

CABINET COMMITTEE CORPORATE PARENTING - THURSDAY, 1 FEBRUARY 2024

MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE CABINET COMMITTEE CORPORATE PARENTING HELD HYBRID IN THE COUNCIL CHAMBER - CIVIC OFFICES, ANGEL STREET, BRIDGEND, CF31 4WB ON THURSDAY, 1 FEBRUARY 2024 AT 10:25

Present

Councillor J Gebbie – Chairperson

F D Bletsoe
W R Goode

JPD Blundell
J E Pratt

HJ David
JC Spanswick

N Farr
HM Williams

Apologies for Absence

Councillor Maxine Lewis

Officers:

Steve Berry	Corporate Parenting and Participation Officer
Nimi Chandrasena	Democratic Services Officer - Support
Stephen Griffiths	Democratic Services Officer - Committees
Rachel Keepins	Democratic Services Manager
Laura Kinsey	Head of Children's Social Care
Claire Marchant	Corporate Director Social Services and Wellbeing
Oscar Roberts	Business Administrative Apprentice - Democratic Services
Nichola Rogers	Regional Adoption Services Manager - Western Bay Regional Adoption Service

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Mark Shephard

Chief Executive

Title of Report	Apologies for Absence
Decision Made	Councillor Maxine Lewis
Date Decision Made	1 February 2024

Title of Report	Declarations of Interest
Decision Made	None
Date Decision Made	1 February 2024

Title of Report	Approval of Minutes
Decision Made	<p>That the minutes of a meeting of the Cabinet Committee Corporate Parenting dated 05/10/2023 be approved as a true and accurate record. The following correction to the minutes were noted :</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• The Deputy Leader / Chairperson wanted it noted that the meeting dated 05/10/23 was chaired by the Cabinet Member for Community Safety and Wellbeing and that the Deputy Leader herself was present but had to leave part way to attend another engagement.
Date Decision Made	1 February 2024

Title of Report	Corporate Parenting Development Update
Decision Made	The Report was presented by the Corporate Parenting & Participation Officer. The purpose of which was to provide the Cabinet Committee with an update on the development of Corporate Parenting in Bridgend and to request that the Cabinet Committee sign up to the All-Wales Corporate Parenting Charter.

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The Chairperson and Deputy Leader stated that it was inspiring to see the young people and their work at the Corporate Parenting Launch. She noted that Newport Council had declared all care experience children as a protected characteristic though not mentioned in the pledge and explained the possible reasoning behind the decision.

Questions were raised around Corporate Parenting training and Performance indicators (PIs), to which the Committee were reassured by the Corporate Director - Social Services and Wellbeing that the Social Care Workforce Development Team were engaged in Corporate Parenting training, but that more was required corporately to ensure everyone understood their responsibilities across the Council. The link would then be made with the Corporate Plan and PIs.

responded that The Strategic Plan of three years around commitments towards children and family was on track which had very specific measures around corporate parenting.

Members inquired about pledges and how they were measured, incorporated into the action plan as well as how success would be measured and how young people were engaged in the consultation process

The Corporate Parenting & Participation Officer addressed these questions including detailing how the action plan would be taken forward and implemented as well as measured via PIs. In relation to consultation with young people the Youth Forum had openly stated that they do not wish to be consulted on everything, however they raised very clear points in discussions which were fed through by the Corporate Parenting Participation Officer, either to the Board or to Children's Services. He highlighted that it was meaningful feedback was provided to young people in order that they feel their voice has been heard and their views valued.

Queries were also raised around Newport Council's declaration that all care experience children be considered a protected characteristic, with a request that this be explored with Newport Council to determine if this was something that Bridgend could replicate, and possibly even Welsh Government to make this a national priority.

The Corporate Director - Social Services and Wellbeing responded that she would follow this up with her counterparts in the Newport LA.

Resolved : It was agreed that the Cabinet Committee Corporate Parenting, on behalf of Bridgend County Borough Council, would sign up to the 'Corporate Parenting Charter – A promise for Wales A Shared Parenting Pledge.

It was also agreed that Cabinet Committee Corporate Parenting noted the progress made by the Specialist Participation Service that supported care experienced Youth Forum as identified within the

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	report.
Date Decision Made	1 February 2024

Title of Report	Monitoring The Performance And Progress Of The Western Bay Regional Adoption Service
Decision Made	<p>The report was presented by the Regional Adoption Manager, to provide information about the performance and progress of the Western Bay Regional Adoption Service. This included the Quality of Service Report for Q3 & Q4 2022-23 and the Quality of Service Report for Q1 & Q2 2023-24 as depicted in the enclosed appendices of the report.</p> <p>Questions were raised around the adoption process which it was clarified by the Regional Adoption Manager usually takes on average between six to twelve months from application to the final adoption order to be granted.</p> <p>Members requested that in the future an analysis be undertaken to reflect the performance of the process across the region with a view to improving the Authority's services.</p> <p>Members inquired about training in schools to assist them in supporting care experienced children and young people including those in Secondary Schools facing challenges with regards to their origins. The Regional Adoption Manger addressed these questions stating that there were two different workshops for primary and secondary schools, with the Secondary school session having an emphasis on social media, as this was now where young people went to if they had questions about their birth family members.</p> <p>Members requested that the education department in the Authority liaises with head teachers to remind them about undertaking the awareness sessions around adopted children in schools to ensure teachers are able to recognise the needs of these children and provide appropriate support.</p> <p>In response to a suggestion made, the Head of Children's Social Care stated that the Board would not be opposed to the idea of having more than one education representative sit on the Board.</p> <p>On the subject of abandoned babies and support for young women, the Corporate Director - Social Services and Wellbeing responded that the Authority work very closely with partners in the Health Board and in Education, particularly around sexual health services to make sure that vulnerable children, young people and women got advice and education at a very early stage.</p> <p>It was recognised that such groups were particularly vulnerable and a key part of the care providers was around healthy relationships and encouraging healthy behaviours. The Head of Children's Social Care added that support services had been extended to pregnant mothers with 'Baby in Mind' and those types</p>

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	<p>of services were aimed at supporting and equipping parents to confidently and safely look after their children so they don't become care experienced. The Regional Adoption Manager stated that there was a national process for relinquished children and they worked closely with the local authority's front door team to ensure those families have the support they require.</p> <p>In relation to sibling groups and children with varied ethnic origins, who historically faced more challenges in waiting for their 'forever home', the Regional Adoption Manager explained that both the national marketing campaign and local campaigns featured heavily on sibling groups, however challenges were faced where one of the siblings had additional needs posing complex potential issues for the children. She stated that their marketing campaigns utilised social media and in person community events where the team try joining events across the region reaching out to different cultural backgrounds.</p> <p>The Cabinet Committee congratulated the officers and their teams as she stated that the overall the position of the adoption service was very positive and was a direct result of the staff delivering the service.</p> <p>Resolved: The Cabinet Committee Corporate Parenting agreed to consider and note the performance and progress of the Regional Adoption Service</p> <p>It was also agreed that future reports would include a glossary to acronyms mentioned within reports.</p>
Date Decision Made	1 February 2024

Title of Report	Urgent Items
Decision Made	None
Date Decision Made	1 February 2024

To observe further debate that took place on the above items, please click this [link](#)

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The meeting closed at 10:25