

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 7th November, 2016 at 10am.

Present

County Borough Councillor G E Hopkins – In the Chair

County Borough Councillors:-

(Mrs)E.Hanagan, L Walker and M Weaver.

Officers in Attendance:-

Mr P Lucas – Director, Legal & Democratic Services
Ms A Batley – Service Director, Children's Services
Ms L Pearce – Head of Safeguarding & Support
Ms M Meredith – Residential Services Manager
Ms N Thomas – Service Manager – Early Years & Family Support
Ms G Davies – Service Director, Access, Engagement & Inclusion.
Ms E Brabon – Looked After Children's Employment Coordinator
Mr A Cope – Senior Eet Advisor (Looked After Children)
Ms S Woolson – Employment, Education & Training Manager
Ms D Hughes – Head of Organisational Development
Ms E Phipps-Magill – NYAS Cymru
Ms H Williams – Cabinet Business Officer

Others in Attendance:-

Two Young Person Representatives

24 WELCOME

The Chair took the opportunity to welcome the officers from the Council's HR department and the two young person representatives to the meeting, and introductions were made.

25 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from County Borough Councillors M Davies & J Watts, G Isingrini and J Thomas (RCT).

26 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

In accordance with the Code of Conduct, there were no declarations of interest pertaining to the agenda.

27 MINUTES

It was **RESOLVED** to approve as an accurate record, the minutes of the meeting of the Corporate Parenting Board held on the 5th October, 2016.

28 CARE TO WORK & STEP IN THE RIGHT DIRECTION

The Senior Advisor, Looked After Children provided the Board with a presentation on the Step in the Right Direction programme. The officer advised that the programme helped young people between the ages 16 and 21 in their transition from care to employment.

The Board were pleased to hear of the success of the programme, in that 39 trainees had completed it since its implementation in 2005, with 1 trainee supported into University and a variety of qualifications being achieved overall.

The Looked After Children Employment Coordinator proceeded to present to the Board the Care2Work programme. It was explained that the engagement programme was established in 2010 to provide children looked after and young people with care and support needs who were not in employment, education or training with encouragement and support to identify and access a range of training and employment opportunities.

An opportunity was given to the two Young Person Representatives to provide first hand details of their experiences on the programmes. Both representatives spoke positively on their experiences, advising the board that they were both in the process of undertaking a qualification in Business Administration and were in full time employment within the Council. The representatives stressed that not only did the programme teach them interview etiquette and provide them with new working skills, but it gave them the confidence to enter the world of work and communicate with new people on a daily basis.

The officers took the opportunity to update the Board on an exciting new project taking place at one of the Council's closed canteens. It was explained that the canteen in Ty Trevithick would reopen for two weeks in December in order for young people to work in the kitchen alongside a professional chef, to develop new skills. Officers were pleased with the news of the pilot scheme, commenting that it would benefit the authority and the young people alike.

The Board thanked the officers & young people for the hard work put into the programme. Members agreed that it was pleasing to see such fantastic outcomes with the Chair adding that they would look forward to seeing more in the future.

29 CHANGE TO THE AGENDA

The Chairman changed the running order of the meeting and brought forward agenda item 9 – Regulation 32 Reports.

30 EXCLUSION OF PRESS & PUBLIC

It was **RESOLVED** that the press and public be excluded from the meeting under Section 100(4) of the Local Government Act 1972 (as amended) for the next 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.

31 REGULATION 32 REPORTS

The Residential Services Manager provided the Board with an update on the Regulation 32 visits undertaken at the four children's homes – Beddau, Treherbert, Bryndar and Nant Gwyn for August/September 2016.

The officer outlined a summary of the Inspection outcomes and it was **RESOLVED** to note the report.

32 FRONT LINE VISITS

The Chair of the Corporate Parenting Board presented an update on the visits made to front line teams by Members since the beginning of 2016. The Chair assured Members the overall verdict was pleasing and took the opportunity to thank the staff involved, commenting that despite the challenging circumstances and the significant demand faced, the enthusiasm was clear to see.

The Chair referred Members to the section of the report entitled 'Issues for the Board's Consideration', where concerns were raised over ICT access within the different locations. The Service Director, Children's Services assured the Board that

discussions were underway in respect of improving technology and that in moving forward, differentiating between the needs and wants of staff needed to be established.

The Chair provided Councillor Walker with an opportunity to update the Board on a recent visit to Bryndar Residential Children's Home. The Member spoke positively of the visit, commenting that the location and building were of high standard and that the staff were welcoming and open to receive questions.

Members of the Board agreed that taking part in front line and residential children's home visits was helpful in gaining a further understanding of the services to children in Rhondda Cynon Taf.

It was **RESOLVED:-**

- a. To Note the Contents of the Report.
- b. That a future report of the Service Director, Children's Services be presented to the Board in respect of Agile Working

33 REGISTERED CHILDCARE PROVISION – QUALITY UPDATE

The Service Manager, Early Years & Family Support provided Members with an update on the Care and Social Services Inspectorate for Wales (CSSIW) registered childcare settings overseen by the Early Years and Family Support Service (EYFSS) and on the action planning and service improvements within and by the staff at the childcare settings.

The Members were referred to Appendix 1 of the report where the latest CCSIW feedback was displayed. The officer advised that recent inspections had been positive with all feedback being taken on board to ensure statutory obligations continued to be met.

The Board spoke positively on the contents contained within the report, commenting that it was pleasing to see the requirements being met. Questions ensued on the eligibility requirements in respect of running private after school child care provision and it was explained that there are requirements which must be met by both the Council and CCSIW.

Following discussions the Board **RESOLVED:-**

- a. To note the contents of the report.

34 NYAS QUARTER 3 & 4 REPORT

Ms E Phipps–Magill presented the Board with 2 quarterly narrative reports on behalf of NYAS for the periods 1st March – 31st May; and 1st June – 31st August which was tabled at the meeting. The officer discussed both reports, highlighting the recommendations and performance accountability within each.

Members were advised that the highest referral issues presented to NYAS were in respect of contact & placement and would continue to be monitored.

Discussions ensued on the key recommendations highlighted within the report, with the officer explaining that a key priority for NYAS was to ensure that all children and young people are made aware of the advocacy service and how to access it. It was suggested that a pilot be implemented by way of an informative letter to the young people at each key stage of their time in care. Members agreed that it was vital for the young people to be given information in respect of their care plans and any decisions being made about them with the Chair touching upon the relaunch of Wicked and the need to remind young people of NYAS and their capabilities.

Questions formulated around the framework in respect of active offers within Rhondda Cynon Taf and it was advised that this would need to be revisited to ensure every child is notified of the services provided.

Members were advised about the successful recruitment of a Peer Development Worker, funded by Comic Relief. It was explained that the post would provide support for young leavers in gaining employment and building aspirations.

Members were pleased with the contents contained within the report and it was **RESOLVED:**

- a) To note the contents of the report.

35 FUTURE WORK PROGRAMME

The Board were provided with an update on the Draft Work Programme which identified the issues going forward in future meetings and the dates of future front line and residential children's home visits.

Members **RESOLVED:-**

- a) To note the contents of the report.

The meeting terminated at 11.10am

Councillor G Hopkins

Chair