

# BRIDGEND COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL

## REPORT TO CORPORATE PARENTING CABINET COMMITTEE

5 JANUARY 2015

### REPORT OF THE CORPORATE DIRECTOR – CHILDREN

#### OUTCOME OF CSSIW'S INSPECTION OF BRIDGEND COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL'S SAFEGUARDING AND CARE PLANNING OF LOOKED AFTER CHILDREN AND CARE LEAVERS, WHO EXHIBIT VULNERABLE OR RISKY BEHAVIOURS.

#### **1 Purpose of Report**

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to inform Corporate Parenting Cabinet Committee of the outcome of a recent Care and Social Services Inspectorate Wales (CSSIW) inspection into Bridgend's Safeguarding and Care Planning arrangements for Looked After Children and Care Leavers who exhibit vulnerable or risky behaviours.

#### **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 During the week beginning 10<sup>th</sup> of January 2014, CSSIW carried out a comprehensive inspection of the Safeguarding and Care Planning arrangements in Bridgend for Looked After Children and Care Leavers, who exhibit vulnerable or risky behaviours. The inspection was carried out as part of CSSIW's national thematic inspection programme. Between January and May 2014, all 22 local authorities in Wales were subjected to the same inspection. Findings of individual local authority inspections will form a CSSIW national overview report to be published later this year, at which point it will be brought to the attention of Corporate Parenting Cabinet Committee.

- 3.2 The aim of the inspection in Bridgend was to assess the quality of care planning and to ascertain whether it effectively:

- Supports and protects looked after children and care leavers;
- identifies and manages the vulnerabilities and risky behaviours of looked after children and care leavers;
- promotes rights based practice and voice of the child;
- promotes improved outcomes for looked after children and care leavers;
- promotes compliance with policy and guidance.

- 3.3 The inspection focussed primarily on work undertaken with looked after children over eleven years of age and care leavers who were identified as being vulnerable and/or involved in risky behaviours, against defined criteria. As well as inspecting cases in respect of the assessment, care planning and review systems, the inspection also considered the extent to which the corporate parenting, management and partnership arrangements acted to promote improved outcome for children and care leavers. It also considered how organisational structures including, workforce, resources, advocacy and quality assurance mechanisms impacted on the quality of care planning. The inspection considered the above areas against five questions as follows:-

*Question 1*

Did the authority effectively discharge its corporate parenting roles and responsibilities promoting the stability, welfare and safety of looked after children and care leavers?

*Question 2*

Were care and pathway plans informed by relevant assessments, including explicit risk assessments, which supported a comprehensive response to the needs and experiences of children and young people?

*Question 3*

Were operational systems and procedures in place that ensured responsive co-ordinated action was taken to mitigate risk and achieve safe continuity of care?

*Question 4*

Did Independent Reviews and quality assurance arrangements promote safe care and best outcomes for young people?

*Question 5*

Did care and pathway planning effectively capture and promote the rights and voice of the child?

## **4 Current situation**

- 4.1 On the 28<sup>th</sup> August, the Statutory Director for Social Service in Bridgend received CSSIW's report which is attached to this report at Appendix 1. The report details a significant number of positives which are balanced with a similar number of areas for improvements. To address the areas noted for improvement, a post inspection action plan has been developed. (This can be found at Appendix 2) Members will note that most of the areas noted for improvement, as detailed in the action plan are green and plans are in place to address any outstanding areas for improvement. The action plan will be monitored by the senior management team with regular progress reports being presented to the Head of Service and the CSSIW.
- 4.2 The report acknowledged that Children's Services were recognised as a corporate priority with corporate parenting arrangements well embedded through its Corporate Parenting Cabinet Committee which has a strong focus on the wellbeing and progress of looked after children. However the report also states that Members needed to assure themselves that strategic aims are being effectively owned and translated into action across the local authority and partner agencies.

## **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 Implementation of the action plan will be met from within existing resources.

## **8 Recommendations**

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

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**Corporate Director - Wellbeing**

**Date:** 2<sup>nd</sup> December 2014

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