

RHONDDA CYNON TAF COUNCIL CORPORATE PARENTING BOARD

Minutes of the meeting of the Corporate Parenting Board meeting held on Monday, 28 January 2019 at 10.00 am at the Block F, The Pavilions, Cambrian Park, Clydach Vale, Tonypany, CF40 2XX.

County Borough Councillors - Corporate Parenting Board Members in attendance:-

Councillor C Leyshon (Chair)

Councillor J Rosser Councillor R Yeo
Councillor L Jones

Officers in attendance

Mr G Isingrini, Group Director Community & Children's Services
Mr P Nicholls, Head of Legal - Litigation, Planning & Environment, Community & Children's Services
Ms C Jones, Head of Access & Inclusion
Ms J Thomas, Complaints & QA Manager, Social Services
Ms M Meredith, Residential Services Manager
Ms E Brabon, Senior EET Coordinator
Ms K Dobbs, Senior EET Coordinator
Mr L Lewis, Acting Head of the Youth Offending Service

Others in attendance

Ms E Jones (NYAS)

33 Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were received from County Borough Councillors G. Hopkins, S. Rees-Owen and J. James.

34 Declaration of Interest

In accordance with the Council's Code of Conduct, there were no declarations made pertaining to the agenda.

35 Minutes

It was **RESOLVED** to approve as an accurate record, the minutes of the meeting of the Corporate Parenting Board held on the 19th November, 2018.

36 Employment, Education & Training Programmes for Children Looked After

With the aid of a PowerPoint presentation, the Senior EET Co-ordinator, HR, provided the Corporate Parenting Board with information in respect of the Step in the Right Direction programme.

Members learned that Step in the Right Direction is a corporately funded, paid programme for young people aged 16 - 25 who are or were previously looked after. The officer explained that, much like the Council's Apprenticeship Scheme, Step in the Right Direction offers the young people two years of experience in a placement tailored to the individual's needs. Unlike many other programmes, Step in the Right Direction provides young people with a number of placement

opportunities in their first year to give them experiences in different departments before deciding which is more suited to the individual. Following completion of the programme, Members were pleased to learn that the young person will have had relevant experience, transferrable skills and gained a number of qualifications which could result in full time employment.

The officer explained that out of approximately fifteen nominations, six young people are chosen to take part in the programme on an annual basis. Members were assured that those who were not fortunate enough to be chosen for the programme, are provided with support and guidance with alternative opportunities.

The representative from NYAS spoke of the peer mentoring opportunities provided by NYAS and queried whether there would be scope for those young people who aren't successful on the Step in the Right Direction programme to be matched with a mentor for additional support. The Senior EET Co-ordinators welcomed the suggestion of peer mentoring; informing Members that the programme relied heavily on the support of the young person's social worker and due to this, Care & Support young people are not eligible for the programme as when they turn 18 years of age, there is no longer a social worker to guide them.

One Member questioned the completion rates of the programme. It was explained that previously, young people have dropped out of the programme for various reasons but due to the three month probation period, there is always an opportunity for another young person to fill the placement.

Members spoke positive of the Step in the Right Direction programme and questioned whether there would be scope for more young people to participate. Officers advised that since the programme was established 14 years ago, the team had expanded and would now have the capacity for ten young people at the cost of £12.5k per person, per annum. The Group Director praised the team and advised that he would look into the possibility of increasing its eligibility to ten young people per year.

The Chair thanked the officers for the positive presentation and it was **RESOLVED** that the EET officers were to be invited to attend the Corporate Parenting Board twice a year to provide further updates.

37 Pupil Deprivation Grant

In the absence of the Central South Consortium representative, the Head of Access and Inclusion provided the Corporate Parenting Board with an update on the Pupil Development Grant for Looked After Children funding and explained how it was used in Rhondda Cynon Taf during the academic year 2017/18.

The officer provided Members with background information in respect of the Pupil Deprivation Grant and advised that it is funded by Welsh Government, in order to enhance the work already undertaken by the Local Authorities to raise the educational attainment of Children Looked After and Formerly CLA pupils to close the attainment gap.

The officer continued by advising that the Grant was currently managed centrally by the Central South Consortium with Directors of Education from each Local Authority agreeing the key priorities of the monies, which include:

- Raising attainment/achievement;
- Improving attendance;
- Reducing exclusions;
- Enhancing the capacity of schools to improve the outcomes for pupils through training and support, through school to school working and the sharing of good practice (hopefully within the cluster) and;
- Ensuring that partnerships across the region continue to develop within CSC, schools, Social Care and other agencies.

Members were pleased to learn that the outcome data for academic year 2017/18 highlighted improvements in the educational attainment of pupils in Key Stage 2 and 3. It was also positive to learn that the attendance levels of CLA pupils was better than the general school population of RCT and although the overall exclusion rate within RCT had increased, the rate of exclusion per 1000 pupils had reduced in relation to CLA pupils.

The officer drew Member's attention to the team's pilot of the PERMA profiling tool at several schools. It was explained that the software would support the identification of an individual, school and home approaches to develop self-awareness, resilience and better emotional awareness.

Referring to appendix 1 and 2 of the report, one Member raised concerns over the delegation of resources and noted that during 2017/18 the majority of the resources were delegated directly to schools and in 2018/19 funding was delegated to school clusters.

The Group Director, Community & Children's Services spoke of the increase in need across Wales and the subsequent need for comparative data across other Local Authorities to ensure the best outcomes.

The Chair thanked the Head of Service for the detailed report and commented on the positive data outcomes and success stories outlined.

It was **RESOLVED:**

- a) That comparative data in terms of Local Authority outcomes is to be reported back to a future meeting of the Corporate Parenting Board and;
- b) That the results of an evaluation of the school cluster model in comparison to providing the schools with the resources direct, is brought back to a future meeting of the Corporate Parenting Board.

38 Youth Offending Service Annual Report

The Acting Head of the Youth Offending Service provided the Corporate Parenting Board with an annual review of the work of the Youth Offending Service (YOS) for 2018/19.

Members were informed that along with the scrutiny provided via the Offender Management Board, the Youth Offending Service also reports its performance on a quarterly basis to the Youth Justice Board and to the Welsh Government in relation to its prevention work. Referring to Section 4 of the report, the officer explained that the YOS is also subject to an inspection regime carried out by Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Probation, which was carried out in March 2017. The judgements were formed against six key areas and marked within a scale of one

to four stars corresponding to;

1. Poor
2. Unsatisfactory
3. Satisfactory
4. Good

Members were pleased to learn that the inspection results indicated a positive and balanced picture of the service and were assured that the key recommendations had been acknowledged and were being improved upon. The officer added that following the publication of the report, an action plan had been developed and that there were no 'red' actions established.

The representative from NYAS queried whether feedback of the service area was monitored. The officer assured the Board that an independent representative undertakes a quality assurance assessment of the service area which includes feedback from the children.

The officer advised of potential changes to the Youth Justice System in the next financial year and Members noted that there was uncertainty regarding the grant money and how it would be distributed to Local Authorities.

One Member praised the service area and took the opportunity to speak of a local skateboard project within her ward which was funded by the YOS to engage young people and decrease anti-social behaviour in the community.

The Group Director took the opportunity to extend his gratitude to the Acting Head of Service who had played a pivotal role in producing the positive inspection results before Members.

The Chair thanked the officer for the report and it was **RESOLVED** to note its content.

39 Cwm Taf Partnership Statement of Strategic Intent Update

The Group Director, Community & Children's Services presented the Cwm Taf Regional Statement of Intent for Supporting Children and Young People to the Corporate Parenting Board, advising that it had been endorsed by Cabinet on 21st November, 2018. The statement before Members set out the shared vision, principles and objectives which will direct the work of all partners when addressing Welsh Government legislation.

The Group Director explained that the Statement would support each partner agency in Cwm Taf in working together to provide an integrated service for vulnerable children, young people and their families. It was added that the Implementation Plan would be brought back to Cabinet for sign off once completed and that the Corporate Parenting Board would be included in the process.

The Chair thanked the Group Director for the report, commenting that it was pleasing to see partners working together to produce a robust strategy to help shape different aspects children's services across Cwm Taf.

The Corporate Parenting Board **RESOLVED** to note the Cwm Taf Regional Statement of Intent for Supporting Children and Young People and Families.

40 To consider passing the following under-mentioned Resolution:

It was **RESOLVED** that the press and public be excluded from the meeting under Section 100A(4) of the Local Government Act (as amended) for the following items of business on the grounds that it involves the likely disclosure of the exempt information as defined in paragraph 13 of Part 4 of the Schedule 12A of the Act.

41 Regulation 73 reports

The Residential Services Manager provided the Board with an update on the Regulation 32 visits undertaken at the three children's homes – Beddau, Bryndar and Nantgwyn.

The officer outlined a summary of the inspection outcomes and it was **RESOLVED:**

- a) That an invitation be extended to Councillor L. Jones who requested to join the Chair at her next visits to the children's homes.
- b) That NYAS present a quarterly report to future meetings of the Board in respect of their independent visits to the three above-mentioned children's homes.

This meeting closed at 11.30 am

**Cllr C Leyshon
Chair.**