



RHONDDA CYNON TAF

**RHONDDA CYNON TAF COUNCIL
CORPORATE PARENTING BOARD**

Minutes of the virtual meeting of the Corporate Parenting Board held on Monday, 2 October 2023 at 10.00 am.

This meeting was recorded, details of which can be accessed [here](#)

County Borough Councillors – The following Councillors were present:

Councillor G Caple (Chair)

Councillor R Lewis Councillor C Leyshon
Councillor J Bonetto Councillor P Evans
Councillor S Hickman Councillor S Rees
Councillor S Trask

Officers in attendance

Mr N Elliott, Director of Social Services
Ms A Lloyd, Service Director, Children's Services
Ms C Jones, Head of Access & Inclusion
Ms C Miles, Childcare Solicitor
Ms L Hawkins, Virtual School Head Teacher
Ms J Evans, Head of Service Intensive Intervention
Ms R Hughes, Magu Team Practice And Performance Manager
Ms E Walters, Head of Partnerships
Ms M Davies - TGP

19 WELCOME AND APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

The Chair welcomed County Borough Councillor S Hickman to her first meeting of the Corporate Parenting Board and there were no apologies for absence.

20 DECLARATION OF INTEREST

In accordance with the Council's Code of Conduct, there were no declarations made pertaining to the agenda.

21 MINUTES

The Corporate Parenting Board **RESOLVED** to approve the minutes of the meetings held on 27th June 2023 and 18th July 2023.

22 MENTAL HEALTH SUPPORT

The Service Director for Children's Services provided the Corporate Parenting Board with information about the services that are available to improve the emotional well-being and mental health needs for young people with cares and support needs.

Members' attention was drawn to section 4 of the report, which detailed an update to the following areas of service provision available:

- Early Years Strategy;
- Development of the Whole School Approach known as Shine;
- Embedding the Single Point of Access for CAMHS;
- Launch of the Neuro-divergence Improvement Programme;
- Development of a Therapeutic Approach for Children who are Looked After; and
- Therapeutic Families Team (TFT)

Whilst it was acknowledged that there was increased pressure on the Health Board, several Members raised concerns in respect of the accessibility of CAMHS and its capacity to respond to the needs of young people. When questioned about the nature of the working relationship with colleagues in CAMHS, the Service Director informed Members that positive integrative work was being carried out but that there was a difficulty in accessing consultation.

The Service Director spoke of the CLA Health Assessment, which was provided by the Health Board and proposed that going forward, it would be beneficial to use a less clinic based, but rather a more integrated approach.

The Chair noted that, in some cases, Children Looked After were waiting for approximately three years to access the Neurodiversity service and proposed that an invitation to a future meeting of the Board be extended to Cwm Taf Morgannwg University Health Board and representatives from CAMHS and the Neuro-divergence Improvement Programme.

The Corporate Parenting Board **RESOLVED:**

1. To note the content of the report and
2. To extend an invitation to Cwm Taf Morgannwg University Health Board to attend a future meeting of the Corporate Parenting Board to discuss the Promise, Children and Adolescent Mental Health Service and the Neuro-divergence Improvement Programme.

N.B – County Borough Councillor S Hickman was not present for this item.

23 MAGU UPDATE

The Head of Service for Intensive Intervention and the Magu Team Practice and Performance Manager provided the Corporate Parenting Board with information about the progress of the Magu service since its implementation in May 2023.

The purpose of the Magu Project is to deliver an integrated support pathway for pregnant women and fathers to be across early intervention and edge of care services, focused on building skills and resilience and reducing risk. The early intervention approach delivers targeted support for families to prevent escalation of statutory involvement ultimately reducing the number of children entering care at birth or in their first year.

The Head of Service drew Members' attention to section 4 of the report, which clearly set out the aims of the Magu Project and its progress to date. Despite the project only launching in May 2023, the officer was pleased to inform the Board that there had been 51 referrals to date and that the feedback from service users had been positive.

One Member was pleased to note the progress made and looked forward to receiving comparative data in the coming years. The Member spoke of her role on the Adoption Panel and referred to instances whereby parents had lost children following them being placed in care at birth and was encouraged that the Magu Project could prevent such harrowing outcomes.

The Virtual School Headteacher questioned whether officers work with all families up until the age of one. It was explained that the aim was to work with all families up until the age of one, but that the expectation was that the intensity would decrease as time goes by.

The Chair thanked the officers for the comprehensive report and emphasised the importance of early intervention.

The Corporate Parenting Board **RESOLVED:**

1. To note the content of the report.

N.B – County Borough Councillor S Hickman was not present for this item.

24 INDEPENDENT REVIEWING SERVICE MONITORING REPORT TO THE GROUP DIRECTOR COMMUNITY AND CHILDREN'S SERVICES

The Head of Partnerships provided the Corporate Parenting Board with information about the discharge of the Independent Reviewing Officer (IRO) functions for children looked after (CLA) for the period 30th June 22 – 30th June 23.

Members were provided with an overview of the review activity during the period along with detailed comparative performance data.

The Chair thanked the officer for the comprehensive report and spoke of the value of undertaking an independent view into ensuring the needs of Children Looked After are being met by the Local Authority.

The Chair spoke of Out of County placements and questioned if a lack of placements could be attributed to the figures. The officer advised that placement availability was a national issue and that finding a suitable placement for such complex needs could often be difficult. The officer advised that where young people wish to be placed back in county, the team would work with them to find suitable placements but recognised that many were with family or in long-term placements and did not wish to be placed back in county.

Referring to the significant decrease in adoption orders, the Chair questioned if there were any concerns. The officer spoke of the PLO reform and hoped that the pre-court application work with families, along with the Magu Project was having an impact on the reduction of the number of children requiring adoption.

The Corporate Parenting Board **RESOLVED:**

1. To note the content of the report.

25 TROS GYNNAL PLANT (TGP) CYMRU

Tros Gynnal Plant provided the Corporate Parenting Board with a progress update for the quarter 1 period, which covered April 2023 – June 2023

Members were informed that, during the period, 49 young people accessed Issue Based Advocacy and 29 were referred for the Active Offer across RCT. The officer advised that 11 care experienced young people and 1 care leaver accessed Issue Based Advocacy, presenting with 14 issues; and 6 care experienced young people were referred for the Active Offer.

Members learned that, during the period, 24 Care Experienced young people became eligible for the Active Offer, 7 of those offers were rejected and of the 6 care experienced young people who were referred for the Active Offer, 4 became eligible for the service in the quarter and the remaining 2 became eligible in the previous quarter.

Members were pleased to note that 25% of eligible young people were referred for Active Offer compared to the 18% in the previous quarter.

The Chair thanked Tros Gynnal Plant Cymru for the informative report and commented that the case studies were great examples of the importance of advocacy work.

The Corporate Parenting Board **RESOLVED:**

1. To acknowledge the work undertaken by TGP Cymru.

26 TO CONSIDER PASSING THE FOLLOWING UNDER-MENTIONED RESOLUTION:

It was **RESOLVED** that the press and public be excluded from the meeting under Section 100A(4) of the Local Government Act (as amended) for the following items of business on the grounds that it involves the likely disclosure of the exempt information as defined in paragraph 13 of Part 4 of the Schedule 12A of the Act.

27 UPDATE IN RELATION TO THE CHILDREN LOOKED AFTER : RESIDENTIAL CARE STRATEGY 2022 - 2027

The Service Director of Children's Services provided the Corporate Parenting Board with information about children in settings known as Operating without Registration (OWR), and Children's Services plans for supporting those children, and ending those arrangements.

Following consideration of the exempt report, the Corporate Parenting Board **RESOLVED:**

1. To acknowledge the information contained within the report; and
2. To receive subsequent reports until such time as there are no OWR situations for Rhondda Cynon Taf looked after young people.

This meeting closed at 11.02 am

**Councillor G Caple
Chair**