

CORPORATE PARENTING PANEL

Minutes of meeting held on 2 November, 2015

Present: Councillor C Elmore (Chairman), Councillor S Egan (Deputy Chairman), Councillor R. Traherne, Councillor R Bertin, Councillor E Williams, Councillor V Hartrey, Angela Harris (Regional Adoption Manager: Vale, Valleys and Cardiff Regional Adoption Collaborative), Phil Evans (Director of Social and Care Services), Rachel Evans (Head of Children & Young People Services), Mike Glavin (Head of School Improvement and Inclusion), Martine Coles (LAC Education Coordinator), Michael Willmott (Cabinet Support Officer).

		Actions
(1)	Apologies for absence	
1.1	Councillor J Birch.	
(2)	Vale, Valleys and Cardiff Regional Adoption Collaborative	
2.1	<p>Rachel Evans presented a letter from Cllr Mel Nott (Chair of the National Adoption Service for Wales Governance Board) in regards to Adoption Services and Corporate Parenting and the September 2015 Progress Report for the Vale, Valleys and Cardiff Regional Adoption Collaborative.</p> <p>Rachel Evans informed the committee that it was important to consider this report in light of the fact that this is a new collaboration and was written to be deliberately transparent and honest. There were inherited issues to be addressed, and not all Local Authorities had been performing to the same level before the collaboration.</p> <p>Rachel Evans then invited Angela Harris, the Regional Adoption Manager for the Vale, Valleys and Cardiff Regional Adoption Collaborative to give further context to the report and the progress of the collaboration, discussing:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Governance Structure • Staffing Resources • Service Delivery • Priorities • Performance Management • Budget and Financial Considerations <p>During the discussion, Cllr Traherne asked for clarification of the adoption figures from before the collaboration, and how these matched the new data being presented. Phil Evans noted that this framework was unprecedented, so comparisons were difficult to make. Angela Harris noted the concerns of the committee that thirteen children had been waiting for over six months for adoption in prior quarters and stated the need for improvement as this was a key performance indicator.</p>	

	<p>Rachel Evans, Phil Evans and Cllr Egan discussed income generation issues concerning the sector.</p> <p>Mike Glavin asked for clarification in regards to enquiry figures and how the data is handled.</p> <p>Councillor Bertin enquired what reasons might contribute to staff losses during the collaboration. Rachel Evans and Angela Harris noted that distance and travel was a chief reason for staff losses, although they were protected under TUPE. Overall, only a small number of losses had been sustained across a small team and there had been lots of interest in filling the remaining posts. Angela Harris added that it was a credit to staff that they had embraced the change and were performing well. Councillor Bertin extended his thanks to the staff of the collaboration.</p> <p>Councillor Bertin, Angela Harris and Phil Evans confirmed that staff appraisals would be taking place in the future.</p> <p>Phil Evans concluded discussions on this matter by noting that England was following Wales in setting up similar regional adoption panels.</p>	<p>The committee noted the progress report and progress made.</p>
(3)	Minutes and Matters Arising 27 April 2015	
3.1	The minutes of 27 April 2015 meeting were agreed as a correct record.	All Agreed.
(4)	Corporate Parenting Workshop – Reflections and Next Steps	
4.1	<p>Rachel Evans presented the outcome of the Corporate Parenting Workshop held on the 1st July 2015, and the committee discussed how to build upon the results of the Workshop and the Corporate Parenting Panel as a whole.</p> <p>One of the key issues identified during the workshop was the need to target resources for LAC and prevention strategies. As such, the Head of Children & Young People Services proposed a pilot scheme to offer a direct family support service. Councillor Traherne questioned if this would duplicate and overlap with the work of other services. Rachel Evans responded that the proposed intervention service would target vulnerable children at a different stage to existing provision and Martine Coles added that increasing staff provision was needed to help reduce waiting lists, and a therapeutic approach was worth investing in. Councillor Bertin noted that this approach might save money in the long term through early intervention. The committee discussed the staffing implications of the proposal with Phil Evans noting that Welsh Government was determined to drive down the numbers of children in care with a focus on repairing, not rescuing, families. As such, a targeted and focussed intervention</p>	

	<p>service was required. He recognised that it was difficult to achieve, but could be done.</p> <p>Councillor noted that the workshop was successful in raising awareness of Corporate Parenting amongst Members and Departments and proposed another training session. He queried if it might be beneficial to dovetail Corporate Parenting Panel meetings with Scrutiny Committees to ensure attendance.</p> <p>The Panel discussed the Corporate Parenting Panel Strategy. It was noted that feedback from the workshop could form a basis, while a draft strategy could be reviewed and discussed in future meetings. It was noted that the Corporate Parenting Panel held no powers, and it was considered appropriate to request a change to the constitution to gain more authority, rather than rely on multiple reports to Cabinet. This was also thought to be beneficial to encouraging young person engagement at Corporate Parenting Panel.</p> <p>Following from these discussions, the Chairman proposed discussion between the Cabinet Office and Democratic Services to gain powers for the Corporate Parenting Panel and refer matters that required Executive decision to Cabinet. Councillor Bertin agreed with the proposal and requested Members to be consulted on this matter.</p>	<p>Cabinet Office to contact Democratic Services to discuss further powers for the Coporate Parenting Panel.</p>
(5)	Dates of Meetings for 2016	
5.1	Members of the panel were happy with the proposed dates of meetings.	All Agreed.
(6)	Any Other Business	
6.1	<p>Martine Coles informed the panel that a Welsh Government consultation document that concerned Corporate Parenting was going to be released in the Spring. She will distribute the consultation document to members of the panel when it is released.</p> <p>Councillor Hartrey noted that the recent Awards panel had been very popular with elected members and queried if young person participation with the Corporate Parenting Panel could be increased. The committee discussed this matter, including the possibility of representatives and information from representative children being presented to the panel through a variety of communication methods. Phil Evans noted that this could be written into the contract with Advocacy providers.</p>	<p>LAC Education Coordinator to distribute information when available.</p>

DATE OF THE NEXT MEETING

11 April 2016