

**RHONDDA CYNON TAF COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL**  
**CORPORATE PARENTING BOARD**  
**MUNICIPAL YEAR 2015 - 16**

**CORPORATE PARENTING BOARD**

**26th OCTOBER 2015**

**REPORT OF THE GROUP DIRECTOR,  
 COMMUNITY & CHILDREN'S  
 SERVICES**

**Agenda Item No: 3**

**'IMPROVING ENGAGEMENT &  
 PARTICIPATORY  
 OPPORTUNITIES FOR YOUNG  
 PEOPLE WITHIN THE REVIEW  
 PROCESS.'**

**REPORT OF THE GROUP DIRECTOR, COMMUNITY AND CHILDREN'S  
 SERVICES**

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**1. PURPOSE OF REPORT**

To update the Corporate Parenting Board, with regards to progress made on the recommendations of the Graduate Officer's report.

**2. RECOMMENDATION**

The Graduate Officer's recommendations are attached to this report for endorsement.

**3. BACKGROUND**

The Social Services and Wellbeing Act 2014 identifies a need to encourage and facilitate young people to play a key role in decisions regarding them....

*"the IRO must....ensure that any ascertained wishes and feelings of the child concerning the case are given due consideration by the local authority"* (Social Services and Well-being (Wales) Act, 2014, p.84).

The reviewing team encourage children and young people to attend and actively participate in their review meetings, and historically, in addition to meeting with a child, they have relied upon consultation documents as a means of establishing a child's wishes and feelings regardless of whether they choose to attend or not. Feedback from a consultation group of looked after children in November 2014 was that the consultation documents were outdated and should be available online.

The Graduate Officer was appointed with the task of enabling children and young people who are looked after and accommodated by RCT Council to access a range of resources that allows them to actively participate in their review process and make more informed decisions regarding their future care.

#### **4. CURRENT SITUATION**

Please refer to the Graduate officer's report (attached).

The updated consultation documents have been circulated to the social work teams and the feedback has been very positive with comments such as "I like the tick boxes and I like the pictures" and, "I'd like to fill in my form this time"

There are clear timescales for the completion of the website but they have been extended by nearly a month because unfortunately it has coincided with the redevelopment and upcoming launch of the Council's new website.

The need to update consultation documents for parents and carers is timely in as much as with the recent formation of the Kinship Team within Fostering Services the documents can be tailored to meet the needs of foster carers and kinship carers (family members). Fostering Services and the Reviewing Team will need to collaborate to produce an updated consultation document.

## Recommendations Update: Improving Engagement & Participatory Opportunities for Young People within the Review Process

<b>Recommendation</b>	<b>Progress Update</b>
Recommendation 1: Continuation of the Website Design and Build Phases (to be completed by November 2015)	There have been ongoing discussions with the Web Development Team regarding the progress of the website. We have recently been informed that all of the LAC pages will be included in the new Council Website. Lisa Maddocks, Research and Information Officer has agreed to work with the LAC Reviewing Team to develop the LAC pages and its '2 Sides' identity ready to go live by 30th November.
Recommendation 2: Appointment of a Children's Services Information and Research Officer	Unable to provide update.
Recommendation 3: Allocate website maintenance duties to Business Support Staff	Two members of staff within the LAC Reviewing Business Support Team have agreed to take on the maintenance duties for the website once launched. It has been arranged that both members of staff will undertake the Contensis training on either the 17 <sup>th</sup> or 19 <sup>th</sup> November which will provide them with the skills and knowledge to upload and edit the website content.
Recommendation 4: Renewal of the Foster Carer and Parents Consultation Documents	There has been no further progress with recommendation 4 as the LAC Reviewing Team are currently focusing on promoting the young people consultation documents.
Recommendation 5: Continuation of Children's consultation	The LAC consultation Group has been invited to numerous consultation events across South Wales over the last few months. Unfortunately due to the short notice of these invites, the young

## APPENDIX 1

	<p>people were unavailable to attend. However, the IROs have remained in contact with members of the consultation group to ensure the group is sustained. The majority of the young people have expressed an interest in continuing with the group and it is envisaged that the group will be an integral part of the official launch of the site.</p>
<p>Recommendation 6: Structured Marketing Plan</p>	<p>The newly appointed LAC Reviewing Team Manager has distributed the new consultation booklets to the relevant teams within Social Services and has encouraged all Team Managers and Service Managers to promote the use of the new documents and inform them of the upcoming website.</p> <p>Publicity for the website has been limited until there is a definitive launch date which includes the '2 sides' branding.</p>
<p>Recommendation 7: Undertake an evaluation into the website and Review documents usage and efficiency</p>	<p>A review would need to be undertaken in approximately 12 months time, allowing sufficient time for the consultation documents to be distributed and the website to be fully launched.</p>