

CABINET MEMBER (CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE)

4th September, 2012

Cabinet Member

Present: Councillor O'Boyle

Shadow Cabinet

Member Present: Councillor Lepoidevin

Employees Present:

A. Bell (Children, Learning and Young People Directorate)
A. Clarkson (Children, Learning and Young People Directorate)
A. Daly (Children, Learning and Young People Directorate)
C. Green (Director of Children, Learning & Young People)
J. McLellan (Customer and Workforce Services Directorate)
J. Newman (Finance and Legal Services Directorate)
J. Sembi (Children, Learning and Young People Directorate)

Apologies:

Councillor Kershaw (Cabinet Member (Education))

Public Business

10. Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest.

11. Minutes

(a) The minutes of the meeting held on 17th July, 2012, were signed as a true record.

(b) There were no matters arising.

12. Annual Family Group Conference Services Report

The Cabinet Member considered a report of the Director of Children, Learning and Young People which indicated that the Coventry Family Group Conference facilitated family meetings where strengths and resources within a network of family and friends could be drawn upon to make a family plan which offered support, care and safety for children and young people.

The outcomes for the children and families who had been offered a Family Group Conference had been carefully monitored and evaluated and were documented in the Annual Report which was attached to the report.

The Family Group Conference Service had increasingly demonstrated its value in enhancing and assisting wider family and community networks involvement to facilitate safe decision making for children and families in Coventry where there were child welfare concerns.

The key principles for the delivery of the service included:-

- The positive involvement of family and community networks in decision-making about their children
- The voices of children being heard and contributing to decision-making
- The provision of information and resources and empowering families to make safe, effective, realistic and lasting plans for their children
- Continued prioritisation of work with families where critical decisions were being made about their children, in particular those at risk of harm, family breakdown or in need of permanent alternative carers.

The outcomes for the children and families who had been offered a Family Group Conference had been carefully monitored and evaluated, and was documented in the Annual Report which was appended to the report.

RESOLVED that after due consideration of the report and the matters raised at the Meeting, the Cabinet Member (Children and Young People) endorsed the report and noted the continued development of Family Group Conferencing as a process to enhance and assist wider family and community networks involvement in safe decision making for children and families in Coventry where there were child welfare concerns.

13. **Annual Report of the Coventry Independent Reviewing Officers (IRO) 2011-2012**

The Cabinet Member considered a report of the Director of Children, Learning and Young People on the third Annual Report of the Coventry Independent Reviewing Service, which covered the period from 1st April, 2011, to 31st March, 2012, as required by statutory guidance, the Independent Reviewing Officers (IRO) Handbook 2010.

The report provided information for the Lead Member with responsibility for children, young people and corporate parenting on the work undertaken by the IRO service, and any issues that had arisen regarding how the Local Authority exercised its role as Corporate Parent for all Looked after Children during that period.

In order for the aspirations and expectations for Children in the City Council's Care and Care Leavers to be realised, it was important that the Lead Member and the Scrutiny Board responsible for achieving them received regular reports that set out progress. The annual Independent Reviewing Officer (IRO) was part of that process. As a national requirement, its primary purpose was set out in the Independent Reviewing Officer's Handbook.

The report focussed on the Independent Reviewing Officer's functions. In particular the timeliness of reviews, the participation of children in their reviews and ensuring that permanency plans were in place to avoid children drifting in care. It also identified how many cases were the subject of the care plan resolution process, and whether any cases were referred to Children and Family Court Advisory and Support Service.

RESOLVED that after due consideration of the report and the matters raised at the Meeting, the Cabinet Member (Children and Young People) noted the report which provided an update on the management of children's cases by the Independent Review

Officers.

14. Comments, Compliments and Complaints 2011/12 – Children’s Social Care Services

The Cabinet Member considered a report of the Director of Children, Learning and Young People which detailed the comments, compliments and complaints received during 2011/12, the themes that had arisen from them and the learning and service improvements that had resulted from the feedback received.

RESOLVED that after due consideration of the report and the matters raised at the Meeting, the Cabinet Member (Children and Young People) endorsed and approved the publishing of the report.

15. Outstanding Issues

The Cabinet Member noted the outstanding issues relevant to his portfolio and requested that the report be updated accordingly.

16. Any Other Items of Public Business

Nil

Private Business

Nil

(The meeting closed at 2.30 p.m.)