



**RHONDDA CYNON TAF**

**RHONDDA CYNON TAF COUNCIL  
CORPORATE PARENTING BOARD**

Minutes of the virtual meeting of the Corporate Parenting Board held on Tuesday, 18 July 2023 at 11.00 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 C Leyshon   Councillor S Rees

**Officers in attendance**

Mr N Elliott, Interim Director of Social Services  
Ms C Jones, Head of Access & Inclusion  
Ms A Lloyd, Service Director, Children's Services  
Ms L Hawkins, Virtual School Head Teacher  
Ms N Katchi, Graduate Participation Officer (Children's Services)  
Ms J Thomas, Complaints & QA Manager, Social Services  
Ms C Miles, Childcare Solicitor  
Ms H Jones - Senior Executive and Regulatory Business Officer  
Mrs T Watson, Senior Democratic and Scrutiny Officer

**11      APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies of absence were received from the Vice-Chair, Councillor R Lewis, and County Borough Councillors J Bonetto, P Evans, S Trask, and K Webb.

**12      DECLARATION OF INTEREST**

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

**13      VISITS MADE TO FRONT LINE TEAMS BY MEMBERS OF THE  
CORPORATE PARENTING BOARD DURING THE 2022-23 MUNICIPAL  
YEAR**

The Chair provided the Corporate Parenting Board with an overview of the visits made to Frontline Teams, by Members of the Corporate Parenting Board during the 2022-23 Municipal Year.

The Chair advised that it was his, and the Vice-Chairs first visit, noting that staff morale was high, whilst acknowledging that everything had changed post-Covid, but staff were really adapting to the new hybrid way of working, which was working well, and would not change.

The Chair acknowledged that there were issues with understaffing, in terms of social workers, but in general the teams were working well. The caseloads had

become more complex and increased since Covid, but it was pleasing to meet the teams and say thank you. The Chair acknowledged that the visits were very useful and both himself, and the Vice-Chair had learnt a lot, and it had been a pleasure to go around the teams and just thank them for the work being done to protect children.

The Corporate Parenting Board **RESOLVED** to note the report.

#### **14 CORPORATE PARENTING BOARD ANNUAL REPORT 2022-23**

The Senior Executive and Regulatory Business Officer provided the Corporate Parenting Board with the Corporate Parenting Board Annual Report for the 2022-2023 Municipal Year. The report covered the breadth of work considered by the Board during the year; and put forward the items identified for future consideration. The officer reminded Members that if approved, the report would be presented to Scrutiny and Cabinet.

The Chair stated that it was a delight to follow his predecessor, Cllr Leyshon, and thanked her for the work she had done. The breadth of reports, over the last year had been tremendous, and the Chair congratulated Officers for their efforts in producing these reports.

The Chair thanked the officer for the report and the Corporate Parenting Board **RESOLVED**:

1. To provide comment as appropriate on the draft Annual Report before its presentation to Cabinet.
2. Subject to 1, forward the final version of the report to the CIW for information.

#### **15 PARTICIPATION UPDATE 2022 TO 2023 FOR CARE EXPERIENCED CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE**

The Graduate Officer - Participation provided the Corporate Parenting Board with an update in respect of the progress achieved in taking forward the Participation Strategy 2023-2026 and to provide feedback on the participation activities, Children's Services had held during 2022-2023, with most of the details provided in the Appendices. The Graduate Officer – Participation took Members through the background and progress to date, at Section 3, highlighting a number of key points, before providing Members with details on the link to the Corporate and National Priorities and Well-being of Future Generations Act, before outlining the Next Steps, and Section 9 of the report. The Graduate Officer – Participation concluded by noting the appendices attached, for Members consideration.

The Chair thanked the Officer for the report and said it was great to see comments from Children, who wanted their voices to be heard, and the declaration was right and proper.

The Chair noted that page 45 of the report asked the question, what could be better, and asked if these issues, as highlighted in the responses, were being tackled through the scheme.

The Graduate Officer – Participation explained that this was part of the project implementation plan, to develop the public facing information, to take on board what young people had said, but would also work with young people as well to

develop that information going forward.

A Member asked, around the proposal to facilitate the autumn workshop, what this would like.

The Graduate Officer – Participation advised it was to develop a one voice forum, so CLA, were supported through staff and the Corporate Parenting Board to put forward their views as way of developing co-production. She noted that WG would shortly be producing, what that vision would look like, and how it could be developed at a local level.

A Member asked if the workshop would be online or hybrid.

The Service Director of Children's Services explained that the ambition for the proposed workshop, was to provide a face-to-face meeting for Members to engage with care experienced young people. It was hoped that particularly, one of the results would be to work towards how care experienced young people with current experience of the system, could support the work of the Corporate Parenting Board, so exploring options for care experienced young people to be Members of the Board e.g., how to develop young person friendly reports, decisions, etc. The Service Director of Children's Services was aware in some areas, Corporate Parenting Boards were co-chaired by a Cabinet Member and a young person, which was a very strong, co-produced model, which it was hoped to aim for and a move in that direction.

The Chair agreed that young people wanted a voice at the highest level, and it was only right and proper, to listen to what they had to say.

The Corporate Parenting Board **RESOLVED**:

1. To note the information in the report.

## **16 RADICAL REFORM: IF NOT NOW, THEN WHEN?**

The Service Director of Children's Services provided the Corporate Parenting Board with information regarding the report by the Welsh Parliament's Children, Young People and Education Committee following the inquiry linked to the Welsh Government's commitment to explore radical reform of current services for children looked after and care leavers as part of the Programme for Government. The ambition was to make sure Members felt informed about the work under radical reform, in relation to children's services, knowing it to be strongly connected to the work of the Board. There was a great deal of information in the report and the Welsh Parliament's Children, Young People and Education Committee heard evidence from a range of sources, including RCT Children's Services, which had provided evidence both in video and written form. The report outlined the evidence heard, with a number of recommendations detailed in the high-level summary table on pages 109 – 116 of the report. The Service Director of Children's Services advised that what had struck her was the strong congruence with the direction of travel of Children's services strategy areas, particularly around the workforce strategy in relation to participation and young people, parents, and carers voices, shaping and influencing the agenda at all levels, making sure to develop services linked to improving young people's wellbeing and mental health.

The Service Director of Children's Services noted that the Government's

response to the recommendations, would be circulated following the meeting, acknowledging that not all recommendations had been accepted, with some in part, although she noted that in relation to the areas being progressed by the Council, alongside staff, families, and carers, these were largely accepted areas.

The Chair thanked the Director for her summary of the report and acknowledged that there were interesting comments on both pages 113 and 114 of the report, in respect of unregistered and unregulated placements, the issue of running away and reforms to the on-going support young people received when they left care. The Chair acknowledged that there was no beginning and no end, with the duty of care, because those children were so vulnerable and it was fantastic to see those issues were now being talked about at the highest level, informing policy, moving forward.

The Corporate Parenting Board **RESOLVED**:

1. To note the information in the report.
2. Receive an updated report when Government's decisions about the recommendations were known.

**17 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 14 of Part 4 of the Schedule 12A of the Act.

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

The 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 11.43 am**

**Councillor G Caple  
Chair**