

THE VALE OF GLAMORGAN COUNCIL

CABINET: 5<sup>TH</sup> SEPTEMBER, 2016

REFERENCE FROM HEALTHY LIVING AND SOCIAL CARE SCRUTINY  
COMMITTEE: 18<sup>TH</sup> JULY, 2016

“184 DRAFT CORPORATE STRATEGY FOR CHILDREN WHO NEED CARE  
AND SUPPORT AND ACTION PLAN 2016-2019 (DSS) –

The Head of Children and Young People Services presented the report, the purpose of which was to advise the Scrutiny Committee of progress in developing a draft Corporate Strategy for Children Who Need Care and Support and also provided a summary of the associated Action Plan for 2016-19.

The report advised that the decision to develop a Corporate Strategy was a direct consequence of the workshop hosted by the Corporate Parenting Panel in 2015 that included Elected Members and officers from across the Council. The draft Corporate Strategy and Action Plan was attached at Appendix 1.

The draft Strategy set out how the Council was going to work collaboratively so that the Council could improve the general wellbeing of children and young people who needed care and support, for whatever reason.

The draft Strategy identified how the needs of children, young people and their families would be met within the resources available to the Council during the period 2016-19. The document described the level of care and placements that the Council wanted to provide and commission for Looked After Children. It also focused on all stages of the care journey, detailing how the Council would support children in need of care and support and their families to stay together whenever it was safe to do so in order to minimise the risk of children becoming looked after.

In order to deliver the objectives set within the draft Strategy, relevant strategic plans in all Directorates would need to reference this document, and funding decisions taken in one area should not materially disadvantage the most vulnerable group of children and young people.

The report advised that the Corporate Parenting Panel and the Cross Directorate Corporate Strategy Management Team would be asked to oversee delivery of the Strategy, monitoring the impact.

The draft Strategy included an Action Plan which demonstrated the commitment of the Directorates in working towards the shared goals. As a result, the draft Strategy

and the associated Action Plan would continue to be live documents, requiring regular reviews as progress was made.

The draft Corporate Strategy would focus on the following areas:

- Preventing the need for statutory interventions and provision of care and accommodation
- Managing the increasing expectations and demand for help and support
- Managing the ongoing reductions in budgets and the need to prioritise service delivery to those most in need.

The Chairman commented that the Strategy represented an excellent piece of work and that the Action Plan clearly set out how the Council should take a strategic and corporate approach to children and young people who need care and support.

A Committee Member then raised two points for clarification. The first was whether enough resources had been allocated to Tier 2 of the Model of Integrated Children and Young People Services. In reply, the Head of Children and Young People Services stated that there had been a 12% reduction in the funding allocated to Families First and this had meant some difficult decisions for the Council. Members noted that a further more detailed report on the Families First Programme was scheduled for the September meeting and so more information could be provided then.

The second point of clarification was in relation to the overlapping of geographical boundaries that existed between Families First and Communities First. The Head of Children and Young People Services advised that within the Vale there were four strands of work aligned to tackling poverty, each of which had its own management board. Therefore, discussion was required on the areas that these boards covered and how their work could be better aligned in order to complement one another. This work was ongoing.

The Committee was pleased to see a number of innovative actions included within the Strategy's Action Plan, such as the possible exemption or reduction in the amount of Council Tax paid by foster carers.

With regard to support provided to young people not in education, employment or training, a Committee Member queried whether the use of Section 106 monies had been considered as a way of providing training opportunities. In response, the Head of Children and Young People Services advised that this would be noted as a suggestion, but would require discussion across Council Directorates and service areas.

A Committee Member also suggested whether a Mission Statement could be included that would outline what the Council wanted to achieve. This would be something that would also be considered.

RECOMMENDED –

- (1) T H A T the progress made in developing a new Corporate Strategy and Action Plan for Children Who Need Care and Support to replace the current single Directorate Children and Young People Services Commissioning Strategy be noted.
- (2) T H A T the draft Strategy and the associated Action Plan be referred to Cabinet for its consideration.

Reasons for recommendations

- (1) To provide Members with the opportunity to exercise oversight of a key strategic development for the Council.
- (2) In order for Cabinet to consider a Council wide strategy for children who need care and support.”

Attached as Appendix – [Report to Healthy Living and Social Care Scrutiny Committee](#): 18<sup>th</sup> July, 2016