

Minutes of a Meeting of the Healthier Communities Overview and Scrutiny Committee held remotely via video-conferencing on Wednesday, 06 October 2021

Present: Councillors Bryan Davies (Chair) Gethin Davies, Marc Davies, Elaine Evans, Hag Harris, Alun Lloyd-Jones, Lyndon Lloyd MBE, Dan Potter, John Roberts and Ivor Williams.

Cabinet Members Present: Councillors Rhodri Evans, Catherine Hughes, Gareth Lloyd, Catrin Miles, Ray Quant, and Alun Williams

Officers present: Mrs Nerys Lewis, Service Manager – Direct Services, Mrs Donna Pritchard – Corporate Lead Officer – Porth Gofal. Ms Sian Howys, Corporate Lead Officer – Porth Cynnal- Children Services, Mrs Heather West – Corporate Manager – Targeted and Short Term Services, Mr John Callow, Corporate Manager – Substance Misuse, Mrs Dwynwen Jones, Overview and Scrutiny Officer and Mrs Dana Jones, Democratic and Standards Officer

(10:00 am -12:45pm)

1 Apologies

Councillor Paul Hinge and Lynford Thomas apologised for their inability to attend the meeting.

2 Disclosures of personal and prejudicial interest

None.

3 Update regarding recruitment of Welsh speaking Foster Carers in Ceredigion

Consideration was given to the Report Corporate Lead Officer – Porth Gofal updating the Committee regarding recruitment of Welsh Speaking Foster Carers in Ceredigion. The update report had been requested by the committee members

It was reported that the Fostering Service in Ceredigion provided short and long term placements for the Looked after Children of Ceredigion. The age range for the service was from birth to 18 years of age. Currently Ceredigion County Council had 31 registered Foster Families.

There were also 16 Kinship carers (also known as family and friends) who had been identified and progressed through the same processes as mainstream Foster Carers and registered to provide care and support for specific Looked after child/ren as outlined in their individual registration. Ceredigion's Kinship carers were located all across the UK.

Currently, there were under 5 children within Ceredigion mainstream/Kinship Foster placement who were identified with Welsh as their preferred language

of choice. However, there were children who do attend Welsh medium Education and the service recognises the importance of supporting and promoting the Welsh Language and Culture.

The following table provided an overview of the current position relating to foster carer ability of the Welsh language;

ALTE Level (Number of carers)	Welsh Listening and Speaking (Number of carers)	Welsh Reading (Number of carers)	Welsh Writing (Number of carers)
0	6	11	14
1	9	9	5
2	5	1	2
3	2	0	1
4	0	1	0
5	1	1	1

In relation to the areas of further development for the service the following was outlined:-

- Recruitment – Key element for the service moving forward was to work with National and Regional recruitment campaigns that would provide a range of specifically targeted opportunities utilising National resources including media e.g. S4C and ITV advertisements. This would be enhanced by a local County Engagement and Communication plan that would focus on targeting specific campaigns driven by the identified needs for our Looked after Children in Ceredigion e.g. engaging with Young Farmers, Merched y Wawr and wider community groups.
- Language support – To provide Ceredigion Foster Carers with opportunities to improve their language skills through accessing training via opportunities provided through Porth Cymorth Cynnar.
- Cultural support – To develop an annual social and integration plan maximising on the heritage and culture of Ceredigion providing the Foster Carers with the knowledge and access to the wealth of local heritage, natural environments and cultural activities available locally. The service will be working in conjunction with Porth Cymorth Cynnar, Education and 3rd sector organisations to enhance and celebrate the wealth of local provision available to Ceredigion Foster Carers.

Following questions from the floor, it was AGREED:-

- (i) to note the report for information;
- (ii) that a progress report on the Fostering service be presented at a future meeting;
- (iii) to also place this item in the Forward Work Programme of the Committee; and
- (iv) to thank the service for all their work within the Fostering Service

4 Domiciliary Care Provision

Consideration was given to the Report of the Corporate Lead Officer – Porth Gofal upon the Domiciliary Care Provision in Ceredigion. The Healthier .

It was reported that in Ceredigion the Domiciliary Care provision had over a number of years continued to be met through the Commissioning Framework for Procurement for the provision of care to individual service users. This process was known as E Tender. All providers in Ceredigion were registered to the Framework having passed through a series of Procurement requirements, were then able to contract for services with Ceredigion County Council.

Once a Social Worker had identified eligible care needs following a Social Services and Wellbeing Act Assessment, a service request was made. Once confirmed the notice was placed on the E Tender Procurement Portal on Sell2Wales. The providers who were registered to deliver care within Ceredigion were then able to look at the packages of care that were required in the community and submit offers to deliver that care. These offers were made to the family and once accepted care would be arranged to commence. If a family refuse the offer (for example if care times do not meet their personal preference and a compromise was not possible), then the care request would remain on procurement pending an alternative offer. The care needs for a care and support package for highly complex care needs may require 2 care staff up to 4 times a day, 7 days a week, 52 weeks a year, and others care needs would also range throughout the spectrum of needs through to lower level interventions once or twice a week to assist with bathing/showering as an example. Care and Support at home had a focus on delivering skills to provide personal care and wellbeing needs.

Throughout the Covid 19 pandemic the Domiciliary Care Providers had worked tirelessly to sustain the care and support needs of our communities. Their staff continued to deliver to those vulnerable individuals in the face of increased risks to themselves and their families, in maintaining close contact care and support and their efforts have been and continue to be recognised as exceptional in unprecedented times.

Following a lengthy discussion, a Committee Member put forward a recommendation to Cabinet seconded by another Member. Some Members were not comfortable with this recommendation for various reasons and it was therefore put to a Committee vote.

The outcome of the vote was 4 in favour, 1 against and 8 abstained from the vote.

As there were 4 in favour of the, it was AGREED to

- (i) note the report for information,
- (ii) to recommend to Cabinet that they investigate the possibility of making use of Council reserve funding to provide an innovative funding package to support much needed recruitment in the Domiciliary Care Provider Sector;
- (iii) to support an introduction of a Bonus Referral Scheme used in a Residential Care home to encourage recruitment; and
- (iv) to thank all involved in providing the Domiciliary Care service

5 Substance Misuse in Ceredigion and Service Provision

Members received a power point presentation on the content of the report presented and the following information was outlined:-

- The Welsh Government sets out a Substance Misuse Delivery Plan 2019-2022 (Revised in Response to Covid 19)
- National Picture
- Alcohol
- Ceredigion GP Stats
- Services in Ceredigion
- Info Base Cymru- 2019-2020 Hywel Dda Ceredigion
- Barod
- Ceredigion Council Substance Misuse Service Cases
- Police – tackling supply
- Dyfed Powys Police Possession Offences Data
- Dyfed Powys Police Drug Trafficking Offences Data
- Drug Related Deaths by County
- Non-Fatal Overdoses by County

Following questions from the floor, it was AGREED to note the current position.

6 Independent Reviewing Service Performance Management report, quarter 4, 2020-2021

Consideration was given to the Independent Reviewing Service Report Quarter 4 2020/2021. The report had been presented in order to monitor the progress of Looked After Children through Independent Reviewing Officers scrutiny of their plans and placements during the fourth quarter of 2020/2021. This information contributes to Members fulfilling their roles as Corporate Parents.

This report includes national and local standards and targets used to measure outcomes for looked after children and care leavers at the time of their review meeting and includes Welsh Government Performance Indicators.

On the basis of the information available and the views expressed during the review meeting, the IRO makes a professional judgement about the effectiveness of a child/young person's care plan in meeting their needs and may recommend changes to the care plan.

During the review meeting the IRO considers whether the child/young person requires assistance to identify relevant other people to obtain legal advice/take proceedings on their behalf. This action was not deemed necessary by the IRO for any child in the period.

In addition, the IRO has regard as to whether the child/young person's human rights are being breached in any way and, if so, might make a referral to CAFCASS Cymru. This action was not required at any of the review meetings in the period.

These reports are considered within Multi Agency LAC Quality Assurance Meetings which meet on a quarterly basis; these meetings provide an opportunity to identify and act upon performance and other issues in relation to this area of work.

These reports are also circulated and reviewed by Local Authority's Corporate Parenting Group which is Chaired by Cllr Alun Williams, Cabinet Member for Children Services and Culture these meetings take place on a quarterly basis.

SUMMARY OF KEY POINTS;

- At the end of this Quarter, Quarter 4, as of March 31st 2021, there were 85 children being looked after by the Local Authority. This is an increase in the number of children being looked after. At the end of Q3 there were 79 children being looked after.
- 58 children were reviewed in this quarter. 89.7 % were reviewed within the statutory timeframe.
- 1 child was returned home to family during this quarter, compared to 4 children in Q3.
- The placement provision for the children reviewed in this quarter ranged from 20 placed in Local Authority Foster Care Provision, 12 placed with family, 9 placed with parents, 8 in Independent Foster Care Provision, 3 in residential care and 3 with kinship carers.
- Of the children reviewed in this quarter, 87.9% of children received a statutory visit.
- 32 of children reviewed were the subjects of a Full Care Order, 16 were of an Interim Care Order, 1 of a Placement Order and 9 were under the legal status of a Section 76.
- 100% of the care and support plans were recorded as meeting the needs of the children/young people reviewed in this quarter.
- The number and percentage of children (of sufficient understanding) who were involved in or consulted about their review, was 100%.
- The number and percentage of children who were made aware of their right for an advocacy service, was 100%
- The percentage of young people who are eligible and have a Pathway Plan in place and a PA to support them is 100%.
- 25 Pathway Plan Reviews were completed in this quarter. 80% were completed within timescale.
- 96% of the Reviews undertaken evidenced that the Pathway Plans that were in place were meeting the needs of the young people.
- 80% of the Pathway Plan Reviews that had taken place had either the views of the person represented in the review or the young person attended their review.

Following questions from the floor, it was AGREED to note the current position.

7 Draft Forward Work Programme 2021-2022

Consideration was given to the Draft Forward Work Programme 2021-22 as presented. It was AGREED to note the content subject to the progress reports requested on the recruitment of Welsh speaking Foster Carers in Ceredigion and Domiciliary Care Provision items.

8 Minutes of the 17 September 2021 Committee meeting and any matter arising therefrom

The Committee resolved to confirm the Minutes of the Meeting of the Committee held on 17 September as a correct record.

Matters arising

None.

Confirmed at the Meeting of the Healthier Communities Overview and Scrutiny Committee held on 20 October 2021

Chairman: _____

Date: _____