

REMOTE CORPORATE PARENTING PANEL

Minutes of meeting held on 10th January, 2022

Present: Councillor B.T. Gray (Chair), Dr. I.J. Johnson, K.F. McCaffer, R. Nugent-Finn, N. Thomas and, E. Williams; Mrs. M. Coles (Vulnerable Groups Manager (CLA Education Co-ordinator)), Ms. A. Condy (Operational Manager CYPS), Ms. K. Conway (Operational Manager CYPS, Mr. M. Dacey (Lead Officer for Social Inclusion and Wellbeing), Mrs. R. Evans (Head of Children and Young People Services), M. Hudson (Head of Standards and Provision), Mr. M. Ingram (Head of Housing and Building Services), Miss CL (Care Leavers Forum Representative), C. O’Dare (Team Manager 15 Plus), J. Rudge (Team Manager, Children and Young People Services) and Mr. M. Swindell (Cabinet and Committee Services Officer).

(1)	Apologies for Absence –
	These were noted from Councillors P. Drake and L. Carver (Director of Social Services).
(2)	Minutes and Matters Arising –
	Minutes from 15 th November, 2021 were agreed. There were no matters arising from the minutes.
(3i)	Support for Parents In and Leaving Care – Best / Good Practice Charter (Rachel Evans)
	<p>Rachel Evans (RE) presented and talked through the information circulated with the papers which set out assistance available to help those in and leaving care who themselves may become parents.</p> <p>The Charter had been carried out by Cascade and a number of other organisations and had received Welsh Government and the Children’s Commissioner for Wales’ support and was requesting the support of the Council as a key partner.</p> <p>RE said it was a positive way forward and asked for Corporate Parenting Panel to consider signing up to the Charter and its key principles. Helping for care-experienced young people to plan for being a parent, receive support when becoming a become a parent and to help challenge stigma and disadvantage.</p> <p>There would be support for those with questions about becoming parents, family planning and planning to have children, whilst still having a focus on education, training and employment and access to advocacy and advice.</p> <p>Further consideration included commitments to the health and wellbeing of mums and of dads from the beginning as being part of that parenting relationship, whether or not the couple were together or otherwise, and thinking about access to entitlements, support and services, and planning for the future</p>

The Charter would also allow for challenging stigma and disadvantage and to help us think about how we could educate people in relation to those unhelpful assumptions.

The Charter was not asking anything over and above what the Authority as a Corporate Parent was already doing in terms of corporate parenting and a commitment the Good Practice Charter principles.

The Chair thanked RE for the informative information and agreed with the Charter principles and the importance of supporting new parents who have had an experience in care. He then invited any questions or comments from Members and sought the endorsement of Corporate Parenting Panel.

Councillor Neil Thomas (NT) said that those who ended up in care often needed support. Encouraging and supporting them going forward was important, particularly younger parents who may not have any experience of forward planning. He supported the Panel signing up to the Charter.

Councillor Eddie Williams (EW) was pleased to see that consultation that had taken place with young people and asked about discussing sex and healthy relationships with those concerned and if that would be done with the care leaver's permission. RE said that Officers were already giving that advice and supporting individuals to think about family planning and contraception and talking about healthy relationships, so was already part of conversations taking place in order to support young people and why that was included in the Charter. Not all young people have conversations with their parents in relation to healthy relationships and sex and would be part of our responsibilities to children and young people as Corporate Parents. Nothing happens without the young person's consent, but they are the ones who often initiate those discussions and we have a responsibility to assist and provide help and advice from the most applicable source.

RE said that the Charter sought to formalise for our young people what we already do, by outlining the commitments made to them and assisting them to make informed decisions.

The Care Leavers Forum Representative (CL) said that having the young person's consent was really important. It was also beneficial to have relationships with people in the 15+ Team so that conversations were more comfortable and not awkward in the way that talking to a parent may be. Putting the commitment in the Charter helped to show young people that it was not a taboo subject and was an open conversation.

The Chair said it was good to hear how involved young people had been in drafting the Charter but that it should be kept under review and have the involvement of care experienced young people in that conversation.

Councillor Nugent-Finn (RNF) asked if Partnership with Young Parents (PYP) still existed. Amber Condy (AC) said that had not existed for four or five years, but the education element was taken forward by Cardiff & Vale College and the

	<p>Education Team in Adult Learning for those young people There was still a dedicated midwife for young people and support from the Vale Parenting Service.</p> <p>RE asked in terms of signatories for the Charter whether the Panel were happy for her to sign as the Council Officer, the Chair as relevant politician as the Cabinet Member and Chair of the Panel and CL as the Care Leavers Forum Representative.</p> <p>RESOLVED – T H A T the signatories noted above would sign the Charter on behalf of the Corporate Panel for the Vale of Glamorgan Council.</p>
3(ii)	National Youth Advocacy Service (NYAS) ‘My Things Matter’ Pledge – (Karen Conway)
	<p>With the agreement of the Chair as an additional agenda item, RE advised of another good practice way forward proposed by NYAS relating to supporting children in how they move from one place into the next, particularly with regard to their belongings.</p> <p>Karen Conway (KC) said that NYAS had done National Research in relation to the impact of placement moves on young people and were about to launch that research nationally on 18th January, 2022. NYAS were asking for Local Authority to sign up to a pledge called ‘My Things Matter’ prior to the launch which referred to the impact on Children Looked After and their belongings as part of placements. The Pledge consisted of 5 aspects:-</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) We will help you to keep your most precious belongings with you safely during your move and promise they will not be moved in bin bags. 2) We will provide written guidance for you, and anyone helping you to move, which we will publish on our website. 3) We will never move or throw away your belongings without your consent and will always respect your personal property. 4) We will support you to make a complaint if any of your belongings have been lost or damaged during your move. 5) We will communicate with you about your move and ask you how the move went. <p>NYAS were asking the Authority to sign up to that pledge and the aspects contained within it. Nothing that was being asked was not already taking place as examples of good practice, and NYAS would promote the Authority as an example of good practice as part of their launch.</p> <p>The Chair invited any questions or comments from Members and sought the endorsement of Corporate Parenting Panel.</p> <p>NT said that the use of black bags had been common as they were a cheaper alternative for buying an alternative and agreed with the principle of respecting young people and their property.</p>

	<p>RESOLVED – T H A T the Corporate Parenting panel would sign up to the NYAS ‘My Things Matter’ pledge on behalf of the Corporate Panel for the Vale of Glamorgan Council prior to their launch on 18th January, 2022, with the appropriate signatories to be determined after the meeting.</p>
(4)	<p>Preventing Admissions to Care - Edge of Care Delivery (Amber Conway)</p>
	<p>Amber Conway (AC) provided Panel Members with an update concerning Edge of Care Delivery with a PowerPoint presentation on-screen, with the following additional points noted:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Covid had had an effect on the emotional wellbeing of children and young people and the Primary Mental Health Worker was a means for them to get assistance at the right time and from the right place. • Social Workers remained involved throughout Action for Children involvement, but with clear outcomes set out. Families work with Officers to develop their plan and outcome goals and there was a meeting on a regular basis with Action for Children monitoring our contract. • Some parents had not had the capacity or the opportunity to understand that their own relationships had an impact on their children. • The Adolescent Resource Centre was developed by Cardiff Council eight or nine years ago. There was an opportunity through ICF funding to extend that through to the Vale of Glamorgan, launched in February 2020 and therefore impacted by the pandemic. • Independent consultants completed an independent evaluation of the Ymbarel projects in 2021 and the recommendations were currently being considered. What was learned and how those lessons could be incorporated into enhancing existing in-house provision through Vale Parenting Service was being moved forward. <p>Chair thanked AC for the presentation and noted how little something had to change in a person’s life to suddenly mean they required support. He asked for the presentation to be shared with Members after the meeting and invited any questions from Members.</p> <p>NT asked if funding stream would be finishing. AC said that the funding stream for Ymbarel would end at the end of March, but an additional period had been commissioned to share learning and complete some training. NT asked if anything would be replacing Ymbarel. AC said it was not possible to extend it but were investing in education and learning and exploring the ways of working with parents with learning disabilities and how to support them. It had been found that offering services as a specialist option was disadvantageous as many parents had come through with a learning disability but no formal diagnosis. It was hoped that Action for Children would share some of the resources they had developed to support existing services.</p> <p>EW also thanked AC for the presentation as the case studies had brought the detail to life. The Chair agreed and asked for consideration as to how to share some of the ongoing work at a future Panel meeting.</p>

	<p>The Chair asked for any further questions; no further questions or comments were added.</p> <p>RESOLVED – T H A T there be an update concerning Edge of Care Delivery at a Corporate Parenting Panel meeting in a year's time.</p>
(5)	Children and Looked After – Breakdown (Karen Conway)
	<p>KC advised of the latest figures as they were as of the 6th January, 2022 where there were currently 289 Children Looked After, the same figure as presented at the 15th November, 2021 meeting. Those figures had fluctuated during that period, influenced by the number of entrants, and exits but related to 259 at the end of March 2020, 284 at the end of March 2021, 295 at the end of September 2021 and 289 on the 15th November 2021.</p> <p>It was noted that:-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 22 of those aged 16-17 would turn 17 this year • The number of those in IFA placements had not increased since November. • There were 13 currently placed with adopters and awaiting an Adoption Order. <p>The Chair thanked KC for the updated information provided, that the number awaiting adoption orders was good to see and invited any further questions from Members; no further questions or comments were added.</p>
(6)	Any Other Business –
(i)	<p>RNF asked if Members would be agreeable to having a presentation from an organization called Papyrus which was about prevention of young suicide.</p> <p>The Chair asked if RNF could pass on details to the Cabinet and Committee Services Officer for discussion at a future Agenda Conference meeting.</p>
(ii)	<p>Councillor Dr. I.J. Johnson (IJ) mentioned that the March meeting of the Corporate Parenting Panel would be the last before the local elections in Mat 2022. He suggested that at that meeting the Panel could consider what had been achieved in the last 5 years since its restart and to understand the pathway, journey and work undertaken during that time.</p> <p>The Chair thanked IJ for the suggestion and agreed that a discussion on the matter would help both present and future Corporate Parenting Panel Members to get the best from the Panel and give a better understanding of its responsibilities.</p>
(7)	Date of Next Meeting –
	The date of the next meeting would be Monday 21 st March, 2022 at 4.30 p.m.