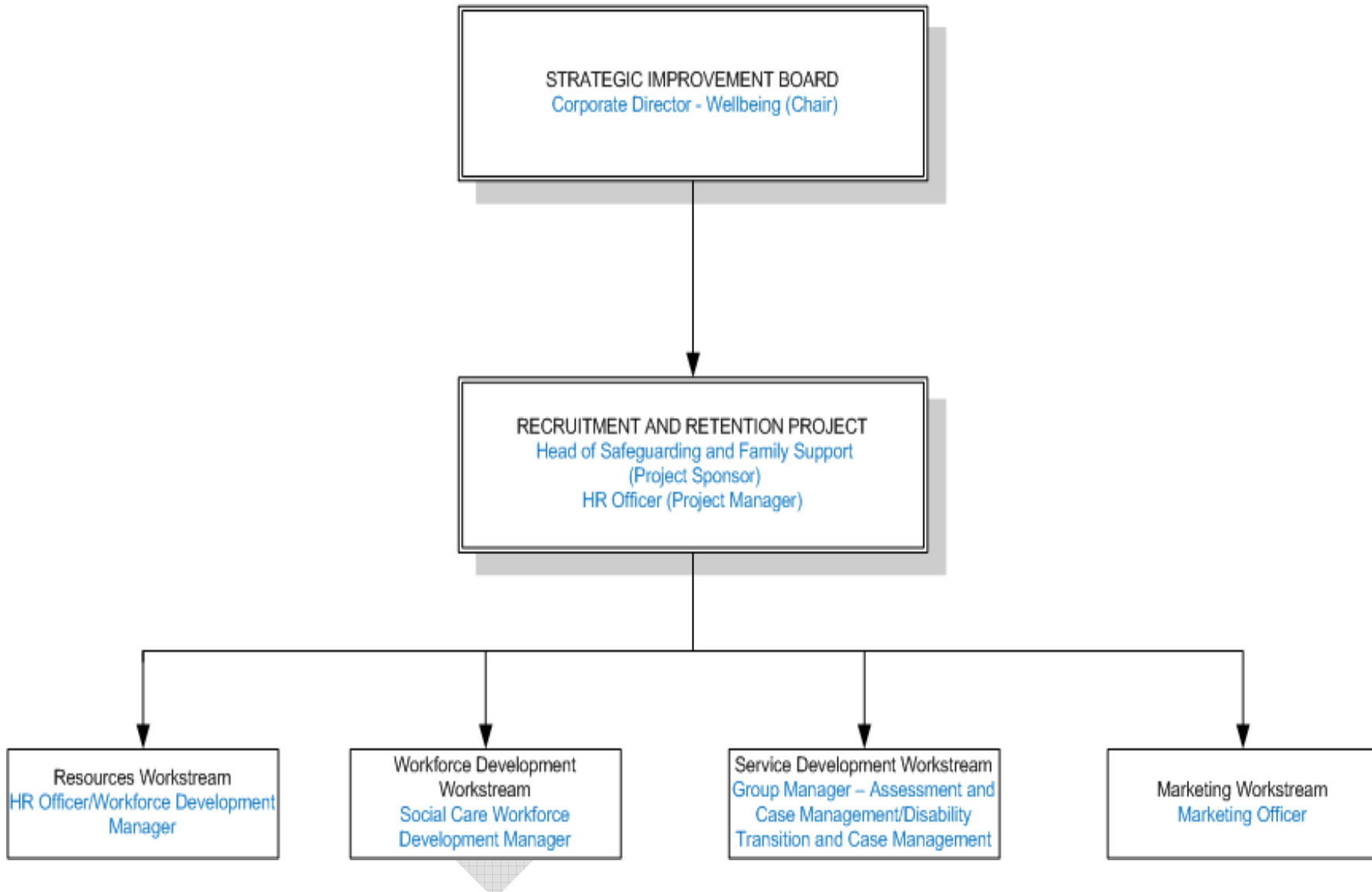
Appraisal		
For Stage, enter OA for options appraisal (aka feasibility), S for start-up, IP for in progress, and C for Complete		

Key Milestones

Key Milestone	Estimated Date
Established Project Board	February 2014
Agree Terms of Reference and Project Brief	March 2014
Agree Work Streams; including membership and scope	May 2014
Project Board to receive highlight report from Resources Work Stream on progress against Products	July 2014
Project Board to receive highlight report from Service Development Work Stream on progress against Products	August 2014
'Go live' for S&FS recruitment web pages	September 2014
Workforce Update Report to Service Improvement Board	Quarterly

Funding

11. Staffing costs need to be monitored to ensure that they remain within budget.
12. Any costs over and above the established budget will need to be identified and appropriate actions taken or issues escalated.
13. Specific actions/recommendations which require additional resources will be costed and funding options will be explored



BRIDGEND COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL

REPORT TO CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

13 OCTOBER 2014

REPORT OF THE ASSISTANT CHIEF EXECUTIVE LEGAL & REGULATORY SERVICES

MEMBER AND SCHOOL ENGAGEMENT PANEL

1. Purpose of Report.

- 1.1 To present the Committee with a revised plan for the Member School Engagement Panel.

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 on 11 February 2013, the Committee established a Research and Evaluation Panel in order to engage with Head Teachers and Chairs of Governors. The purpose of this Panel would be to explore school performance and improve levels of understanding in support of the Committee's accountability function.
- 3.2 The Committee agreed that the Panel would pilot this project with secondary schools, receiving and discussing with the relevant Head Teacher and Chair of Governors their Estyn report when it is published, alongside school banding figures and school performance data for the current year.
- 3.3 An annual summary report was presented to the Committee in April 2014 in to ensure that all Members were kept informed of the work of the Panel, and the key findings.

4. Current Situation / Proposal.

- 4.1 Following Estyn's inspection of the Local Authority in October 2012, inspectors have returned for monitoring visits. Whilst acknowledging the work of the Member and School Engagement Panel, they were of the view that the project should be further developed and expanded; firstly to incorporate primary schools as well as secondary, and also to focus on a broader criteria other than the timing of a school's Estyn inspection.

4.2 Having learnt from the pilot project, and following research and discussions with the Corporate Director - Children's Services, it seems more appropriate to concentrate on where there are issues or concerns and a need for improvement, as well as where there has been significant change and significant improvement in performance. It is therefore proposed to continue with the Research and Evaluation Panel with enhanced focus on schools who come under the following criteria:

- Schools in Category Red in the National Schools Categorisation System
- Schools where the Director has had to intervene and use her statutory powers
- Schools where there has been a significant improvement in performance; this could be a school who has moved up from a Category Red to Green in the Categorisation System, or even a school whose performance in a particular area appears to stand out positively against the majority of other schools within the county borough.
- Schools whose involvement in the Central South Wales Challenge or Challenge Cymru has brought about improvement in standards.

National Schools Categorisation System

4.3 Attached at Appendix A is a written statement by Welsh Government around the new National Schools Categorisation System which is due to be introduced in January 2015. This system will incorporate the principles of the Secondary School Banding but will be colour coded, and will include Primary Schools, for a pilot year, as well as Secondary Schools.

Local Authority Intervention

4.4 Intervention in maintained schools is done under Part 2 of the School Standards and Organisation (Wales) Act 2013. This is accompanied by the 'Schools Causing Concern: Statutory guidance for schools and local authorities', which, together, provide a single point of reference for local authorities when they are considering using their powers to intervene in schools causing concern.

4.5 There are 6 grounds for intervention and where there are grounds for doing so, it is initially the local authority's job to intervene in the conduct of a school, usually after serving a warning notice under the Act.

4.6 The key messages about where the LA can use its powers of intervention are as follows:

- Where a school has been judged as requiring significant improvement or special measures
- Where the school or key figures within it refuse to collaborate with an appropriate partner.
- Where the governing body needs additional expertise, or the head teacher and senior management team need further challenge and support.
- Where the governing body is providing insufficient challenge to the head teacher or senior management team of the school, is providing an obstacle to progress, or where there has been a breakdown in working relationships that is having an impact on standards.

Central South Wales Challenge

- 4.7 In January 2014, the five local authorities that constitute Central South Wales (Bridgend, Cardiff, Merthyr Tydfil, Rhondda Cynon Taff and the Vale of Glamorgan) launched a major new strategy to raise standards across all schools in the region.
- 4.8 The aim of the Central South Wales Challenge is to stimulate the sharing of expertise amongst schools and joint efforts to innovate in order to:
- Improve the performance of every school;
 - Increase the numbers of good and excellent schools;
 - Reduce the gap between high and low performing groups of learners; and
 - Improve outcomes for vulnerable groups of pupils.

School Challenge Cymru

- 4.9 Schools Challenge Cymru was announced in February 2014, and includes 40 Secondary Schools, called Pathways to Success Schools, who will be part of the Welsh Government's multi-million pound, improvement programme to increase performance in Welsh schools.
- 4.10 Schools have been chosen using a range of performance data and information that highlights the challenges they face in terms of their circumstances and stage of development. They have been also been chosen as it is believed they have the potential to deliver swift and positive improvements for learners.
- 4.11 Working with their Schools Challenge Cymru advisor, each Pathways to Success School will be given the opportunity to access proven expertise, to deliver a package of support that is individually tailored to meet each school's needs and the needs of their learners. This will be backed by around £20 million of Welsh Government funding.
- 4.12 The programme will also provide targeted support to participant schools' cluster primaries in order to address challenges at the earliest opportunity and improve transition between these key stages of education.

Research Areas

- 4.13 As it is now proposed to include primary schools as well as secondary schools in the investigation, the data considered at each meeting will need to reflect this. Therefore, as before, the relevant Estyn inspection report and Key Stage Data will be considered for all schools, as well as the new National Schools Categorisation data. Further to this, it is suggested that the Panel also consider Central South Consortia documentation such as the Annual Report on Performance (APR), school visit reports and where relevant, Post Inspection Action Plans.

Panel Membership

- 4.14 Once again, it is proposed that the membership of the Panel be determined on a rota basis, to allow all Members an opportunity to be involved and to minimise the potential for conflicts of interest, given that a significant number of Members are also school governors.

Schedule of Meetings

4.15 Due to the increase in the project's remit, with primary schools now being incorporated, and the criteria expanded, the number of schools being considered under the project will likely increase. Due to the fact that the school performance results have not yet been published, it is not known how many schools will now fit within the criteria. Once the results are in the public domain, Members will be able to determine what schools will form part of this project. However, in determining which and how many schools to include, Members are asked to take into account capacity issues.

5. Effect upon Policy Framework and Procedure Rules

5.1 The work of the Children and Young People Overview & 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 equalities impact issues arising from the report.

7. Financial Implications

7.1 There are no financial implications.

8. Recommendation

The Committee is asked:

- i. to agree to re-establish the Member and School Engagement Panel;
- ii. to approve the new approach and criteria for the Panel, including the incorporation of Primary Schools as well as Secondary schools.

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

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Background Documents

Welsh Government

<http://wales.gov.uk/topics/educationandskills/schoolshome/raisingstandards/schools-challenge-cymru/?lang=en>

Welsh Government

<http://wales.gov.uk/newsroom/educationandskills/2014/140501-schools-challenge-cymru/?lang=en>

Central South Consortium

<http://www.cswchallenge.com/>

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Llywodraeth Cymru
Welsh Government

WRITTEN STATEMENT BY THE WELSH GOVERNMENT

TITLE **National School Categorisation System**
DATE **25 September**
BY **Huw Lewis, Minister for Education and Skills**

I announced in a Written Statement on 7 May 2014 that the development of a primary grading model was underway along with a review of the performance measures currently included in secondary school Banding.

We know that using performance data to drive school improvement has made positive strides for many schools and learners. Since Banding was introduced we have seen schools in Band 4 and 5 make real progress year on year. Band 5 schools in 2012 have seen the overall percentage of pupils achieving the Level 2 threshold including English/Welsh First Language and Mathematics increase from 35.0 per cent in 2012 to 45.0 per cent in 2013. Similarly Band 4 schools in 2012 have gone from 45.8 per cent to 49.5 per cent in 2013.

Robert Hill's report on 'The future delivery of education services in Wales' noted that regional consortia should achieve a common understanding on how to apply a four-level categorisation to school performance. As part of the agreed National Model for Regional Working, work has developed to ensure a national approach in relation to how they categorise their schools. Officials and officers from local government, consortia and WLGA have worked together to bring all of these elements together.

We have listened to the feedback received since the introduction of Banding and we have built on this when developing a model for primary schools and in amending the secondary school measures. My department has also worked closely with local authorities, consortia and schools to ensure we develop a system-wide approach to support and challenge schools, bringing together the principles of Banding with the Hill report recommendation. This new system is a system which is not purely data-driven but also takes into account the leadership, teaching and learning that goes on in our schools. A system where the principles of Banding are embedded.

To build on the improvements achieved by Banding and to include primary schools, I am today announcing a new National School Categorisation System which will

cover both primary and secondary schools and be based upon three steps. The new system will assess schools on the following intelligence:

- a range of performance measures provided by Welsh Government;
- robust self-evaluation from schools on their ability to improve in relation to leadership, learning and teaching; and
- corroboration of the school's self-evaluation by education consortia Challenge Advisers.

The outcome of the performance data and self-evaluation will generate a categorisation for each school. This will be determined by consortia, discussed with the school and moderated by a quality assurance and standardisation group to ensure consistency within and across consortia. My officials will attend each of these meetings.

The three steps of the system are:

Step One: consists of data in relation to standards and performance. The first step in the process identifies how well the school is performing. An agreed set of data measures will be generated by Welsh Government and used by each consortium as part of the process to categorise schools. The agreed set of measures will be used by consortia from September and verified by Welsh Government in December/January of each year. A judgement of 1-4 will be generated in relation to standards.

Step Two: having made the first objective, data-driven judgement on a school's categorisation – based on the performance of pupils; the second judgment is based on the school's ability and capacity to self-improve. The process of coming to a judgement on its ability to bring about improvement will begin with the school's own self-evaluation, which it should already be undertaking on an annual cycle. The judgement on capacity to improve is to do with the school's ability to drive its own improvement for the future and will focus on leadership, learning and teaching.

Following the self-evaluation, consortia Challenge Advisers will have to be assured, and see evidence, that all school leaders use performance data robustly as part of effective school management and improvement. This will include governors, head teachers, middle and subject leaders. There must be evidence of the effective use of accurate data at individual pupil, class, group, cohort, subject and school level. Challenge Advisers will consider the performance of all learners and groups of learners and the quality of teaching and learning within the school. In particular, the performance of learners in receipt of free school meals will be reviewed and analysed – a school's context will not be used as an excuse for poor performance. A judgement of A-D will be generated.

Step Three: the combination of the two judgements will lead to a colour categorisation of the school which will trigger a bespoke programme of support, challenge and intervention. This will need to be agreed between the Local Authority and the regional school improvement service. The categorisation will be used to plan the targeting and deployment of resources by consortia and the Welsh Government in respect of national capacity building programmes.

A definition of each category is included at the end of this Written Statement.

Primary Schools

In the first year the National School Categorisation System for primary schools will operate on a pilot basis and will be reviewed if necessary. The performance data for Step One will include:

Overall achievement

- Proportion of pupils achieving the Foundation Phase Indicator at the end of the Foundation Phase and the Core Subject Indicator at the end of Key Stage 2.

Language

- Proportion of pupils achieving the expected outcome or above in Language, Literacy and Communication Skills (English or Welsh) at the end of the Foundation Phase and the expected level or above in English or Welsh First Language at the end of Key Stage 2 (where a pupil has been assessed in both English and Welsh First Language at the end of Key Stage 2, the highest of the two is counted);
- Proportion of pupils achieving the expected outcome plus one or above in Language, Literacy and Communication Skills (English or Welsh) at the end of the Foundation Phase and the expected level plus one or above in English or Welsh First Language at the end of Key Stage 2 (where a pupil has been assessed in both English and Welsh First Language at the end of Key Stage 2, the highest of the two is counted).

Mathematics

- Proportion of pupils achieving the expected outcome or above in Mathematical Development at the end of the Foundation Phase and the expected level or above in Mathematics at the end of Key Stage 2;
- Proportion of pupils achieving the expected outcome plus one or above in Mathematical Development at the end of the Foundation Phase and the expected level plus one or above in Mathematics at the end of Key Stage 2.

Attendance

- Proportion of half-day sessions attended.

Each of the measures will be placed into benchmark quarters based on their Free School Meal (FSM) group. The FSM groups will be the same groups as those in the All Wales Core Data Sets.

The benchmark boundaries calculated in the base year, to place schools in their quarters, will remain fixed for a period of three years. This is to ensure that schools will be able to demonstrate progress through the system, with their improvements reflected in their total score. This means that one school moving up in the system will not mean that another school will have to move down.

However, not all schools will be included in the model. Only schools with three years of performance data will be included.

Secondary Schools

The National School Categorisation System will also include secondary schools and will build on the success of Banding to deliver a more holistic approach to school improvement.

As with Banding, we will not waiver from using school performance data to make a judgement on a school through our new system. The principles of Banding remain an integral part of the wider National School Categorisation System. The new system will use this performance data to make a judgement on a school and also include a judgement of the school's self-evaluation on leadership, learning and teaching. The two judgements will result in one of four categorisation colours being given to the school in the same way I have described above for primary categorisation.

As with primary schools, this will be an absolute model. This will mean that schools that can demonstrate improvement against their own baseline can move up in the system and will not mean that another school will have to move down in the system. Whilst work has been completed in relation to Step Two and Three, my officials continue to review the range of secondary data measures and I intend to make a further announcement in relation to this in October.

The new National School Categorisation System will have a relentless focus on those schools where groups of learners are underperforming or where teachers are not able to consistently ensure that all pupils fulfil their potential. Those schools will not be able to be categorised as 'Green'. This is a step change where context cannot be used as an excuse and 'coasting' schools will not be tolerated.

Finally, consortia have a crucial role to play. Brokering support for schools will be a key function of the regional consortia, and I am very encouraged by the fact that head teachers of our best schools around Wales are already responding to the call for their schools to support schools that have identified areas for development. I am also pleased that both national and regional training has taken place to support them. Estyn, as part of their inspection of consortia, will have a key role to ensure that regional implementation of the National School Categorisation System accurately reflects the position and direction of travel for each school.

Definition of categories:

Green Categorisation – these are our best schools who:

- know themselves well and identify and implement their own priorities for improvement;
- have resilience within the staff team;
- are rewarded by greater autonomy;
- will be challenged to move towards or sustain excellence; and
- have the capacity to lead others effectively (school to school support).

Yellow Categorisation – these are our good schools who:

- will know and understand most of the areas in need of improvement;
- have many aspects of the schools performance which are self-improving; and

- will receive bespoke challenge and support deployed according to need.

Amber Categorisation – these are our schools in need of improvement who:

- do not know and understand all the areas in need of improvement;
- have many aspects of the schools performance which are not improving quickly enough;
- will receive bespoke challenge and intervention deployed according to need
- will receive an automatic letter from consortium;
- self-evaluation and school improvement plan will be signed off by consortium;
- will be expected to remain in an amber category for only the short-term; and
- will receive time limited, focused challenge and intervention to support improvement or and be at the risk of dropping to the red category.

Red Categorisation – these are our schools in need of greatest improvement who:

- will receive critical intervention;
- receive an automatic warning letter from LA and subsequent use of statutory powers where necessary;
- trigger intensive and effective collaboration between LA and consortium;
- trigger the all-Wales common school causing concern arrangements; and
- will lose autonomy and be subject to a more directed approach.

Following the verification of data with Step One of the model, the categorisation of all schools will be published in January of each year.

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BRIDGEND COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL

REPORT TO CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

13 OCTOBER 2013

REPORT OF THE ASSISTANT CHIEF EXECUTIVE – LEGAL & REGULATORY SERVICES

APPOINTMENT OF REGISTERED REPRESENTATIVE TO THE CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

1. Purpose of Report

- 1.1 The purpose of the report is to inform the Committee that Mr Kevin Pascoe has been nominated for appointment as the Secondary School Parent Governor Representative on the Children and Young People Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

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 In line with the Parent Governor Representatives and Church Representatives (Wales) Regulations 2001, Part 4 of the Constitution states under the Overview and Scrutiny Procedure Rules that an Overview and Scrutiny Committee, whose functions relate wholly or in part to education functions which are the responsibility of Cabinet, shall include in its membership one Church in Wales Representative, one Roman Catholic Church Representative, and three Parent Governor Representatives (one from a Primary School, one from a Secondary School, and one from a Special School).

4. Current Situation / proposal.

- 4.1 Mr G Isaac has resigned from his position as the Secondary School Parent Governor Representative. Following an election held in accordance with the Parent Governor Representatives and Church Representatives (Wales) Regulations 2001, Mr. Kevin Pascoe has been nominated to serve as the Secondary School Parent Governor Representative.

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 relating to this report.

7. Financial Implications

- 7.1 This report has no direct financial consequences.

8. Recommendation

That the Committee recommends to Council the appointment of Mr Kevin Pascoe as the Secondary School Parent Governor Representative to the Children and Young People Overview and Scrutiny Committee, for a term of four years.

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

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Background Documents:

None

BRIDGEND COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL

REPORT TO CHILDREN & YOUNG PEOPLE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

13 OCTOBER 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 25 November 2014 and seeks confirmation of the information required for the meeting to be held on 17 December 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 November

- 4.1 In relation to the Committee's next meeting, scheduled 25 November 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
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	
Fostering Placements REP Final Report	None	Findings of the Fostering Placements REP	

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 due to be held on 17 December 2014.

Topic	Invitees	Specific Information Requested	Research to be Undertaken by the Overview & Scrutiny Unit
Draft Budget Consultation Process	Deborah McMillan, Corporate Director - Children's Services Cllr Huw David, Cabinet Member Children & Young People Colin Turner, Head of Safeguarding and Family Support	Draft budget proposals 2015-16	
Overview of Half Yearly Performance 2014/15	Deborah McMillan, Corporate Director - Children's Services Cllr Huw David, Cabinet Member Children & Young People Colin Turner, Head of Safeguarding and Family Support	Quarter 2 Directorate Performance Report	
Corporate Plan	Deborah McMillan, Corporate Director - Children's Services Cllr Huw David, Cabinet Member Children & 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 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 25 November 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 17 December 2014.

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

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Background Documents
Bridgend County Borough Council Constitution
Part II of the Local Government Act 2000: Executive Arrangements