

# CORPORATE PARENTING PANEL

## Minutes of the meeting held on 10 September, 2018

**PRESENT:** Dr Gwynne Jones, Chief Executive (Chair)

Councillor Llinos Medi Huws (Portfolio Member for Social Services)  
Councillor R. Meirion Jones (Portfolio Member for Education, Libraries, Culture and Youth)  
Councillor Richard Griffiths (Corporate Scrutiny Committee)  
Councillor Margaret M. Roberts (Partnership and Regeneration Scrutiny Committee)  
Barbara Jones (Anglesey Foster Carers' Association)  
Dr Caroline Turner (Assistant Chief Executive/ Statutory Director of Social Services)  
Fôn Roberts (Head of Children's Services)  
Huw Owen (Independent Reviewing Officer)  
Llyr Bryn Roberts (Service Manager, Intensive Intervention)  
Gwyneth Hughes (Senior Education Manager – Standards and Inclusion)  
Dawn Owen (Team Manager - Child Placement Team)  
Llinos Parry (Fostering Recruitment and Marketing Officer)  
Ann Holmes (Committee Officer)

**APOLOGIES:** Councillor Alun Mummery (Portfolio Member for Housing & Supporting Communities), Liz Fletcher (BCUHB)

---

### 1 DECLARATION OF INTEREST

No declaration of interest was received.

### 2 MINUTES OF THE 11 JUNE, 2018 MEETING

The minutes of the previous meeting of the Corporate Parenting Panel held on 11th June, 2018 were presented and were confirmed as correct.

### 3 MATTERS ARISING

- The Head of Children and Families' Services said that work is currently being undertaken at a regional level to harmonise the North Wales authorities' approach to children who go missing from care, how the related data is reported and how the mandatory return to home interviews are conducted. Issues which complicate the matter include the Police and local authorities' differing understanding of what "missing" and "absent without consent" mean leading to a variance in the data reported and also the fact that local authorities arranging placements in another local authority area do not always notify the host authority of the placements made. The Officer said that Children and Families' Services in Anglesey have written to all the relevant agencies to try to establish an accurate picture of the children placed on the Island by other authorities. The Officer said that he was leading on co-ordinating this work among the six North Wales authorities which includes formulating a collective protocol and that subject to the democratic processes of the other authorities and the

Police with whom the protocol will be discussed, he aimed to bring the protocol to the December, 2018 meeting of the Corporate Parenting Panel.

- With regard to the costs of providing an education provision for children in placements on Anglesey which have been made by other local authorities, the Senior Education Standards and Inclusion Manager said that there are currently 6 pupils in mainstream schools on Anglesey from other local authority areas for whom an additional education provision is being made i.e. over and above the standard provision. The cost of this additional provision for the six pupils is £85k in total with the placing authorities being billed for their share of that sum.

The Panel noted the information and that the six pupils referred to above are likely to be part of a larger cohort of children from other local authority areas who are being looked after on Anglesey who have yet to start school or who are not included in the group above because although they are attending school, they do not require an additional education provision.

#### **4 REPORT OF THE INDEPENDENT REVIEWING OFFICERS**

The report of the Independent Reviewing Officers (Safeguarding and Quality Unit) was presented for the Panel's consideration. The report set out the progress made against the improvement objectives highlighted following an appraisal of the Authority's corporate parenting by the Safeguarding and Quality Unit which was reported to the Panel in March, 2018.

The Independent Reviewing Officer (IRO) reported that in its appraisal of corporate parenting, the Safeguarding and Quality Unit had identified some areas wherein practice could be improved. Recommendations were made and progress has been made as follows –

- Each Looked After Child must have an up to date assessment of their needs including a pen picture of each child on file updated on a regular basis - Since 1 June, 2018, the Care and Support Plan Part 6 document has been used which includes a brief portrait of each child. The plan is based on information regarding the child's needs. However, as this does not constitute a full assessment the IROs will continue to monitor whether the assessments are up to date.
- Care and Support Plans must be put in place for each child – the Unit is aware of the priority given to this issue by the Service. At the request of the Head of Service, the Unit prepared an audit of cases which had Care Plans. The audit concluded that despite a considerable number of cases now having a formal plan many of the plans had not been completed. In some cases, several of the sections had not been completed.
- Preparation for reviews must be improved and information provided which allows the child's plan to be scrutinised and progressed – A report in the form of the Care and Support Plan is now presented to Review meetings on a regular basis. In most cases where this did not happen, an explanation was provided. The Unit is aware of the considerable effort which many Social Workers have made to prepare the documentation; however it remains an area of focus for the service.
- Recording statutory visits to show an understanding of the requirements with the record counter signed by both the child and the carer – In preparation for this update, a random selection of 10 cases were made, and there were up to date recordings on every one. However, when preparing for reviews, this is not always the case but there is evidence of positive progress in this regard.

- Progression of permanency plans for a number of children where Special Guardianship Order arrangements would have been a better outcome - IROs now attend monthly meetings with the Service Manager to scrutinise foster placements. These meetings provide an opportunity to consider the plans for each child holistically, including the possibility of discharging Care Orders. This is also discussed at LAC Reviews.

The Panel considered the information and made points as follows –

- With regard to regularly updating the needs assessment of looked after children, the Panel sought clarification of why it was considered premature to assess whether this information is updated given that new documentation has been in use since 6 June, 2018. The Panel noted that initial feedback on how well the new Part 6 document fulfils the need in terms of the quality of assessments would have been helpful.

The IRO said that as the new documentation was only introduced in June and the update report above prepared in August, it was considered that little is likely to have changed in the intervening period to make updating the needs assessment necessary. The Unit is mindful also of the considerable work that is involved with needs assessments; however, in the event of any significant change or development the needs assessment would be updated accordingly.

- The Panel noted that that the language used in the report could be more precise in terms of quantifying progress and performance. For example reference is made to “a considerable number of cases” which does not give an indication whether or not this refers to a majority of cases. The Panel also noted with regard to the cases that had been randomly selected to assess whether or not they were up to date that no information beyond affirming that they had been updated is provided; neither is there an indication of how many cases are there where this is not true.
- The Panel noted that in order to be able to build an accurate picture of performance in relation to the quality of assessments it would be helpful to be provided with a greater level of detail otherwise it is difficult to establish the extent of progress and whether any further action needs to be taken.

The IRO acknowledged the points made and confirmed that for future reporting, figures and percentages will be included where possible to help the Panel obtain a clearer understanding of the state of play. The IRO clarified however that being able to confirm that up to date recordings were available for all the 10 sample cases reviewed at random is very good progress.

**It was agreed to accept the report and to note the position.**

**ADDITIONAL ACTION PROPOSED: That future reports are more precise in conveying the level of progress made.**

## **5 ADVOCACY SERVICE ANNUAL REPORT 2017/18**

The report of the Regional Independent Advocacy Service on the operation of the service in Anglesey during 2017/18 was presented for the Panel’s consideration.

The Service Manager (Intensive Intervention) said that the report shows that the number of referrals received each quarter was consistent throughout the year but the total number of issues referred was substantially lower than in the previous year (63 children and young people worked with compared to 96 in 2016/17). Training on the National Approach to Statutory Advocacy for Anglesey was postponed on two occasions in the

winter due to adverse weather conditions. The training will now be delivered via staff conference days and it is hoped it will have a positive impact on future referral figures. A total of three LAC young people were referred for Active Offer advocacy and all three requested issue based advocacy support from the North Wales Advocacy Service. The Officer said that support at meetings followed by contact issues were the main reasons for referrals to the service. Anglesey's contribution to the Advocacy Service which serves all six North Wales authorities is £20k per annum – this is an increase of £7k due to the introduction of the Active Offer which means that children are given the opportunity of contact with the advocacy provider when they first become known to Social Services.

The Panel noted the information and noted also that the Social Services and Well-being (Wales) Act 2014 places increased emphasis on advocacy as well as informal advocacy which can take place through a relative or teacher. Statistics for informal advocacy are not collected.

**It was agreed to accept the Annual Report and to note its contents.**

**NO ADDITIONAL ACTION WAS PROPOSED**

## **6 FOSTERING RECRUITMENT STRATEGY UPDATE**

The Head of Children and Families Services reported that the strategy for recruiting Foster Carers is being reviewed and a paper on possible options and their costings will be presented to the Senior Leadership Team in October with the Corporate Parenting Panel to be updated thereafter. The objective is to put together a package of incentives that will make fostering for the Authority on Anglesey more attractive to people who may be thinking about becoming foster carers. The Officer confirmed therefore that the work is in progress and updates will be provided as the revised recruitment package takes shape.

**The Panel noted the position.**

**NO ADDITIONAL ACTION WAS PROPOSED**

## **7 FOSTER CARERS' EVENT**

The Fostering Recruitment and Marketing Officer gave the Panel a presentation on the work of the team over the summer period. She referred specifically to the Foster Carers' Celebration Event held on 10 July 2018 by the Isle of Anglesey County Council to say a thank you to all the Authority's foster carers and family and friends (connected persons) foster carers.

The Officer said that as well as providing the 26 foster carers who were present with an opportunity to meet the Council's Senior Leadership Team, staff and Elected Members, the event was most significantly an opportunity for the Authority to formally recognise the valuable work that foster carers do 24 hours a day with some of Anglesey's most vulnerable children and young people. The Service was also able to announce at the event free Isle of Anglesey Leisure Services Membership for approved Council foster carers and for looked after children and young people. The Service is grateful to the Leisure Service for extending the free leisure membership that is already available to care leavers to all Anglesey foster carers and looked after children.

The Panel acknowledged the importance of formally recognising the work that is carried out by the Authority's foster carers and voiced its own appreciation of the service which they provide.

**It was agreed to note the information.**

**NO ADDITIONAL ACTION WAS PROPOSED**

## **8 FUN DAY – 8 SEPTEMBER, 2018**

The Fostering Recruitment and Marketing Officer gave a presentation on the Child Placement Team's Annual Fostering Fun Day which has been held since 2011 in conjunction with the Rotary Club Holyhead and with the support of Tyddyn Môn which provides the venue free of charge. The Officer showed clips of the day and the activities arranged for the looked after children who attended.

The Panel expressed its thanks to both the Rotary Club, Holyhead and to Tyddyn Môn for their collaboration and support for the Fun Day.

### **NO ADDITIONAL ACTION WAS PROPOSED**

## **9 NEXT MEETING OF THE PANEL**

It was noted that the Panel's next meeting will be held at 2:00 p.m. on Monday, 10 December, 2018.

**Dr Gwynne Jones**  
**Chair**

DRAFT