

## BRIDGEND COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL

### REPORT TO CORPORATE RESOURCES AND IMPROVEMENT OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

24 JUNE 2015

#### REPORT OF THE ASSISTANT CHIEF EXECUTIVE – LEGAL & REGULATORY SERVICES

#### CORPORATE PARENTING CABINET COMMITTEE CHAMPION UPDATE

##### 1. Purpose of Report

- 1.1 To provide the Members with an update from the Committee's Corporate Parenting Champion on the work being undertaken by the Corporate Parenting Cabinet 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 25 February 2015 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 Corporate Parenting is the term used to describe the responsibility of a local authority towards looked after children and young people. This is a legal responsibility given to local authorities by the Children Act 1989 and the Children Act 2004. The role of the Corporate Parent is to seek for children in public care the outcomes every good parent would want for their own children. The Council as a whole is the 'corporate parent' therefore all Members have a level of responsibility for the children and young people looked after by Bridgend.<sup>1</sup>
- 3.2 In order to further develop and enhance the Council's corporate parenting role with its partners, a Corporate Parenting Cabinet Committee comprising all Members of Cabinet was established by Cabinet on 4 November 2008.
- 3.3 The inaugural meeting of the Cabinet Committee was held on 27 November 2008. It has been agreed that the Cabinet Committee will meet bi-monthly. The terms of reference for the Cabinet Committee are:
- to ensure that looked after children are seen as a priority by the whole of the Authority and by the Children and Young People's Partnership;

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<sup>1</sup> Welsh Assembly Government and Welsh Local Government Association 'If this were my child... A councillor's guide to being a good corporate parent to children in care and care leavers', June 2009

- to seek the views of children and young people in shaping and influencing the parenting they receive;
- to ensure that appropriate policies, opportunities and procedures are in place;
- to monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of the Authority in its role as corporate parent against Welsh Government guidance.

3.4 At its inaugural meeting, the Cabinet Committee requested that a Corporate Parenting “Champion” be nominated from each of the Overview and Scrutiny Committees to become permanent invitees to the Cabinet Committee.

#### **4. Current Situation**

4.1 The role of the Corporate Parenting Champion is to represent their relevant Overview and Scrutiny Committee, partaking in discussions with Cabinet over items relating to children in care and care leavers.

4.2 In this role, it is also suggested that Champions provide regular updates to their Committees to ensure that Members are informed of the ongoing work of the Cabinet Committee and particularly any decisions or changes which they should be aware of as Corporate Parents.

4.3 It is also proposed that Members consider how the services within the remit of their Committee affects children in care and care leavers, and in what way can the Committee therefore assist in these areas.

4.4 Paragraphs 4.5 to 4.12 contain an update provided by Cllr E Dodd who is the nominated Corporate Parenting Champion for the Corporate Resources and Improvement Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

4.5 At its meeting on 7th July 2014, the Corporate Director, Children submitted a report on the Safeguarding and Family Support Service. The report delivers the Council’s own assessment of performance in respect of their social services responsibilities and focuses on strategic objectives and improvement priorities across the department.

4.6 The Corporate Director – Children submitted a report the purpose of which was to update the Cabinet Committee on the progress made to develop a refreshed “Strategy to reduce the number of Looked After Children and Young People in Bridgend, now known as the “Looked After Children – Placements and Permanency Strategy”.

4.7 The Corporate Director – Children submitted a report in line with the Independent Reviewing Officers Guidance Wales (WAG 2006). The report provided an overview of the role and function of the Independent Reviewing Service (IRS).

4.8 At its meeting on 6th October 2014 the Head of Strategy, Partnership and Commissioning submitted a report, the purpose of which, was to update the Cabinet Committee on the progress made to develop a strategy to define the activity around early intervention and prevention services in Bridgend, now known as ‘Early help in Bridgend’.

- 4.9 The Corporate Director – Children submitted a report, which confirmed that at a previous Committee Members requested that Abertawe Bro Morgannwg University Health Board (ABMU) provide information in relation to the role of AMBU'S Looked After Children's Health Team and the impact this is having on promoting the health outcomes of all Looked After Children and Young People in Bridgend.
- 4.10 At its meeting on 5th January 2015 the Committee received a presentation from the Head of Safeguarding and Family Support on the Social Services and Wellbeing Act (Wales) Act 2014 which received Royal Assent on 1 May 2014.
- 4.11 The Head of Safeguarding and Family Support reported on the outcome of the recent Care and Social Services Inspectorate Wales (CSSIW) inspection into the Safeguarding and Care Planning arrangements for Looked After Children and Care Leavers who exhibit vulnerable or risky behaviours.
- 4.12 The Corporate Director Education and Transformation informed the Committee of the historical arrangements which had been put in place to celebrate the achievements of Bridgend's Looked After Children and sought the Committee's views on the future arrangements for celebrating the achievements of Looked After Children.
- 4.13 It is the role of the Committee to ask the Champion any questions or raise any queries with him/her to be fed back to the Cabinet Committee.

## **5. Effect upon Policy Framework and Procedure Rules**

- 5.1 The work of the Corporate Resources and Improvement 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 attached report has been provided as an update and therefore does not relate to a specific decision or Equality Impact Assessment.

## **7. Financial Implications**

- 7.1 There are no financial implications arising from this report.

## **8. Recommendations**

- 8.1 The Committee is asked to consider and note the Corporate Parenting Champion's update.

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### **Background Documents**

None