

CORPORATE PARENTING PANEL

Minutes of the meeting held on 11 June, 2018

PRESENT: Dr Caroline Turner (Assistant Chief Executive and Statutory Director of Social Services) (In the Chair)

Councillor Llinos Medi Huws (Portfolio Member for Social Services)
Councillor Alun Mummery (Portfolio Member for Housing and Supporting Communities)
Barbara Jones (Anglesey Foster Carers' Association)
Fôn Roberts (Head of Children's Services)
Huw Owen (Independent Reviewing Officer)
Dawn Owen (Team Manager Child Placement Team)
Heulwen Owen (LAC Education Liaison Officer)
Llinos Edwards (LAC Nurse)
Kevin Thomas (Practice Leader) (for item 5)
Dr Trish Girling (CAMHS) (for item 4)
Ann Holmes (Committee Officer)

APOLOGIES: Dr Gwynne Jones (Chair), Councillor R. Meirion Jones (Portfolio Member for Education), Councillor Richard Griffiths (Corporate Scrutiny Committee), Councillor Margaret M. Roberts (Regeneration & Partnership Scrutiny Committee), Liz Fletcher (BCUHB), Janw Hughes-Evans (BCUHB – Children's Learning Disability Service)

1 DECLARATION OF INTEREST

No declaration of interest was received.

2 MINUTES OF THE 11 DECEMBER, 2017 MEETING

The minutes of the previous meeting of the Corporate Parenting Panel held on 19th March, 2018 were presented and were confirmed as correct.

3 MATTERS ARISING

- The Panel had asked for an update on progress made against the improvement objectives set out in the report by the Quality and Safeguarding Unit presented to the previous meeting relating to the following areas:
 - Quality of Assessments of LAC
 - Putting in place care and support plans for each looked after child
 - Robust review and monitoring of implementation and difference made
 - Quality and consistency of record keeping
 - Focus on permanency planning for looked after children to reduce the number of children being looked after

The Head of Children and Families' Services said since the previous meeting, the paperwork that needs to be completed when a child comes into care has changed completely. The new care and support forms are regionally based and the Service has now begun to work with the new documentation. Implementation of the new

arrangements requires that each looked after child receives an assessment and that a care plan is formulated for them. Quality issues and monitoring will be addressed through the new documents; it is the Service's intention that as the review meeting for each child whom the Authority looks after becomes due, the child will enter the review with the new documentation. The change will consequently take place over the course of about 10 months with any teething problems encountered especially in terms of input by other agencies (the new forms being more focused on the social work aspects) being worked through. Since the last meeting the Service has made progress with permanency planning; it has reviewed a number of plans and progressed a few to Special Guardianship Orders whilst also discharging a few care orders. The Head of Children and Families' Services said that the position will be reviewed after 6 months of implementing the new paperwork to establish which elements are working and which are not and how they can be developed alongside Education and Health.

The LAC Nurse said that an issue from a health perspective is how the LAC health assessments are incorporated within the new document.

The LAC Education Liaison Officer confirmed that the information has been shared with schools and correspondence sent to Head Teachers along with the template for the new Personal Education Plans which will form part of the new Care and Support Plans. The expectation is that each looked after child will receive the plan by November, 2018, this will in any case happen as a matter of course for those children changing schools in September.

The Head of Children and Families' Services said that an offer of support with the changes has been made to schools; for schools there is also a new referral form. The service has sought to prepare schools for the changes.

The Independent Reviewing Officer said that at the last meeting the IROs had put forward a proposed new social work report template. The new documentation referred to above will cover the aspects suggested by the template and will be the format to be used in review meetings from now onwards.

The Panel noted and accepted the information provided in the update.

ADDITIONAL ACTION: Feedback on the implementation of the new paperwork format to be gathered via the North Wales Heads of Children's Services over the course of the next 6 months and a review of effectiveness to take place thereafter.

- The Panel had asked for clarification of review findings contained within the Quality and Safeguarding Unit's report to the previous meeting.

The Independent Reviewing Officer said that the report reflects that what was examined was a sample of reviews from September, 2017 and not the total number of children being looked after. This being so, 7 review of arrangements documents were provided in advance of the review meeting - 27% of 26 reviews; in one case another document was also presented which out of 26 is 3.8%.

The Panel noted the clarification.

- The Panel had recommended that there be Officer consultation on making alternative arrangements to ensure that missing children return to home interviews are conducted pending confirmation of the establishment of a regional service.

The Head of Children and Families' Services reported when a child in the Authority's care goes missing the Authority is responsible for conducting a return to home interview. It has become apparent regionally that the data which the North Wales Police Service collects with regard to missing children is different to that which the Authority gathers and responds to e. g. the Police had reported that 150 children had gone missing over a period of time on Anglesey when the Authority only has 140 children in its care many of whom do not reside on Anglesey. The Police takes into account all children in every placement on the Island regardless of the fact that a number of these children are in placements arranged by authorities from outside of Anglesey and the region, meaning that it is the Placing Authority and not Anglesey Council that is responsible for them. The Officer said that he was drawing up guidance for authorities in North Wales on how to deal with children who go missing from such placements; it might be helpful that where an authority has placed a child in another authority area within North Wales and the child goes missing - for the Host Authority to undertake the return to home interview on behalf of the Placing Authority. Where Anglesey is the Host Authority the approach that is suggested is that in instances where the Placing Authority is outside of the North Wales region, Anglesey will offer to conduct return to home interviews at a charge. This approach will be discussed at an all Wales Heads of Children's Services meeting this coming Friday to consider whether the arrangement should be applied nationally and not just regionally. The Officer said there needs to be discussion with North Wales Police to clarify the differentiation between children who are missing and children who are absent without consent i.e. children who are not where they are supposed to be at a particular time but whose whereabouts are known – North Wales Police have been reporting the latter as missing. There is a protocol on missing children and the intention is to review and agree the protocol and then to meet with North Wales Police to come to an understanding on the data that is reported particularly in relation to children who are placed on Anglesey but who are not this Authority's responsibility. A related issue is the fact that the Authority in Anglesey is not always kept informed by other authorities about the placements they make on the Island until an issue arises despite there being a procedure for out of area notifications.

With regard to the proposal that a regional team be set up to provide return to home interviews, the Head of Children and Families' Services said that the view of most of the authorities is that they already have the resources internally to undertake the return to home interviews which do not have to be conducted by social workers, and that it is a matter of coming to an agreement on process.

The Panel sought clarification of the approach to the education provision for children placed on Anglesey by other authorities. The LAC Education Liaison Officer said GwE is seeking information about the number of children in care in each key stage across the region. A report on the position in Anglesey was made to the Corporate Parenting Panel a few years ago.

The Panel accepted and noted the update provided.

ACTIONS ARISING:

- **The Head of Children and Families Services' guidance paper on an agreed approach to children who go missing from placements made by authorities outside of the region to be presented to the Panel's next meeting in September.**
- **The Panel to also receive an update on the number of children placed by other local authorities on Anglesey who are in receipt of an education provision by the Authority.**

- **The reasons for the disparity between the missing children data reported by the local authorities and the data reported by North Wales Police [i.e. due to the authorities and the police applying the definition of “missing” and “absent without consent” differently and due to the police’s inclusion of children in placements made by out of region authorities in their data reporting] to be reported for clarification to the North Wales Chief Executives’ group.**

4 CHILDREN AND ADOLESCENT MENTAL HEALTH SERVICE (CAMHS)

Dr Trish Girling gave the Panel an overview of the work of the service in Anglesey with children who are looked after with particular reference to –

- The Consultation Clinic

Three slots of 1 hour each are offered within Social Services for social workers who are working with children looked after or up to 3 years in an adoptive placement. Since January this provision has been extended to children on the edge of care. No direct work with young people is undertaken in this forum.

If a child is already known to CAMHS then the child should be discussed with the child’s case manager instead. The purpose of consultation is to support the system around the child to develop stability, security and structure in their lives. These components are considered essential if the child is to become therapy ready to address and resolve past trauma. Direct therapy is not recommended for many children despite difficult behaviours and/or experiences.

Over 50 consultations have been held in the last year with some of these being double slots. The reasons for seeking consultation can be varied including foster carers struggling with behaviours; advice required on contact arrangements or help wanted in identifying needs for care plans. Since the service reconfiguration last year the demand on consultation has grown; meeting requests for more time is not possible due to the increased demand on core CAMHS work.

Working through consultation rather than directly with the child means that looked after children are not exposed to more unnecessary contact with professionals. Children often report that having many people coming in and out of their lives is confusing and hurtful when they leave. Children with past traumas and attachment difficulties need to form attachments to their current support system i.e. their foster carers, teachers, classroom assistants, and not the “help” coming from an outside source.

Some of the difficulties encountered include having to rely on second hand information regarding the children; no guarantee that recommendations will be put into practice; pressure from courts to arrange therapy for a child that CAMHS does not recommend as well as not enough time for more proactive work.

- Trauma Recovery Model

The model consists of 7 layers of intervention which are worked through to arrive at a position where the child has increased self-determination, confidence and is achieving goals. It is considered necessary to have worked through levels 1 to 4 before a child is ready for specialist therapeutic intervention.

- Other Ways In which CAMHS Provides Support

- Provision of training for social workers and for foster carers
- Supervision of research involving Anglesey foster carers (a recent example being a qualitative study looking at the role of compassion in foster carers)
- Provision of further advice and consultation through forums such as the Continuing Care Panel

Dr Trish Girling concluded her presentation by outlining two case examples.

The Panel thanked Dr Trish Girling for providing an informative insight into current CAMHS services on Anglesey. In the course of the ensuing discussion, the following points were noted –

- The need to promote and push ahead with the CAMHS Pathway
- The need to map out what forms of private therapy are being commissioned and whether these are appropriate.

NO ADDITIONAL ACTION WAS PROPOSED

5 HIDDEN AMBITIONS – A FOLLOW-UP REPORT ON LOCAL AUTHORITIES' PROGRESS AND GOOD PRACTICE IN SUPPORTING CARE LEAVERS

A report on the Anglesey's progress since, and contribution to the Hidden Ambitions report on achieving the best for children and young people leaving care was presented for the Panel's consideration.

Mr Kevin Thomas, Practice Leader reported that the Hidden Ambitions report by the Children's Commissioner for Wales published in February, 2017 looked at the support available to young people leaving care in relation to housing, education and training opportunities and personal and emotional support. It is not just the support from Children and Families Services that impact on these young people. Once a child is in care, all Elected Members and officers of the Local Authority, as corporate parents, need to be concerned about the child. Care leavers should expect the same level of care and support that others would expect from a reasonable parent. If the Local Authority as a collective body is responsible for their care and support it should also make sure that they are provided with the opportunities they need which will include offering them more than one chance as they come to terms with taking on the responsibilities of adulthood.

The Officer said that the Children's Commissioner for Wales visited Anglesey on 31 March, 2017 when she was presented with information about how the Authority had responded to the Hidden Ambitions report during the 12 months since it was issued. During that time the Authority has continued to develop and strengthen the corporate support for care leavers in the following ways –

- By creating an additional permanent Personal Advisor post for care leavers, funded by the Support for Care Leavers grant. This has strengthened the service enabling it to provide timely support for care leavers to help them achieve their ambitions and to make a successful transition to adulthood and independent living.
- By providing care leavers with a Council Tax exemption. Anglesey was the first Local Authority in North Wales to help young people leaving its care by providing them with a Council Tax exemption. Approved by the Full Council, the new policy came into effect on 1 April, 2018 and it provides care leavers (aged 18-21) with a 100% discretionary Council Tax Relief.
- By developing a successful range of housing related support services for young people aged 16-24, which includes 26 units of Supported Housing and 14 units of floating support. The Coedlys Project in Llangefni provides 9 units of supported accommodation for some of the most vulnerable young people. When young people leave their care placement, the Authority aims to ensure their new home is suitable for their needs and linked to their wider plans and aspirations – for example located near

their education or work. A joint Housing and Aftercare protocol with Housing Services ensures that the accommodation that is offered to the young person is appropriate.

- By providing work experience. Children and Families Services are involved in a new initiative within the Council called Denu Talent to offer paid work experience for young people to prepare them for work – up to a 12 week paid period with the Council.
- By providing financial support for specific activity through the Welsh Government's St David's Day Fund which was established to help young people who are, or have been in Local Authority care to access opportunities that will lead them towards independent and successful lives. Local Authorities were asked to administer their allocation of the fund flexibly and creatively to meet the needs of their young people in the same way that birth parents support their children. During 2017/18 the Authority provided its care leavers with financial support by way of clothing vouchers for 15 young people (£200); driving lessons for four young people (£200), deposits and rent for accommodation, household goods for new accommodation, outdoor clothing for a new job and accommodation for a job interview.
- By establishing Achievement Awards (Anglesey STARS Awards) in recognition of the successes of the Authority's looked after children and its care leavers.

The Officer referred to areas where there is ongoing work to strengthen the support provided to young care leavers which include the Local Authority acting as a guarantor for a young person's tenancy; finalising the Financial Policy for care leavers; listening to and learning from care leavers' experiences in order to shape services for the future and also, strengthening links with the Communities First project to provide practical and emotional support for care leavers.

As a corporate parent, the Authority needs to continue to have high aspirations for its care leavers by ensuring it provides the best support and the most effective services to give them the best start to independent living.

The Panel noted the information and made the following points –

- The Panel noted that providing care leavers with work opportunities is key to developing their independence. The Panel further noted that it would have expected the Authority to be able to provide such opportunities for the 44 care leavers it is responsible for and suggested that making progress with this should be a priority.
- The Panel sought clarification of the arrangements that apply when a young person in foster care leaves the foster care household for a university/further education placement. The Practice Leader said if entering university or further/higher education the care leaver will still receive the full care leaving service. For those returning for the holidays there is a duty on the local authority to provide vacation accommodation. The expectation is that they will return to their former foster placement. Where this is not possible, the Authority will make alternative arrangements. In relation to the "When I am Ready" arrangement (an arrangement whereby a young person in foster care remains with their foster carers beyond the age of 18) the regulations provide that if a young person goes away to University, they can return to the carer's home in the holidays and the carer will be eligible to receive When I am Ready arrangement funding when the young person is staying at the When I am Ready home. (See appendix for regulations).
- The Panel noted the importance of trying to ensure the continuation of the St David's Day grant fund as a source of funding support to enable children in care/care leavers to undertake activities that will improve their wellbeing, maintain their independence or contribute to their development.

The Panel agreed to accept the report and to note the progress made by the Authority in responding to the Hidden Ambitions report.

NO ADDITIONAL ACTION ARISING

6 HEALTH – LOOKED AFTER CHILDREN STATISTICS

A report by the BCUHB incorporating the following statistical information for the period from 1 April, 2017 to 31 March, 2018 was provided for the Panel's consideration –

- The total number of looked after children within and outside the counties of North Wales under the remit of Anglesey Local Authority (165)
- The total number of new LAC placements into North Wales from outside the BCUHB (207)
- Analysis by county of the 456 Live LAC placed from outside North Wales into the various counties within the BCUHB either prior to or during the period (Anglesey – 49)
- A snapshot by county of the Looked After children population as at 31 March, 2018.
- An analysis of BCUHB looked after children placed outside of North Wales as at 30 March, 2018 and their locations.
- An analysis of looked after children from outside North Wales placed in the BCUHB area as at 30 March, 2018 and their locations.
- The timeliness of notifications provided by the North Wales authorities with regard to when a LAC placement commences or changes and also LAC that are placed within BCUHB from outside North Wales – the NHS Wales Notification Pathway for LAC states that notifications must be sent within 5 days of a child being placed.

The Panel noted the following –

- That the 49 looked after children placed on Anglesey from outside of North Wales is a significant number when added to the looked after children placed on Anglesey by other North Wales counties in addition to the looked after children who come under the remit of Anglesey itself.
- That there is no discernible pattern to the looked after children placed on Anglesey by other authorities.
- That Anglesey compares well with the other North Wales authorities in providing timely notification of placements.

The Panel noted the information provided.

NO ADDITIONAL ACTION WAS PROPOSED

7 SERVICE REPORTS

7.1 A service update was provided by the LAC Education Liaison Officer

The Panel noted the following –

- That a total of 28 Personal Education Plans were completed within timescale while 46 remained due. The LAC Education Liaison Officer said that this is second academic year wherein schools have been responsible for completing the plans and despite being reminded regularly of the requirement, they are not being completed to expectations. It is hoped that the introduction of the Part 6 Care and Support Plans will benefit schools so that the Education section can be completed.
- That the number of non-transitional school changes has risen with 31 recorded in 2017/18 against 17 in 2016/17. The LAC Education Liaison Officer said that this is in part due to a lack of placements but also to children who having been placed in long term homes, are moving to schools within the catchment area which is sensible. Other changes are due to children returning home to live with their families which of itself is a positive change.

The Panel noted the information.

NO ADDITIONAL ACTION WAS PROPOSED

7.2 A service update was provided by the Child Placement Team Manager.

The Panel noted the following –

- That although it is considered that there is insufficient placement choice, Graph 1 shows that many of the Authority's looked after children are in different types of placements on the Island.
- That only one new mainstream family was approved during quarters 3 and 4; however, a great deal of assessment work was undertaken during those periods albeit without being able to bring the work to a successful conclusion.
- That the report emphasises the importance of looked after children having a consistent worker from the Child Placement Team at a time when they have experienced multiple changes of social worker. The Team Manager said that the social worker changes were in evidence in Quarters 3 and 4 and featured in foster carers' feedback from their annual reviews.

The Panel noted the information.

NO ADDITIONAL ACTION WAS PROPOSED

8 NEXT MEETING

The Panel noted that the next meeting of the Panel would be held at 2:00 p.m. on Monday, 10 September, 2018.

**Dr Caroline Turner
Chair**

APPENDIX

Where a young person plans to attend University

- 11.1. *Where a young person wishes to live with their 'WIR' Carer whilst they attend a local University, a meeting will take place to clarify the funding and safeguarding arrangements. The outcome of the meeting and the proposed funding arrangement must be taken to the Principal Officer Corporate Parenting for endorsement.*
- 11.2. *If the young person goes away to University, they can return to the Carer's home in the holidays, and the Carer will be eligible to receive "WIR" arrangement funding when the young person is staying at the "WIR" home.*
- 11.3. *Where a young person returns in the holidays to their Carer who has a foster child/children, they will be treated as an adult member of the Foster Care household and therefore they will be subject to checks as any other Adult would be.*

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