

BRIDGEND COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL
CORPORATE PARENTING CABINET COMMITTEE

13 APRIL 2015

REPORT OF THE CORPORATE DIRECTOR – SOCIAL SERVICES AND WELLBEING
OVERVIEW OF CURRENT REGULATED RESIDENTIAL CHILD CARE PROVISION IN
BRIDGEND

1. Purpose of Report

- 1.1 To provide Cabinet Members with an overview of the current residential regulated childcare provision in Bridgend CBC and provide cases studies of Children and Young People who have benefited from the services offered.
- 1.2 To seek Cabinet's approval to change the "Statement of Purpose" for Newbridge House in order to match the terms of the registration certificate provided by CSSIW.

2. Connection to Corporate Improvement Plan / Other Corporate Priority

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

3. Background

- 3.1 Bridgend CBC currently has three residential children's homes, regulated by CSSIW, delivering services to children and young people aged between 0-18 years. These are:
 - Newbridge House which provides a service to young people aged between 15-17 years who require an intensively managed transition into independent living for a short to medium term period of up to twelve months.
 - Sunnybank which provides a short to medium term service for up to twelve months to children/young people aged between 11-15 years who display complex needs and require intensive work to stabilise their behaviour to allow them to move on to a permanent/long term placement.
 - Bakers Way which provides a short break service to disabled children/young people aged 0-18 years.

4. Current situation

- 4.1 Each of the above residential homes has its own “statement of purpose”. These have all previously been approved by the Corporate Parenting Committee and can be found at Appendix 1. None of the units are currently registered to provide emergency bed provision as other effective arrangements are in place to respond to such situations.
- 4.2 Each residential unit is subject to “The Children’s Homes (Wales) Regulations 2002” and as such is inspected by CSSIW every year. (Copies of each of the most recent inspection reports are available at Appendix 2.) For many years, all the Council’s residential child care homes have received very positive inspections with managers and practitioners receiving praise for the quality of services being delivered.
- 4.3 All the units’ registered managers are experienced managers and work closely together to support each other. They have clear reporting mechanisms in place and are confident decision makers.
- 4.4 All the residential units have developed positive links within the local neighbourhood, with Newbridge House and Sunnybank having named Police Community Service Officers (PCSO’s) who regularly call in at the homes to meet with and develop important relationships with the young people accommodated in order to minimise situations of self-harm, risk taking behaviour and any offending or anti-social behaviour.
- 4.5 **Newbridge House**

The referral route into Newbridge house is via an “individual placement matching form” (IPM) and a detailed referral form which is completed by the child’s social worker. The registered manager then completes an “impact assessment” in respect of that young person which considers the potential impact of the young person becoming accommodated on all the other residents currently being looked after in the home. If appropriate, an “in principle” decision is then made and a pre-admission planning meeting arranged involving all professionals working with the young person, the young person and where appropriate their family members.

Introduction visits are then arranged and each young person meets with the manager and/or a senior residential worker and the unit residence rules are explained. Each young person has their own named keyworker to undertake a transition programme with them during their time living in the unit.

Over the years the unit has progressed and been successful in becoming affiliated to Agored Cymru; an accredited training programme. This enables and supports young people to obtain further recognised qualifications during their time living at Newbridge House.

A large part of the units’ work focuses on encouraging and supporting young people to move into their own accommodation, supported or otherwise. There are several exit routes including young people moving into their own property, supported lodgings, supported flats or when it is safe to do so, return home to family. Staff have worked hard in developing positive relationships and networks with local

agencies such as Llamau, Yellow Wales and Valleys to Coast, all of which provide support to young people through their transition to independence.

As young people progress through the transition process to independence, they are assisted by being part of the units' continuing outreach programme which consists of designated staff, who remain in touch with the young person for up to three months following their discharge from the unit. This involves residential staff remaining in regular contact with young people and involves outreach workers visiting young people in their new homes to ensure they are supported in their transition to independence. Young people are also supported to secure education or employment opportunities, ensure their health needs are promoted and their general wellbeing promoted. They are also supported in their day to day living arrangements to prevent them becoming socially isolated. Many young people also choose to return to the unit for regular Sunday lunch where they meet with staff and other former residents. These occasions are valued by former residents who benefit from sharing their worries and the positives about living independently.

Newbridge House staff have also taken on the new role of "Personal Advisors" (PA) to young people leaving care. The manager has been pivotal in developing the PA role and delivering training across other areas of service including foster carers. A personal advisor's role is essentially to act as a supportive befriender/mentor to young people during the period that they are leaving care. Their role is to provide advice (including practical advice) and support and includes them participating in the young person's assessment, preparation and review of the young person's Pathway Plan.

4.6 Sunnybank

In respect of Sunnybank; the referral route is again through a planned admission process which starts with the social worker making a request for accommodation at the Council's "Accommodation and Permanence Panel", a multi-agency meeting, chaired by a social services senior manager. If it is agreed that a young person's needs may be met at Sunnybank, a referral will be made to the registered manager, who then undertakes an impact assessment specifically looking at the suitability of the referral in relation to the children/young people already accommodated. Decisions to accommodate are based on a thorough assessment of the child's needs and a judgment on the ability of the Home to meet those needs within the terms of our Statement of Purpose. The final decision to accommodate always lies with the Registered Manager of the Home.

The focus of Sunnybank is to provide accommodation for children/young people who have complex needs and often challenging behaviours. These children require intensive work in order to stabilise their behaviour to enable them to move on and settle into a more suitable long term placement. Sunnybank staff have all undertaken restorative justice training and offer a range of therapeutic techniques aimed at motivating and inspiring young people to address their presenting behaviours and difficulties. Whilst not formally accredited for the provision of formal therapeutic techniques, the approaches used are performed to a high standard. From the moment children are accommodated at Sunnybank an exit transition plan is developed between the child and his/her key worker. This also involves engagement with the child's social worker and family members.

Sunnybank supports children with extremely complex and demanding behaviours, many of which display significant risk to themselves or others. Consequently special attention has been paid to the management of young people with risk plans being in place to address issues such as absconding, self-harm, suicidal tendencies and sexual exploitation.

Like Newbridge House, Sunnybank has developed strong links within the local community working hard with the PCSO, education services and TAITH (specialist service offering support for sexual offenders, perpetrators and victims) A primary aim for the staff is to support and enable young people to keep safe and learn to be responsible for and manage their own behaviours.

Sunnybank staff seek to promote young people's health and educational needs. In respect of promoting the educational needs of its residents, staff have been particularly successful in ensuring that all children attend appropriate education provision with attendance for all young people being high with an average of 94% being achieved. This is a significant achievement, when one considers that many young people had not been attending any education provision for prolonged periods of time prior, to their admission to Sunnybank.

Without the services offered at Sunnybank, many of the residents would inevitably have to be accommodated in residential placements outside of the County Borough.

The registered manager at Sunnybank oversees the development of all proposed exit plans for the young person when it becomes clear what their after care plan needs to be. The manager and key worker for the young people are always involved in co-producing "individual placement matching forms" to provide a clear picture of the young person's needs in order that an appropriate move on placement can be identified. Residential staff are actively involved with the child's social worker in visiting any prospective move on foster families and agreeing appropriate matches of children with foster cares, based on their assessments and knowledge of the child. Residential staff attend all pre-placement planning meetings and work with the safeguarding teams and other agencies to support a child back home or to an appropriate move on placement

The staff team at Sunnybank provide a continuing outreach support programme for all young people's families or foster placements. This has proven to be key to preventing placement breakdowns when young people move on from Sunnybank. To date, no young person who has moved out of Sunnybank has had to re-enter the care system when they have returned home to family members.

4.7 Bakers Way

The referral route into Bakers Way is via the Disabled Children's Team. Each child/young person has a named worker allocated to him/her and their family. It is the responsibility of the Social Worker/case manager from the Disabled Children's Team to discuss the child/young person's needs, and offer information to the family about the services available.

A maximum number of 5 children with complex disabilities can be looked after at Bakers Way at any one time. The service provides high level intensive care and

support to disabled children to meet their individual needs. Staff work very closely with families to ensure continuity of care between home and Bakers Way.

The unit is specifically designed and equipped for disabled children including a soft play room, a room furnished with sensory equipment, a computer and software with touch-screen monitor and a large secure garden area with well-equipped recreational and play equipment. The unit also has its own mini-bus used for trips for social and recreational purposes. The children are offered a variety of activities or trips at each visit.

Given the wide range of complex needs of the children, staff have developed close working links and relationships with a range of staff from community nursing, paediatric services, speech and language, occupational therapy and physiotherapy services.

Bakers Way regularly holds children's meetings to involve the children with regard to the services they receive and how these are delivered. In addition, parents and carers are regularly consulted to seek their views as to how they rate the service. The most recent CSSIW inspection report noted that, "Support is provided for children/young people and their families in an environment which is caring and supportive and child centred in their approach".

The registered manager at Bakers Way, along with her staff, have worked hard at developing and running an outreach scheme for up to 10 young people each week who regularly attend Bakers Way. This is aimed at transition aged disabled young people and has improved their independent living skills and enabled them to enjoy regular peer group activities. Additionally, young people have been assisted to improve their preparation for adulthood. This provision has again recently received notable praise from CSSIW.

Bakers Way has been able to assist in some particularly complex, difficult and sensitive family situations this year, enabling and supporting whole families to remain together or manage difficult situations.

During 2015/16, the Directorate will be reviewing each of its regulated residential children homes to ensure that the Council's continued financial investment into these services realise the best possible value. The Directorate will constantly strive to ensure that its residential services are of high quality and continue to focus on delivering positive outcomes for children and young people. In line with the Council's Placements and Permanency Strategy, the Directorate will ensure that only the right children are accommodated, at the right time within its care homes and that clear achievable plans are in place for each child for their appropriate discharge. It is recognised that for some children, they will require special therapeutic interventions. Consequently staff will be trained accordingly to allow these to be delivered in-house where possible.

In respect of the Council's respite care provision, the Directorate is currently undertaking a review to consider alternative models of service delivery which may realise significant savings in order to address ongoing financial challenges and pressure.

5. Effect upon Policy Framework and Procedure Rules

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

6. Equality Impact Assessment

6.1 This has been considered but as the report is for information purposes, an EIA is not deemed necessary.

7. Financial Implications

7.1 This has been considered but as the report is for information purposes, there are no financial implications.

8. Recommendation

8.1 That Corporate Parenting Cabinet Committee note the information contained within this report and associated appendices.

Members are also asked to approve a change in the “Statement of Purpose” for Newbridge House to match the terms of the registration certificate provided by CSSIW.

The change of wording is:

From “The young people will not be younger than sixteen years of age on admission’.

To “The young people will not be younger than fifteen years of age on admission.”

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26th March 2015

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Background documents

Appendix 1 – Statements of Purpose for Newbridge House, Sunnybank and Bakers Way
Appendix 2 – CSSIW Inspection reports for Newbridge House, Sunnybank and Bakers Way