

## REMOTE CORPORATE PARENTING PANEL

### Minutes of meeting held on 17<sup>th</sup> October, 2022

**Present:** Councillor E. Williams (Chair), R. Fisher, W.A. Hennessy, I.A.N. Perry and N. Thomas; J. Ballantine (Principal HR Business Partner), L. Carver (Director of Social Services), M. Coles (Vulnerable Groups Manager (CLA Education Co-ordinator)), K. Conway (Operational Manager CYPS), M. Dacey (Lead Officer for Social Inclusion and Wellbeing), C.Light (Care Leavers Forum Representative), R. Evans (Head of Children and Young People Services), M. Hudson (Head of Standards and Provision), C. O'Dare (Team Manager 15 Plus), J. Rudge (Team Manager, Children and Young People Services) and M. Swindell (Cabinet and Committee Services Officer).

<b>(1)</b>	<b>Apologies for Absence –</b>
	<p>These were noted from Councillors Dr. I.J. Johnson and S. Lloyd-Selby; M. Ingram (Head of Housing and Building Services) and T. Dickinson (Head of Human Resources and Organisational Development).</p>
<b>(2)</b>	<b>Minutes and Matters Arising –</b>
	<p>The minutes from 21<sup>st</sup> March, 2022 were agreed.</p> <p>At the last meeting, the previous Chair of the Corporate Parenting Panel had been granted dispensation to clear the minutes of the 21<sup>st</sup> March, 2022 Corporate Parenting Panel meeting in order to refer them to a Cabinet meeting before the local elections – May 2022.</p> <p>RESOLVED: T H A T the minutes of the 21<sup>st</sup> March, 2022 Corporate Parenting Panel meeting be noted by new Panel Members, having been circulated to all Members with papers for the Cabinet meeting that took place on 11<sup>th</sup> April, 2022.</p>
<b>(3)</b>	<b>Nomination / Appointment of Vice-Chair –</b>
	<p>The Cabinet and Committee Services Officer advised that no written representations had been received prior to the meeting so the Chair sought nominations for the role.</p> <p>The Chair proposed Councillor Dr. Johnson for the position as Vice-Chair, due to his previous and ongoing commitment to the work of the Panel, which was seconded by Councillor Hennessy with no objections or further nominations received.</p> <p>RESOLVED – T H A T Councillor Dr. I.J. Johnson have responsibility as Vice-Chair of the Corporate Parenting Panel.</p>
<b>(4)</b>	<b>Welcome to Corporate Parenting Panel and Forward Work Programme –</b>
	<p>The Chair welcomed all parties to the meeting and noted that all Councillors had a duty as a Corporate Parent as a result. Officers would provide in-depth</p>

information at the meetings in relation to that role in relation to the Vale of Glamorgan.

The Panel considered the proposed items for work program inclusion that had been circulated with the meeting papers. The listing covered suggested items for inclusion on future meeting agendas from previous Panel meetings, as well as standing items that would come to Corporate Parenting Panel to be considered throughout the year.

Any further examples of matters to be considered could always be brought to the attention of the Chair for inclusion on a later meeting agenda, once agreed.

R. Evans (Head of Children and Young People Services) (RE) said that Corporate Parenting Panel had traditionally concerned Children Looked After (CLA) by the Local Authority, be that by providing accommodation either in foster care or residential care, or by supporting children who were Looked After who lived with their parents or wider family. The Authority shared parental responsibility for some children, but not all.

However, the Authority's responsibility was much broader than that, as those who had been involved in the workshops for developing the Corporate Strategy for those who need care and support would have been aware, e.g. how was the Authority involved early on, how best was it to intervene in a timely way or how to provide support at the edge of care and how to provide support when children were Looked After.

RE noted that the matters on the circulated list were broader than CLA and although relevant would not solely give a comprehensive understanding for Panel Members in terms of the Panel's roles and responsibilities. She suggested that it may be useful for Officers to ask Members for their understanding of the Panel which would give a clearer indication of the matters to bring to Panel as part of the Work Programme and enable elected Members to be comfortable and confident in their roles as Corporate Parents.

As part of the discussion, the following points were raised:-

- Councillor Hennessey (WH) asked how many children were currently Looked After in the Vale of Glamorgan. RE advised that currently 312 were Looked After, which had increased from 259 since the end of March 2020 and steadily increased since the height of the pandemic in lockdown and that the pressure and the stress within families was not abating. Now there was also the cost of living crisis, challenges around emotional well-being and mental health which meant that the numbers exiting care were not as quick as those coming into care.
- WH asked if the Authority placed all the children in the Authority or whether they went out of the area. RE said that about half of the children that the Authority looked after lived with either their parents or their wider family, often as the Court had granted a Care Order, which meant that they had crossed the threshold for significant harm and the Authority

needed to share parental responsibility, so positively about half of the Children Looked After lived within their families.

The other half lived in a combination of fostering and residential care. Currently there were 15 in residential care with the others being in fostering placements. The Council had its own fostering placements but also an increasing reliance on externally purchased care. The Authority was increasing the number of placements for both residential and fostering and would be one of the things to discuss in a future meeting. There were a smaller number of children who were placed outside of the boundary of the Vale of Glamorgan, but attempts were always made to keep CLA in the Vale of Glamorgan and with family wherever possible.

- WH asked about the age range of the CLA. RE said that the age range was from 0-18, but also care leavers post-18 as there was a responsibility to support some young adults until they were 25.

The Chair advised Panel Members that Officers would be bringing regular reports to future Panel meetings that would provide the detail on the latest position with CLA in the Vale of Glamorgan for Members, including information concerning the age breakdown, where children were being placed how they were being supported and any changes that happened over time as well. It was important to note that there would be input across Authority Departments, including Health and Social Care, Education and Housing.

Councillor N. Thomas (NT) agreed there was an overlap with education and placement in residential special schools as well as the overlap with youth justice.

K. Conway (Operational Manager CYPS) (KC) said that it was really important to work with families, work to prevent crisis and work effectively with children on the edge of care to try and prevent them from becoming CLA where possible safe to do so. The rate of CLA was increasing and it was important to focus on wider systems, such as the recruitment of Foster Carers and having / managing appropriate resources for those CLA, and matters were reported to Corporate Parenting Panel throughout the year.

WH said that he would be keen to hear from the Advocacy Service regarding how mental health affected young children who were in care or foster care. KC said that it would be possible to have a presentation to the Panel from the Enfys Advocacy Service to address those issues for Panel Members. RE added that a lot of work was being done collectively around emotional well-being and mental health, with a significant amount of work taking place in schools with CLA where young people were being encouraged children to talk about their feelings.

Members were also asked to note that there was a Corporate Strategy for Children event taking place in the Corporate Suite at the Civic Officers on 8<sup>th</sup> December, 2022.

	<p>RESOLVED – T H A T</p> <p>(1) Officers would continue to provide regular and detailed updates to Corporate Parenting Panel Members regarding the latest position concerning Children Looked After in the Vale of Glamorgan.</p> <p>(2) Officers would address the circulated proposed matters for future discussion and take note of the discussion at the meeting and work with all relevant Departments (as Children's Services, Housing, Learning and Skills, etc. all make a contribution) as well as Third Sector partners who were central to delivery of support to produce an updated programme to produce a streamlined programme for future meetings, taking into consideration the third sector observations made by Councillor Johnson.</p> <p>(3) Agenda items for the next meeting of Corporate Parenting Panel would look to include an updated Work Programme for consideration as well as an update on the latest CLA figures for the Vale of Glamorgan.</p>
<b>(5)</b>	<b>Proposed Dates of Future Meetings –</b>
	<p>It had been agreed that the schedule of future Corporate Parenting Panel meetings would be determined with the new Panel after the local elections in May 2022. The dates previously proposed were:-</p> <p>14<sup>th</sup> November, 2022 @ 16.30pm  9<sup>th</sup> January, 2023 @ 16.30pm  13<sup>th</sup> March, 2023 @ 16.30pm</p> <p>The Chair said that the 14<sup>th</sup> November date was quite close to the date of this meeting and Panel agreed that the date should be altered as there would now be a clash with Democratic Services Committee and engagement events for Children and Young People.</p> <p>An amended date would therefore be proposed, considered and agreed with the Chair.</p>
<b>(6)</b>	<b>Any Other Business –</b>
	<p>There were no further items for consideration raised at the meeting.</p>