



RHONDDA CYNON TAF COUNCIL CORPORATE PARENTING BOARD

Minutes of the meeting of the Corporate Parenting Board held on Tuesday, 16 July 2019 at 10.00 am at the Committee Room 1, The Pavilions, Cambrian Park, Clydach Vale, Tonypany, CF40 2XX.

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

Councillor C Leyshon (Chair)

Councillor G Hopkins Councillor R Yeo

Officers in attendance

Mr G Isingrini, Group Director Community & Children's Services

Ms A Batley, Director of Children's Services

Ms C Jones, Head of Access & Inclusion

Ms C Miles, Childcare Solicitor

Ms J Thomas, Complaints & QA Manager, Social Services

Ms T Prosser, Head of Service

Ms S Nowell, Head of Transformation

Mrs. J Allen, Children and Young People's Service Manager

Ms M Meredith, Residential Services Manager

1 Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were received from County Borough Councillors J. Rosser, S. Rees-Owen, L. Jones and J. James.

An apology for absence was also received from Tros Gynnal Plant (TGP Cymru).

2 Declaration of Interest

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

3 Minutes

It was **RESOLVED** to approve as an accurate record, the minutes of the meeting of the Corporate Parenting Board held on the 8th May 2019.

4 Change to the order of the Agenda

The Corporate Parenting Board agreed that the agenda would be considered out of sequence, as detailed in the minutes set out hereunder.

5 Changes to the Operating Model for Young Carers

The Head of Adult Care and Support provided the Corporate Parenting Board with the outcome of the Carers Support Project review and the subsequent changes to the operating model for young carer assessment and support.

The officer informed Members that in conjunction with the Social Services and Wellbeing Partnership, a Regional Partnership Group had overseen the development and implementation of a Carers Strategy. As a result, a Blueprint had been identified, which sought to outline what a comprehensive carers service should look like and whilst Rhondda Cynon Taf has a good record for supporting carers there were also some areas identified for improvement.

The officer reported that during 2018/19, a carers review was undertaken, led by the Carer's Support Project, which considered the wider implications of the SSWB Act.

Members were pleased to learn of the following positive outcomes of the Carers Support Project review, which will seek to:

- improve the experience for carers in Rhondda Cynon Taf, particularly young carers who will now receive the statutory IAA, assessment; support planning and review within the new Children's IAA service;
- strengthen the leadership capacity across the Council to address carers issues, rights and entitlements;
- continue the service delivery within the Carers Support Project; and
- Deliver the Blueprint carers offer

Officers and Members took the opportunity to praise the hard work, which was put into the review to produce encouraging outcomes for young carers. Members were particularly pleased to note that as a result of the review, the profile of young carers and awareness of their pressures would be raised.

One Member questioned whether young carers were regarded the same as Children Looked After, in terms of their vulnerability and support. Officers assured Members that as part of their duty of care, they acknowledge that the young carers are vulnerable children with risks and therefore are offered the same level of support that all vulnerable children would receive (through a Care and Support Plan), in order to alleviate the responsibilities and pressures they face.

The Head of Inclusion Services advised that Estyn were undertaking a review in respect of educational attainment of young carers, which would be an opportunity for the service areas to work together and raise awareness within schools to ensure support is provided for the young people.

The Chair thanked the officer for the report and it was **RESOLVED** to acknowledge the update.

6 Corporate Parenting Board Work Programme 2019/20

The Senior Executive & Regulatory Business Officer provided the Corporate Parenting Board with the report outlining the draft work programme for the 2019/20 Municipal Year. The officer explained that the programme acts as a useful method of managing the Board's work load and is a fluid document, which can be amended throughout the year to reflect any changing priorities the Board may have.

Members **RESOLVED** to acknowledge the update.

7 Corporate Parenting Board Annual Report 2018/19

The Chair provided Members with the Corporate Parenting Board Annual Report for the 2018/19 Municipal Year. The Annual Report highlighted the vast amount of work considered by the Corporate Parenting Board over the previous year, referring to both the successes and the challenges.

The Chair took the opportunity to extend her thanks to Members, officers and in particular, to the young people who attended the meetings over the year.

It was explained that should Members approve the draft report, it would be presented at the Children & Young People Scrutiny Committee for information and then to Cabinet for final consideration.

Members were encouraged with the report, which outlined the robust work carried out in the previous year and the goals for improvement. It was **RESOLVED** to approve the content of the report, subject to a small amendment to the wording in the Chair's foreword.

8 Rhondda Cynon Taf Community Wellbeing and Resilience Service

The Service Director, Children's Services introduced the item to Members and explained that in November 2017 the Cwm Taf Public Services Board (PSB) agreed to work with the Welsh Government to undertake a joint collaborative approach to redesigning Early Years arrangements across Cwm Taf. The aim of the work was to look to create an integrated delivery model.

With the aid of a PowerPoint presentation, the Children and Young People's Service Manager provided the Corporate Parenting Board with an overview of Rhondda Cynon Taf's Community Wellbeing and Resilience Service, which was developed in conjunction with the PSB's vision. The officer provided information in relation to the five teams, which sit under the Head of Community Wellbeing and Resilience:

- Programme Flexibilities Team – Early Years Appraisal and Placement Health and Therapies Staff
- Early Intervention and Prevention Commissioning Team – Children and Communities Grant / FS Childcare Contract / FS Health Contract
- Children and Young People Service – Youth Service / Play Service / Childcare Delivery Team
- Resilient Families Service – ABR Team / CANS Team / Families Plus Team / Families Team / Parenting Support Team
- Service Planning and Transformation Team – Management Information / Service Planning / Partnerships

Members praised the focussed changes made to the service and were pleased to note that it not only promotes early intervention and prevention, but it supports children returning to their families. Members were also pleased to learn that the service was looking at the possibility of moving away from the delivery of services that are determined by geographical postcodes to a model that promotes universal access to services for all families in RCT.

The Corporate Parenting Board spoke of the positive outcomes for families that they had witnessed as a result of the programmes and the Members agreed that it would be vital to monitor the integrated service to ensure it has sufficient

resources and that there is clear evidence to support its positive outcomes.

It was **RESOLVED** that the Corporate Parenting Board receive an update in the future, to inform Members of the progress.

9 Tros Gynnal Plant (TGP)

As detailed in Minute No. 1, a representative from Tros Gynnal Plant (TGP Cymru) was not present at the meeting to provide introductions to Members.

The Chair emphasised the importance of TGP Cymru attending the next meeting of the Corporate Parenting Board.

10 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 14 of Part 4 of the Schedule 12A of the Act.

11 Care Inspectorate Wales (CIW) Report

The Residential Services Manager provided the Board with an update on the outcome of the recent Care Inspectorate Wales (CIW) inspection carried out on the Nantgwyn Residential Children's Home.

During discussions, the Group Director, Community and Children's Services took the opportunity to praise the staff working at Nantgwyn Children's Home for their continuous hard work. The Group Director acknowledged that RCT had not been compliant with Regulation 14 of the Regulated Services and commented that it was only in extraordinary circumstances that such decisions were made.

It was **RESOLVED** to acknowledge the content of the report.

12 Urgent Business

With the agreement of the Chair, the Service Director, Children's Services updated the Corporate Parenting Board with various concerns regarding the Cwm Taf Health Board:

- Following issues experienced in a neighbouring Local Authority, officers from RCT undertook research to establish whether there were any discrepancies in medical advice received from the Health Board. It was reported that in the previous year, there were four cases, which were fortunately disputed by RCT officers at an early stage.
- The officer reported that the Health Board were unable to take on more than five adoption medicals for children and young people from Cwm Taf during August due to capacity issues. As it is integral to the whole adoption process this will have major implications for adoptions to proceed within the courts allotted timescales. It is essential that adoptive parents have a full understanding of any health issues of any child they are adopting.
- Lastly, the officer spoke of Children Looked After medicals and explained that a mere 23% was received on time in the last couple of months.

Members were alarmed by the update and were reassured by officers that The Services Director Childrens had raised these issues with the Local Health Board and was waiting for a response from the Health Board in respect of all three of the issues outlined above. Members were told that officers remained cautious in terms of accepting the advice from the hospitals and acknowledged the huge pressure on officers to dispute the advice given from professional medics.

It was **RESOLVED** to provide an update of the Health Board's response and the Council's subsequent action, to the Corporate Parenting Board in September.

This meeting closed at 11.00 am

**Cllr C Leyshon
Chairman.**