

RHONDDA CYNON TAF COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL**CORPORATE PARENTING BOARD**

Minutes of the meeting of the Corporate Parenting Board held at the County Borough Council Offices, The Pavilions, Clydach Vale on Monday 19th January, 2015 at 10am.

Present

County Borough Councillor G E Hopkins – In the Chair

County Borough Councillors:-

(Mrs) E Hanagan, S Rees-Owen, R K Turner and LG Walker.

Officers in Attendance:-

Mr G Isingrini – Group Director, Community & Children’s Services

Mr P J Lucas – Director, Legal & Democratic Services

Mr A Gwynn – Service Director, Children’s Services

Mrs G Davies – Acting Service Director, Access, engagement and Inclusion

Ms L Pearce – Head of Safeguarding and Standards.

Ms S Edwards – Reviewing Team Manager

Ms A Batley – Head of Prevention Services

32 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from County Borough Councillors (Mrs) M E Davies and Ms Emma Phipps-Magill from Nyas.

33 ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Chairman advised Members of a Special Meeting of the Corporate Parenting Board on the 11th February to consider a Child Practice Review and also took the opportunity to remind Members of the forth coming frontline team visit.

34 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of personal interests made in matters pertaining to the agenda.

35 MINUTES

RESOLVED to approve as an accurate record, the minutes of the meeting of the Corporate Parenting Board held on the 17th November, 2014.

REPORTS OF THE GROUP DIRECTOR, COMMUNITY & CHILDREN'S SERVICES.**35 SAFEGUARDING ACTION PLAN REPORT.**

The Head of Safeguarding and Standards presented her report to Corporate Parenting Board Members.

The Chairman thanked the officer for the detailed report and commented on the positive steps taken forward with MASH. He also commented on the mixed views Board Members received from staff in respect of MASH at a recent frontline team visit. Officers noted the concerns highlighted in respect of 'loss of community knowledge' but spoke of the expected positive outcomes in utilising MASH with early interventions and the positive sharing of information to inform better decision making. The Group Director, Community & Children's Services spoke of the community engagement with MASH, adding that although engagement would not necessarily be with a social worker, the process would be much more effective.

Members questioned whether other partners had fully supported the MASH project and officers advised that a range of partners had fully committed.

Officers were also queried on the monitoring of the actions resulting from Child Practice Reviews and the Board were advised of the action plans taken forward and how these were monitored, through the sub group of the Safeguarding Children Board and the use of Multi Agency Practitioner Forums to disseminate learning. The Service Director, Children's Services commented on the positive benefits of MASH in this area, helping to prevent any breakdown in communication between agencies.

Following consideration of the report the Board **RESOLVED**:-

- a. To note the progress report.
- b. To receive a further progress report in 12 months.

36 INDEPENDENT REVIEWING OFFICER (IRO) REPORT.

The Head of Safeguarding and Standards and the Reviewing Team Manager provided Members presented the Independent Reviewing Officer (IRO) report. Members were advised that the Local Authority were required to appoint IROs to conduct reviews for Looked After Children and monitor the Local Authority's performance in relation to implementing the care plans for individual children, as under the Adoption and Children Act 2002.

Members were referred to Appendix 1 of the report outlining the monitoring report, with the key themes relating to:-

- Maintained good performance in relation to reviews being held within timescales
- Continued developmental work undertaken by the Reviewing Team, which relates to consultation with Children and Young People.
- Positive internal audit report

- Use of the resolution process, alongside caseload size and the IRO quality assurance role.

Members discussed the report before them and the positive findings noted although queried with officers the increase of LAC numbers and the staffing deficits referred to within the report. The Group Director, Community & Children's Services commented on the good performance highlighted within the report by staff in undertaking reviews and commented on the need to undertake a strategic review of the service. The Service Director, Children's Services commented that the rise in figures was attributable to a number of factors and spoke of the work currently being undertaken by the Scrutiny working group in this area.

One Member highlighted the positive increase in RCT foster Carers compared to independent Carers and officers spoke of the robust advertising campaign and the support provided to foster carers which was not available by independent sectors.

The Board **RESOLVED** to Note the report.

37. ESTABLISHING THE VALE, VALLEYS AND CARDIFF REGIONAL ADOPTION COLLABORATIVE.

The Head of Prevention Services outlined the report to Members which provided an update on the progress of plans to establish the Vale, Valleys and Cardiff regional Adoption Collaborative.

Members were provided with the background to the establishment of the Collaborative working, including details of the Business Case and the recent report taken to Cabinet in December 2014 outlining the full resource implications of the establishment of the regional adoption collaborative, including the financial, employment and legal implications of the new service following the commencement of formal consultation with staff and trade unions.

Members were advised that the anticipated timescales for the collaborative working had presented a challenge in terms of developing an agreed service delivery model across the four authorities which best delivered the aims of the Collaborative in delivering an integrated, comprehensive service which would promote service priorities and ensure performance measures were met

It was confirmed by the officer that the collaborative working arrangements would provide an improved level of service for users, and would be a more efficient and resilient service while achieving an overall level of savings and would aim to reduce the overall LAC population across the region.

It was advised that the financial and budgetary implications of the new service along with the proposals for premises, IT requirements and governance arrangements could be achieved within budget. Members were also advised of the staff consultation meetings that had been undertaken and the Head of Prevention Services commented on the key posts of the Regional Adoption Manager and Business Support Manager which would be recruited via a competitive process ring fenced initially to the four local authority areas. The Service Director concluded his report by adding that it was anticipated that there would be no surplus staff in the restructure and that recruitment of new staff would be required.

Members of the Board spoke positively on the work taken forward in creating the Regional Adoption Collaborative working and commented on the need for a scrutiny function to be taken forward in this area. It was **RESOLVED** to note the contents of the Vale, Valleys and Cardiff Regional Adoption Collaborative Business Case.

38 EXCLUSION OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC.

RESOLVED that the press and public be excluded from meeting under Section 100A(4) of the local Government Act 1972 (as amended) for the following item of business on the grounds that it involves the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in Paragraph 13 of Part 4 of Schedule 12A of the Act, namely, information relating to a particular individual. Transparency in the conduct and capabilities of individuals will be discussed and considered. Consequently, it is considered, the public interest in maintaining the exemption outweighs the public interest in disclosing information by virtue of which the meeting is likely not to be open to the public during its consideration.

REPORT OF THE GROUP DIRECTOR, COMMUNITY & CHILDREN'S SERVICES CONTAINING EXEMPT INFORMATION.

39 REGULATION 32 REPORT – RESIDENTIAL CHILDREN'S HOMES.

The Board were provided with an update on the regulation 32 visits undertaken at the four Children's homes –Beddau, Treherbet, Bryndar and Nant Gwyn during the period October to November 2014.

The Service Director, Children's Services outlined a summary of the inspection outcomes and it was **RESOLVED** to note the report.

G.E Hopkins

Chairman

The meeting terminated at 11.30am.