

**AGENDA ITEM 4****RHONDDA CYNON TAF COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL****CORPORATE PARENTING BOARD****16th MARCH 2015****CHILDREN'S SERVICES MODEL FOR CONSULTATION****REPORT OF THE DIRECTOR OF COMMUNITY & CHILDREN'S SERVICES****Author: Andrew Gwynn, Service Director Children's Services****Tel. No. 01443 495118****1. PURPOSE OF THE REPORT**

To update the Corporate Parenting Board members on progress in developing a Children's Services delivery model for Rhondda Cynon Taf.

**2. RECOMMENDATIONS**

It is recommended that Members:

- 2.1 note the contents of this report and the progress made in developing a revised service model for Children's Services;
- 2.2 receive further reports, in due course, outlining the development of the final version and its implementation arrangements

**3. BACKGROUND AND PROGRESS TO-DATE**

- 3.1 Social Services in Rhondda Cynon Taf aim to provide a range of services which are responsive and well coordinated in protecting and supporting the population as a whole and vulnerable people in particular. However, like all Councils, Rhondda Cynon Taf is facing considerable financial challenges with significantly reducing budgets at a time of increased demand, higher expectations and legislation change with the implementation of the Social Services and Well-Being (Wales) Act 2014.
- 3.2 One of the major challenges going forward will be to maintain our focus on maximising independence so that we can help more people and families to manage risks, to stay safe and to stay independent at home for as long as possible. This requires us to continue to promote ways in which we can focus on early intervention and prevention approaches by working with local communities to meet the specific needs of the people who live within them.
- 3.3 Prevention and early intervention are central to our ambition to offer more opportunities for people to stay safe, active, healthy and independent for

longer. We have made good progress in this area, but more needs to be done.

#### **4. THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE CHILDREN SERVICES DELIVERY MODEL FOR RHONDDA CYNON TAF**

- 4.1 The model (attached as Appendix One) has been prepared by the Rhondda Cynon Taf Children's Services Management Team with the support of The Institute of Public Care at Oxford Brookes University (IPC) as part of an exercise to develop a future operating model for Children's Services. It describes the vision, principles, framework and direction of change that the Senior Management Team proposes across services to support children and families in the future in Rhondda Cynon Taf. It has been developed in order to address the Children Service improvement priorities identified in this Council's Director of Social Services report as set out in paragraphs 4.2. and 4.3 below.
- 4.2. The revised operating model will enable children, young people and families to access appropriate support as early as possible, to help them maintain their quality of life, prevent problems escalating and reduce the demand for high cost, specialist support services. Our objective is to ensure that children, young people and their families will be supported to help themselves to achieve their full potential and thereby improve their overall wellbeing and quality of life. In order to achieve this we will need to:
- Improve our capacity to prevent the need for statutory intervention by coordinating preventative and early intervention services for families in the greatest need more effectively.
  - Ensure that the current Team around the Family (TAF) model makes best use of the total resources available to assess the needs and to co-ordinate services for vulnerable families in need of our support.
- 4.3. In addition, the model will need to enable the service to deliver improvements in assessment, planning and decision making for those children who will require long term permanent care in accordance with legislative requirements. In order to achieve this we will need to:
- Achieve improved performance in assessment and care planning arrangements that is quality assured.
  - Ensure that business processes and information systems are fit for purpose, reducing bureaucracy and freeing up social work time for direct work with families.
  - Recruit, develop and retain a highly motivated and skilled workforce, which is responsive to the needs of children, young people, and their families.
  - Support the implementation of the Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH) for referrals received where there are safeguarding concerns in relation to Children and Young People.

- Include a model for services for young people aged 16+ that ensures a consistency of approach that achieves the best possible outcomes for the young person involved.
- Continue to provide sufficient, suitable and cost effective care placements to meet the needs of children looked after and care leavers where this is required.
- Ensure that there is access to Rhondda Cynon Taf systems in Pontypridd Police Station.
- Ensure MHub provides reliable management information that will assist in evaluation frameworks for the MASH.
- Develop a plan for quality assurance of decision making and escalation of professional disagreements.
- Consult with staff affected by the changes; alongside Human Resources and Trade Unions.
- Develop a Communication Strategy to ensure the referring community is fully briefed on the changes.

## 5. **NEXT STAGE**

Consultation is underway with staff and stakeholders to finalise the model and once finalised a revised service configuration/structure will be developed for consideration by Cabinet Members.

## 6. **CONCLUSION**

The production of this revised operational model and its implementation will address the agreed service improvement priorities for Children's Services and will inform the revised service configuration/structure required to deliver these priorities and address the ongoing requirements of the Social Services and Wellbeing Act.























