

# Agenda



## Performance Scrutiny Committee - Partnerships

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Date: Wednesday, 8 November 2017

Time: 5.00 pm

Venue: Committee Room 1 - Civic Centre

To: Councillors M Rahman (Chair), J Clarke, D Davies, R Hayat, M Linton, S Marshall, R Mogford, T Suller and K Whitehead

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### Item

- 1 Agenda in Welsh (Pages 3 - 4)
- 2 Apologies for Absence
- 3 Declarations of Interest
- 4 Minutes of the Meeting held on 4 October 2017 (Pages 5 - 10)
- 5 Proposal to Develop Fostering Services on a Regional Basis (Pages 11 - 26)
- 6 Forward Work Programme Update (Pages 27 - 40)

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# Agenda

## Pwyllgor Craffu ar Berfformiad – Partneriaethau

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Dyddiad: Dydd Mercher, 8 Tachwedd 2017

Amser: 5 y.p.

Lleoliad: Ystafell Bwyllgora 1 – Canolfan Dinesig

Y Cynghorwyr: M Rahman (Cadeirydd), J Clarke, D Davies, R Hayat, M Linton, S Marshall, R Mogford, T Suller and K Whitehead.

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### Eitem

1. [Agenda yn Gymraeg](#)
2. [Ymddiheuriadau am Absenoldeb](#)
3. [Datganiadau o Fuddiant](#)
4. [Cofnodion y Cyfarfod a 4 Hydref 2017](#)
5. [Cynnig i Ddatblygu Gwasanaethau Maethu ar Sail Rhanbarthol](#)
6. [Y Diweddariad o'r Rhaglen Waith i'r Dyfodol](#)

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# Minutes



## Performance Scrutiny Committee - Partnerships

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Date: 4 October 2017

Time: 5.00 pm

Present: Councillors M Rahman (Chair), J Clarke, D Davies, R Hayat, T Suller and K Whitehead

In Attendance: Sarah Morgan (Deputy Chief Education Officer), Rhys Cornwall (Head of People and Business Change), Mark Bleazard (Information Development Manager), Jo Evans (Digital Information Project Officer) and Anne Jenkins (Democratic Services Support Officer)

Hayley Davies-Edwards, Principal Challenge Advisor, Educational Achievement Service (EAS);  
Matt Lewis, Chief Officer, Shared Resource Service (SRS).

Apologies: Councillors S Marshall

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### 1 **Declarations of Interest**

None.

### 2 **Minutes of the Meeting held on 26 July 2017**

The minutes of the meeting held on 26 July were considered.

Members had raised concern about the growing popularity of the smoking of shisha as referred to in the minutes of the previous meeting and considered it an important topic for the Committee to follow up.

The Chair advised that the Health and Wellbeing Lead from Public Health Wales would be attending the meeting on 10 January 2018 as agreed in the Work Programme and could be asked to provide an update at that meeting or at the November meeting, if possible.

#### **Agreed:**

The minutes of the meeting held on 26 July 2017 were approved as an accurate record of the meeting.

### 3 **Briefing - Educational Achievement Service (EAS)**

The Committee welcomed Hayley Davies-Edwards, Principal Challenge Advisor (EAS) and Sarah Morgan, Deputy Chief Education Officer (Newport City Council).

The Consortium was now 12 years old and included Monmouthshire, Torfaen, Blaenau Gwent, Caerphilly and Newport.

The presentation included:

- What is the consortium?
- What does the consortium do?
- How the consortium operates and is funded?
- How is the consortium governed and held to account?
- What was the impact date? (upward trend but not fast enough)
- Priorities for development
- Who are the key people in the EAS?
- Our core values

A business plan was developed once a year and the Cabinet was part of the consultation. Regional youth forums were held to liaise with children and other stakeholders to make a contribution on how the schools were run.

Newport were above the Welsh Average in their A\*-C grades for 2016.

All schools were categorised using the colour code: green, yellow, amber and red across Wales. The level of resources that went into schools was determined by their scores. This however did not mean that a green school could not buy in additional support to maintain their status.

It was noted that Newport had the best inspection in Wales. There were four consortia in Wales and the regional average drop was 3.6%.

There was a progress in leadership, 18 months ago Estyn made recommendations regarding richer data, evaluation of Newport Schools and a risk register. The report would be issued in the next month. EAS felt there were always ways to improve standards. Committee members were welcome to visit and observe the way that the EAS worked to serve the schools within Newport.

The following was discussed:

The Committee asked how did the EAS ensure best value for money? The Deputy Chief Education Officer advised that the annual paper traced back the number of hours and money invested per school and the quality of service, including pupil standards. Key Stage 3 comparisons were still under the Welsh Average and discussion would take place on how to improve this. Over the past four years there was an 8.2% improvement. The Local Authority did not have the luxury to benchmark, there were however individual schools in a position to benchmark specific areas such as science.

The Committee referred to lack of green schools at secondary level and what could be done to drive those standards? Green schools were maintained by sharing best practice and whilst less funding was available, the quality of Key Stage 3 Curriculum was improving. Parental support was also key to revitalising schools and driving standards forward.

The Committee noted that within the summary of the findings from the Progress in Leadership, Newport received an overall grade of 'Good'. Clarification on the grading system was provided. It was noted that the scores ranked from unsatisfactory, adequate, good, to excellent.

Lengthy discussion ensued regarding how to identify risks more effectively, for example, it was difficult to find Welsh speaking Challenge Advisors in Wales. This was a real risk in the Anglicised part of Wales, as well as failing to employ a Head Teacher for vulnerable schools. Holding on to Challenge Advisors was therefore difficult as they were often head-hunted.

Figures on pupil attainment would be provided and presented to Performance Scrutiny Committee: People in January 2018.

The Chair thanked the Principal Challenge Advisor and Deputy Chief Education Officer for the presentation. There was a business plan on the EAS website. Each school had a plan bespoke to their needs. A link to the EAS Value for Money Report 2016-17 would also be circulated to Members for their information.

### **Resolutions and Actions:**

The Committee accepted the Educational Achievement Service Briefing.

#### **4 Briefing - Shared Resource Services (SRS)**

The Committee welcomed the following officers invited to attend for this item:

- Rhys Cornwall, Head of People & Business Change;
- Mark Bleazard, Information Development Manager;
- Jo Evans, Digital Information Project Officer;
- Matt Lewis, Chief Officer, Shared Resource Service (SRS).

The Committee had requested a briefing on the Shared Resource Service (SRS) to enable Members to have an understanding of the partnerships prior to any Scrutiny being undertaken.

The SRS discussed their Digital Strategy for Newport 2015 to 2020, which was to reduce / consolidate IT Systems within the Council, save costs, simplify support and improve their information sharing capability.

There were currently 223 staff working for SRS, with a possibility of Caerphilly Borough Council and Coleg Gwent joining the workforce taking the figure up to 340 staff. In addition, they were looking to explore further collaboration opportunities with other public sector bodies to ensure resilience and further develop business continuity across the council. This would open up a host of opportunities including services such as shared access to Outlook calendars between organisations.

There were development opportunities for staff within the SRS including an Apprenticeship Scheme recently put in place. Staff were encouraged to progress to a higher level and more positively there was a low turnover of staff. Although some IT staff had been dubious at the beginning, the overall outcome had been very positive, with more job security and job satisfaction.

In the past year the SRS were able to provide access to public WIFI for 2 Million people, with access on public transport being by far the most popular service that they offered. Figures showed that in the first three weeks, 5,000 accessed WIFI on the buses.

Discussion ensued regarding the investment objectives, totalling eleven and their progress to date.

A performance session would be held at the end of the month where the partner authorities within the SRS would meet and discuss their requirements on a collaborative basis and how to improve on service provision.

There would be a move to a service point helpdesk system which was the first of its kind. The SRS were looking at tenders and hoped to go live on 1 April 2018.

A Gwent-wide full fibre network for public sector buildings was also being considered by Welsh Government and the SRS was in a position to express an interest to Welsh Government and received a positive response. If the SRS were successful they were looking to provide 1G of full fibre into 10G in a series of public buildings, including schools.

The SRS were also able to make cost savings when purchasing software/equipment collaboratively. As part of this, a virus ransomware protection would allow shared access to Outlook calendars between organisations.

The Committee was invited to ask questions:

The Committee asked were there any job losses as a result of the transfer of services? Only one post was deleted, which was already vacant.

The Committee referred to the investment objectives and savings made by Newport City Council which was a priority. Whilst the Council had to make a decision on whether to invest or save, 10% savings in budget just happened to be a part of the decision for IT to go to the SRS. The capital cost of IT was reduced and in addition the transfer of IT Staff increased their salary and our savings.

The Committee queried whether devices and services for Councillors would improve? The SRS was an organisation that worked with their customers to address problems and how best to solve them. This included Councillors reporting faults via the web and using the easiest technology such as intuitive software.

Digital Champions were also a new initiative with the council and were trained to provide help and advice to Staff and Councillors.

#### **Resolutions and Actions:**

The Committee accepted the Shared Resource Service Briefing.

#### **5 Forward Work Programme Update**

The Chair advised the Committee that the Senior Overview & Scrutiny Officer was unable to attend the meeting.

It was proposed that where possible a maximum of two items per Agenda would be the best way forward to allow an appropriate level of attention on each of the matters discussed. The Committee Members agreed with this proposal.

A Shared Resource Service Update report was scheduled for the next meeting on 8 November in the Work Programme, but it was considered that there would not be any progress to report in that short time, so it was proposed that the SRS update be rescheduled in the Work Programme for April 2018. The Committee were invited to consider holding their April meeting at the Board Room in Blaenavon.

With reference to the SIP – Quarter 2 Performance Update, the Committee also requested that the Health and Wellbeing Theme Lead, of Public Health Wales provide an update in January 2018 on the smoking of Shisha and how it could be regulated.

It was requested by the Committee that the Minutes for the Public Services Board Meeting held on 12 September 2017 be distributed for information.



The Committee also requested that Sophie Howe, Future Generations Commissioner for Wales be invited to the Meeting in November to provide an update on progress within Newport on the Act and how we were meeting the requirements of the Act.

**Resolutions and Actions:**

The Committee agreed:

1. To reschedule the Shared Resource Service Update from 8 November 2017 to 25 April 2018 and to consider the invitation to hold that meeting on site at the SRS Boardroom in Blaenavon.
2. To invite Sophie Howe, Future Generations Commissioner for Wales to the meeting on 8 November 2017 to provide an update on progress within Newport on the Act and how we are meeting the requirements of the Act.
3. To request the Health and Wellbeing Theme Lead to provide an update on the use of Shisha within Newport and how it could be regulated, to the meeting on 10 January 2018.

The meeting ended at 7.20 pm.

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# Scrutiny Report

## Performance Scrutiny Committee - Partnerships

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### Part 1

Date: 8 November 2017

### Subject **Proposal to Develop Fostering Services on a Regional Basis**

Author Overview and Scrutiny Officer

The following people have been invited to attend for this item:

- Sally Jenkins - Head of Children and Young People Services

## Section A – Committee Guidance and Recommendations

### 1 Recommendations to the Committee

- 1.1 The Committee is asked to consider the report and the proposal to explore the development of regional fostering services and determine if it wishes to make any comments.

### 2 Context

- 2.1 Since 2007/8 across Wales Local Authority total spending on fostering services has increased by 20.7%, much of which can be attributed to the increased use of Independent Fostering Agencies. Regionally, there has been a year on year decline in the number of foster carers approved, reducing by 29 places (5.2%). Welsh Government has recognised the challenges faced by public services fostering services by supporting the work of the National Fostering Framework. During Phase One of the work of the National Fostering Framework there was extensive consultation with fostering services, foster carers, children and young people and public sector partners. A link is provided to the Fostering Network's results of their national survey of foster carers in its report : "The State of the Nation's Foster Care 2016" in the background papers at the end of this report, as additional background information.

### 3 Information Submitted to the Committee

- 3.1 The Head of Children and Young People Services' report upon the proposal to develop fostering services on a regional Basis Development is attached as **Appendix 1**.
- 3.2 To provide additional background context, the National Fostering Framework Phase One Report - Summary and Recommendations is attached as **Appendix 2**. (A hyperlink to the full Phase 1 report and the Phase 2 report is provided is in Section 7 Background Papers below.)

## 4 Suggested Areas of Focus

4.1.1 In considering the report, Members may wish to explore:

- What is the timeline for developing this proposal?
- What are the benefits of delivering fostering regionally?
- At what stage is development currently?
- How will a Project Plan to take this forward be developed?
- How does Newport's performance compare with the other prospective Partner Local Authorities?
- Is there Welsh Government funding for development costs for the proposed regional provision?
- How would proposed regional arrangements be scrutinised?
- What would the proposed governance of regional arrangements look like?
- How does the proposal fit with the requirements of the Wellbeing of Future Generations Act and Social Services and Wellbeing (Wales) Act?
- How would this proposed Partnership link with other Regional Partnerships e.g. Adoption, Adult Social Care, etc?
- Can the lessons learned from the recent development processes for similar Partnerships be utilised?

## Section B – Supporting Information

### 5 Links to Council Policies and Priorities

- Improvement Plan Objectives 2016-18
- Corporate Plan 2017-22 and Wellbeing Objectives

### 6 Financial Implications

6.1 There are no specific cost implications associated with this report. Financial implications would be identified as part of the detailed project plan for the next stage.

### 7. Background Papers

7.1 The Fostering Network's [The State of the Nation's Foster Care 2016](#) report.

The National Fostering Framework reports:

[National Fostering Framework Phase One Report 2015-2016](#)

[National Fostering Framework Phase Two Report 2016-2017](#)

Report Completed: October 2017

**Children's Services**  
**Proposal to Develop Fostering Services on a Regional Basis**

**1. PURPOSE OF REPORT**

To secure in principle agreement to explore the development of fostering services on a regional basis using the geographical footprint of the South East Wales Regional Partnership Board.

To agree for future proposals to be considered through a detailed options paper and project plan.

**2. LINK TO CORPORATE STRATEGIES**

Corporate Plan 2017 – 2022

**3. SUMMARY**

This Report outlines the proposal to explore the development of fostering services on a regional basis underpinned by the messages from the work of the National Fostering Framework and a regional case for change.

**4. BACKGROUND**

In many ways, foster care is public care at its best. Foster carers have a beneficial impact upon many of the vulnerable children and young people who are looked after by local authorities. The central aim in establishing regional fostering services is to ensure that the best quality foster care placements are available to all the children and young people who need them in order to reach their full potential and that foster carers are valued, supported and receive excellent training.

The majority of children who are looked after are cared for by foster carers. In 2015 /16 across Wales 76.1% of children who were looked after were cared for by foster carers. On a regional basis we mirror the national picture with 76.3% of our children being cared for by foster carers.

While some children are cared for by family members under a fostering arrangement, kinship foster carers are not a significant proportion of the foster carer population. Across Wales in 2015 /16 children being cared for under these arrangements made up 21.1% of all children with foster carers and on a regional basis the percentage was slightly lower at 18.5%.

Fostering service providers across Wales include public services, independent commercial providers and independent not for profit providers. In 2015/16 we had 64.1% of children with general foster carers cared for by public sector foster carers across Wales, while as a region we performed better with 72.4% of children being cared for by our own local authority foster carers.

While outcomes for children being cared for within independent sector fostering services have not been demonstrated to be any better than outcomes for children being cared for by local authority foster carers there is a higher likelihood of children having placements outside of the local authority boundary when commissioning independent sector placements. In 2015 / 16 across Wales 68.6% of the total number of children being cared for outside of local authority boundaries by general carers were with independent provider foster carers. On a regional basis 58.8% our children being cared for outside of local authority boundaries by general foster carers were with independent provider foster carers. Maintaining links with family and friends and local community and accessing education and health services is made all the more challenging when working across boundaries.

Since 2007 /08 across Wales local authority total spend on fostering services has increased by 20.7%. Much of the increase has come from the increased usage of the Independent Fostering Agencies. The table below demonstrates the comparative spend for Newport in 2016/17.

	In-house provision	Independent Fostering Agencies
Overall spend	£2,427,522	£1,388,018
Number of children	175	30
Average weekly cost	£259.01	£735.17

Recruitment and retention of local authority foster carers is essential to give children the opportunity to remain close to their family and community links and to provide a service that is value for money. Over the past 3 years statistics across Wales show a steady decline with the total number of foster carers approved reducing by 169 (6.5%) and the total number of places linked to approvals reducing by 196 (4.3%). On a regional basis over three years we have also had year on year decline of foster carer approvals with the total number of foster carers approved reducing by 29 (5.2%) resulting in the total number of places reducing by 79 (8.2%).

Welsh Government has recognised the challenges faced by public services fostering services by supporting the work of the National Fostering Framework as one of the four key work streams within the programme of the Strategic Steering Group set up with the task of 'Improving Outcomes for Children'. Phase One of the work involved an extensive consultation with fostering service providers, foster carers, children and young people and public sector partners on fostering services, identifying some of the challenges for fostering services and what opportunities we have to deliver services in a different way on a local, regional and national level. Phase One of the work also explored what performance and resource information we have available on fostering services to understand how we are performing and how we could improve the service we deliver. Work began on developing a National Fostering Performance and Resource Framework to be used by public service and independent fostering service providers. At the conclusion of phase one of the work of National Fostering Framework a report highlighted the messages from the consultation and made a

total of 10 recommendations to take work forward looking at national, regional and local arrangements for the functions of fostering services.

Phase Two of the work of the National Fostering Framework has focussed on seven of the recommendations, one of which was to develop a functional framework for national, regional and local delivery of fostering services and another was to pilot the national performance and resource framework for fostering services. All five local authorities for Gwent participated in the pilot of the national performance and resource framework for fostering services, which has put the region in a good position to be able to identify regional priorities for the development of fostering services. Development and implementation of a national performance and resource framework for fostering services is a priority for the National Fostering Framework which proposes using the regional partnership board geographical footprint plus the national performance and resource framework to identify priorities.

National Fostering Framework functional model proposes several elements of public services fostering which could be developed on a regional basis including:

- Marketing and recruitment of foster carers
- Pre and post approval training for foster carers
- Exchanging placements between local authorities
- Regional commissioning arrangements for foster placements
- Foster Carer Review documentation and process
- Regional Foster Panels
- Peer support for foster carers

## 5. **PRESENT POSITION**

Gwent Heads of Childrens Services have been pro-active in identifying opportunity for regional development informed by the functional model proposed by the National Fostering Framework.

Gwent Fostering Team Managers meet on a regular basis to progress work identified through joint meetings with Heads of Childrens Services.

Increased collaboration has resulted in the development of several regional initiatives which are being implemented which include:

- Development of a regional foster carer review document and process for completing reviews.
- Development and distribution of a regional Foster Carer Handbook.
- Working together to develop common policies in regard to When I am Ready arrangements and Protocol for Joint Working between Shared Lives and Fostering Services.
- Scoping exercises in regard to marketing and recruitment of foster carers, pre and post foster carer training and exchanging placements between local authorities.

6. **CONSULTATION**

During Phase One of the work of the National Fostering Framework there was extensive consultation with fostering services, foster carers, children and young people, public sector partners. Messages from this consultation have informed the recommendations in the Phase One report and the work streams identified, which have also informed the regional work of the fostering services in Gwent. The view is clear that there is a need for change.

The Fostering Network has published the results of their national survey of foster carers in 'The State of the Nation's Foster Care 2016' report. Many of the findings reflect the consultation by the National Fostering Framework especially in regard to access to training and consistency of practice.

Local consultation with foster carers and fostering teams has been ongoing while work has been undertaken developing the regional initiatives to date and changes have been made as a response to feedback.

The consultation across all stakeholders has welcomed the steps being taken towards change. All recognise there is a need to move towards an improved provision to address the emerging lack of placements and poor outcomes for children.

7. **FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

Financial implications would be identified as part of the detailed project planning of the next stage.

8. **STAFFING IMPLICATIONS**

Staffing implications would be identified as part of the detailed project planning of the next stage.

9. **RECOMMENDATIONS**

These recommendations will be presented to Cabinet for decision and all future proposals will be returned for further discussion with Members:

*Members are requested to:*

- *Note the contents of this report and the link to Corporate Parenting.*
- *To endorse the proposal for the five local authorities of Gwent to continue to work in collaboration of the delivery regional fostering initiatives.*
- *To endorse the proposal for the exploration of the development of a regional fostering service.*
- *To agree for future proposals to be considered through a detailed options paper and project plan.*



## 10. **WELLBEING GOALS**

- A prosperous Wales
- A resilient Wales
- A healthier Wales
- A more equal Wales
- A Wales of cohesive communities
- A Wales of vibrant culture and thriving Welsh language
- A globally responsible Wales

The proposal is clearly in line with the wellbeing goals for Wales. Effective fostering services will ensure the most vulnerable children are cared for safely. Strong placements will ensure access to positive educational opportunities and enriching activities for their childhoods thus ensuring they can reach their full potential.

In the Corporate Plan the Wellbeing Goals for Newport are:

1. To improve skills, educational outcomes & employment opportunities
2. To promote economic growth and regeneration whilst protecting the environment
3. To enable people to be healthy, independent & resilient
4. To build cohesive & sustainable communities

Developing regional fostering services will ensure for children and young people in Newport can fully access opportunities for education. They will be supported to access health services and cared for to grow into being resilient adults who are able to fully contribute to the City.

## 11. **SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT PRINCIPLES**

- Long Term
- Prevention
- Integration
- Collaboration
- Involvement

The proposal is clearly in line with the sustainable development principles. Effective fostering services will ensure the most vulnerable children are cared for safely. Strong placements will ensure children receive appropriate care for the right time frame within their local communities and can be fully integrated with their friends and peers.

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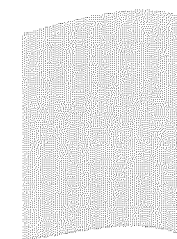
## **APPENDIX 2**

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National Fostering Framework

# Phase One Report

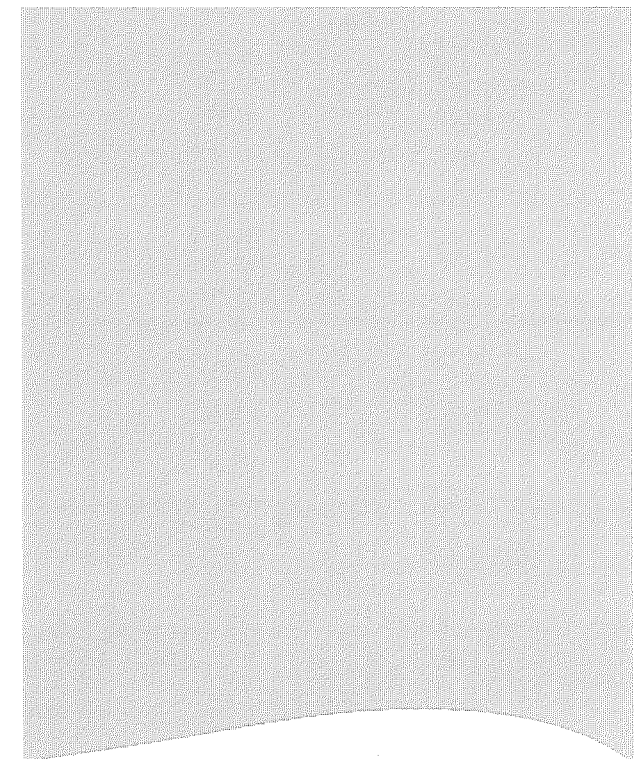
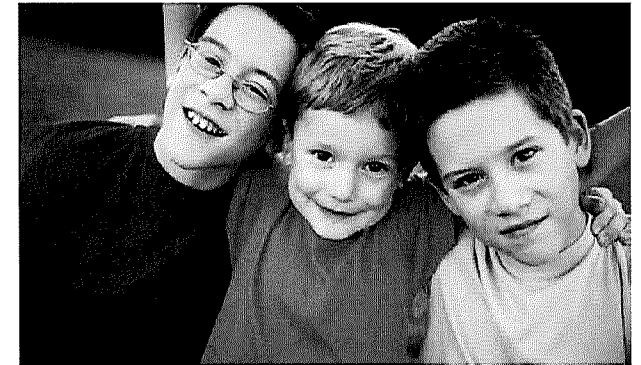
2015 – 2016



National  
Fostering  
Framework  
Fframwaith  
Maethu  
Cenedlaethol

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# Summary and Recommendations

We can demonstrate that foster care is hugely beneficial to children and young people living away from their families. Having good placements and quality foster carers is a fundamental safeguard for children who are looked after and the key to their future life chances.



We can demonstrate that foster care is hugely beneficial to children and young people living away from their families. Having good placements and quality foster carers is a fundamental safeguard for children who are looked after and the key to their future life chances. In many ways, this is public care at its best. The services often work to exceptional standards and with good examples of well-conceived improvements. Our mission is to ensure that all relevant children and young people are able to have good quality care in which they can develop and thrive, and reach their full potential. This care needs to be provided by a well-supported body of dedicated foster carers who can provide a safe, caring and nurturing family environment. There is mounting anxiety that we are not getting very much closer to fulfilling these goals consistently enough.

We need an urgent solution to:

- growing concerns about the overall effectiveness and sustainability of fostering services in Wales;
- placement pressures and our current inability to match needs and placement options well enough; and
- difficulties in recruiting foster carers and in providing them with the range of skills and support needed for the complex and challenging work they undertake.

For example, research published by the Fostering Network in 2015 identified the need for an additional 550 foster care families in Wales. Over the last three years, the total number of general foster placements across the whole of Wales has declined year on year. In the same period, there has been a drop in the number of placements made with local authority foster carers and with Independent Providers. Given that the average age of a foster carer in Wales is 55, we will need to recruit more carers 'just to stand still' but local recruitment campaigns appear to have relatively limited impact. We know, of course, about considerable efforts to find more innovative ways of working, to tackle some of these major problems. However, too many good initiatives don't seem to have enough traction and do not get picked up uniformly across Wales, perhaps because they are not co-ordinated well enough or supported consistently during difficult times.

A clear consensus has emerged that further progress depends upon Wales developing a far more cogent and compelling strategic intent in relation to fostering services, to address growing concerns about their overall effectiveness and sustainability. Continuation of the status quo is likely to produce a situation characterised mostly by managed decline, especially when the operational and financial

context for looked after children services as a whole is likely to be very challenging for the foreseeable future. This is why many key stakeholders advocate strongly the need for greater collaboration in the delivery of fostering services across all sectors and why they see development of a National Fostering Framework as a major priority. In 2015, they came together to develop this concept, motivated by principles of co-production.

This collective enterprise became one of the four major key workstreams within the programme of the Strategic Steering Group set up by Welsh Government with the task of 'Improving Outcomes for Children'. The Group seeks to take forward the policy agenda mandated in the Social Services and Well-being Act, together with the Codes of Practice in Part 6 of the Act, which will have profound implications for the way services for looked after children are delivered.

A reference group for National Fostering Framework was established. One of its key tasks was to produce a 'First Thoughts' paper – which outlined the case for change, identified how we can achieve better partnership across the different sectors and presented initial ideas about what can be delivered most effectively at national, regional and local levels. In order to get an overall picture of the work programme to date, this paper is an important reference document.

There followed a wide-ranging consultation programme, partly based on getting a response to the paper-providing opportunities to engage with many people (individually and in groups). We organised:

- on-line surveys for foster carers and staff in all sectors, with leadership from the Fostering Network and local authorities;

## Summary and recommendations

- workshops with young people, provided by Voices From Care;
- attendance at existing forums and meetings, to meet directly with carers and providers; and
- an all Wales event for local authority managers, staff and public sector partners. Leadership for this event was provided by AFA Cymru.

The outcomes of the National Fostering Framework work programme for 2015/16, including messages from the consultation exercises, have been brought together in this Phase One Report.

The case for change put forward in the First Thoughts paper was almost universally acknowledged, and agreement that a National Performance Framework should be established. This reflected both the scale of people's concerns and also the need to support effective change, tackling some major challenges which can be addressed only at a strategic level. We received a wealth of ideas, views and opinions about what sort of National Fostering Framework is required and its likely components: increased co-ordination; more sector-led improvement; a means of measuring, monitoring and improving performance and resource management; greater accountability and a search for economies of scale where appropriate. People told us that it should be comprehensive and aspirational, collaborative and inclusive - a means of ensuring that known concerns are addressed and of introducing greater consistency without sacrificing the acknowledged strengths and diversity within the current system.

Above all, it was acknowledged that a National Fostering Framework is only a means to an end and that we need to pursue three common aims:

- i. guarantee that fostering is seen as an essential, quality service provided to individual children and for the benefit of society as a whole;
- ii. ensure that foster carers feel valued and supported by their fostering service and by all of us; and
- iii. enable everybody to co-operate effectively in helping children in foster care to achieve the best possible outcomes, including good health and high levels of educational attainment.

We must find ways of delivering a National Fostering Framework Phase 2. A real momentum is building which we cannot afford to let slip. The work programme for the next phase is likely to involve developing a clear set of proposals and an outline implementation plan for what a National Performance Framework should look like, the structures and mechanisms and resources required to establish it. The proposals will need to consider which aspects of the service are best delivered on national, regional and local levels. This will build on the priority areas of action set out at the end of this Report.

The work will involve:

- Developing an agreed framework for allocating responsibilities at a national, regional and local authority levels and begin putting in place the appropriate structures (learning from the approach used in establishing the National Adoption Service)

- Creating a resource management and performance framework
- Establishing a Welsh identity for Foster Care, a national approach to marketing and use of social media
- Developing a national policy framework for foster care, to include a structure for training for foster carers
- Beginning a project to bring about greater consistency and transparency in the fees and allowances carers receive
- Addressing the issues raised in the initial scoping paper on Kinship Foster Care
- Producing strategies for commissioning placements between local authorities, with the independent sector (commercial providers) and independent providers (third sector).

If developing a National Fostering Framework is to improve outcomes for children and young people and support for foster carers, we must engage children and young people, foster carers, staff in the independent and third sector, and local authority staff and their public service partners in the work programme for Phase Two. Consideration must be given as to how this can best be achieved. Above all, principal decision-makers and leaders need to decide whether they are willing to commit to establishing a National Framework as the best means of responding to the concerns and aspirations expressed in a very unified way by the wide range of stakeholders who took part in the consultation exercises.



## Summary and recommendations

### RECOMMENDATIONS

Recommendations	Evidence	Delivery
1. Develop a National Fostering Framework, including the allocation of functions at national, regional and local authority levels and begin putting in place the appropriate structures.	Support for a National Fostering Framework was expressed by all key stakeholders during the consultation programme, with consistent views emerging about what elements of the fostering service could best be delivered on a national, regional and local basis.	Year One
2. Establish the right balance between local authority foster care, third sector providers and commercial providers in terms of national policy objectives, service quality considerations and value for money requirements.	There is considerable concern about the way the current 'market' operates in practice. It is not generating the right number and types of placements, delivering best value for the investment of public resources. Part 2, Section 16 of the Social Services and Well-being Act requires further consideration about the role social enterprises, co-operatives, user-led services and the third sector in delivering fostering services.	Year Two
3. Establish an all-Wales public service fostering collaborative, delivering services regionally and locally, incorporating all the relevant services directly provided by local authorities.	Local authority fostering services have lost ground over the last twenty years to the commercial sector. In achieving the correct balance between the sectors, it is important that local authority fostering services are as well-equipped as possible to meet the needs of children for local, publicly managed placements.	Year Three

Recommendations	Evidence	Delivery
4. Produce a national policy framework for fostering services, to include the training and support of foster carers.	A strong message coming from the consultation programme from foster carers and staff was the need to have more common policies across Wales. The training of foster carers, post approval and the support to carers were issues frequently mentioned.	Year Two
5. Introduce a national performance and resource framework, aligning this with the work being done to deliver the Welsh Community Care Information Service (WCCIS). A phased approach to implementation will be developed. A distinct performance framework should be developed for the independent sector (commercial providers and third sector providers).	The work in Phase One provided clear evidence about how little is known regarding the performance and resourcing of fostering services across Wales and that what we do know is fragmented. Work on a performance and resourcing framework is considered essential to maximise the opportunities presented by the implementation of the Welsh Community Care Information System (WCCIS).	Year One
6. Introduce a national web-site, social media, brand and identity for foster care in Wales, to underpin a marketing strategy for recruiting foster carers and improving communication.	The need to have an all-Wales identity for fostering was a very strong message from local authority staff and others during the consultation programme. This was seen as a key mechanism for improving the ability to communicate well with current foster carers and children and to encourage recruitment and retention.	Year One

## Summary and recommendations

### RECOMMENDATIONS

Recommendations	Evidence	Delivery
7. Ensure greater consistency in the use of Kinship Foster Care for children who are looked after, building on the initial scoping paper from Phase One.	The issues surrounding kinship foster care were very strong messages emerging from the consultation programme. Inconsistent use of kinship foster and a variety of practice approaches were identified through the work in Phase One. An issues paper was prepared, identifying the benefits that could be gained from developing a more national approach.	Year One
8. Develop national arrangements for commissioning all placements, regardless of sector but building on the work of the 4Cs.	Limited progress has been made in matching on an all-Wales basis, placement needs and the options available, partly because we have yet to develop appropriate tools for commissioning.	Year One

Recommendations	Evidence	Delivery
9. Harmonise policies for paying fees and allowances to local authority foster carers.	The payment of foster care allowances and fees was identified by foster carers and staff as a key issue during the consultation programme. The need for greater consistency and transparency were seen as key issues. It was recognised this will present particular challenges but one that should not be ignored.	Year Three
10. Benchmark best practice in corporate parenting across Councils and other public services – to improve outcomes for children and increase the resilience of foster care placements.	There were many examples of children in foster care achieving good outcomes as the result of positive family experiences in combination with help from social services, education, health, housing and other professionals. However, young people and foster carers expressed strong concerns were concerned about inconsistent and inadequate support.	Year One

# Scrutiny Report

## Performance Scrutiny Committee - Partnerships

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### Part 1

Date: 8 November 2017

### Subject: Forward Work Programme Update

**Author** Overview and Scrutiny Officer

The following officers have been invited to attend for this item:

Meryl Lawrence - Overview and Scrutiny Officer.

## Section A – Committee Guidance and Recommendations

### 1. Recommendations to the Committee

The Committee is asked to:

- (i) Endorse the proposed schedule for the next two Committee meetings;
- (ii) Confirm the topics to be considered, the invitees for each item, and indicate whether any additional information or research is required; and
- (iii) Note the list of reports that have been sent to the Committee for information over the last month.
- (iv) Note the Minutes of the Public Services Board held on 12 September 2017.

### 2. Context

- 2.1 The purpose of a forward work programme is to help ensure Councillors achieve organisation and focus in the undertaking of enquiries through the Overview and Scrutiny function. Effective work programming is essential to ensure that the work of Overview and Scrutiny makes a positive impact upon the Council's delivery of services.
- 2.2 The Centre for Public Scrutiny's Good Scrutiny Guide recognises the importance of the forward work programme. In order to 'lead and own the process', it states that Councillors should have ownership of their Committee's work programme, and be involved in developing, monitoring and evaluating it. The Good Scrutiny Guide also states that, in order to make an impact, the scrutiny workload should be co-ordinated and integrated into corporate processes, to ensure that it contributes to the delivery of corporate objectives, and that work can be undertaken in a timely and well-planned manner.

- 2.3 Further information about the work programming process, including the procedures for referring new business to the programme, can be found in our Scrutiny Handbook on the Council's Scrutiny webpages ([www.newport.gov.uk/scrutiny](http://www.newport.gov.uk/scrutiny)).

### **3. Information Submitted to the Committee**

- 3.2 The following information is attached:

**Appendix 1:** The current Committee forward work programme;

**Appendix 2:** List of information Reports sent to the Committee over the last month.

**Appendix 3:** Minutes of the Public Services Board meeting held on 12 September 2017.

## **Section B – Supporting Information**

### **4 Risk**

- 4.1 If proper work programming procedures are not put in place, the organisation and prioritisation of the work programme is put at risk. The work of Overview and Scrutiny could become disjointed from the work of the rest of the Council, which could undermine the positive contribution Overview and Scrutiny makes to service improvement through policy development.
- 4.2 This report is presented to each Committee every month in order to mitigate that risk. The specific risks associated with individual topics on the work programme will need to be addressed as part of the Committee's investigations.

### **5 Links to Council Policies and Priorities**

- 5.1 Having proper work programming procedures in place ensures that the work of Overview and Scrutiny makes a positive impact upon the Council's delivery of services, contributes to the delivery of corporate objectives, and ensures that work can be undertaken in a timely and well-planned manner.

### **6 Financial Implications**

- 6.1 There will be financial consequences for some of the reviews undertaken. These will be commented upon by the Head of Finance as the reports are presented. The preparing and monitoring of the work programme is done by existing staff for which budget provision is available.

## **Background Papers**

Scrutiny Handbook

**Performance Scrutiny Committee – Partnerships  
– Forward Work Programme**

<b>Wednesday 10 January 2018 at 5pm</b>		
<b>Topic</b>	<b>Invitees</b>	<b>Information Required / Committee's Role</b>
SIP - Quarter 2 Performance Update	<p>Rhys Cornwall – Head of People and Business Change</p> <p>Bev Owen – Strategic Director - Place (Economy and Skills Lead)</p> <p>William Beer, Public Health Wales (for the Health and Well-being section)</p> <p>CI David Morgan. Gwent Police (for the Safe and Cohesive section).</p>	<p>To consider the progress towards the objectives outlined in the SIP.</p> <p><b>To include an Update on the use of Shisha within Newport and how it could be regulated.</b></p>
Draft Wellbeing Plan	TBC	Consultation on the draft Plan before it is adopted by the PSB, and forward any comments to the PSB

<b>Wednesday 28 February 2018 at 5pm</b>		
<b>Topic</b>	<b>Invitees</b>	<b>Information Required / Committee's Role</b>
Education Achievement Services (EAS) Business Plan	<p>Deputy Chief Education Officer</p> <p>EAS Representative</p>	Performance Scrutiny – of the EAS Partnership and its achievement of the objectives within the Business Plan and consider the impact of the plan for communities within Newport
Education Achievement Services Contribution – Financial Year 2017/18 and Value for Money Model for Commissioning Arrangements	<p>Deputy Chief Education Officer</p> <p>EAS Representative</p>	<p>Detail of the financial contribution which the Council has made and the level of support which the EAS has provided to Newport over the financial year 2017/8.</p> <p>Information on a “Value For Money Model” so that the approach developed could be applied more widely</p>

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List of Reports sent to the Committee for information  
Up to 1 November 2017

<b>Name of Report</b>	<b>Date sent to Committee</b>	<b>Comments Received</b>
Minutes of the Public Service Board held on 12 September 2017	31/10/17	None

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**APPENDIX 3**

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# Minutes

## Newport Public Services Board

**Date:** 12 September 2017: Newport City Homes, Nexus House, Newport

**Time:** 10.00 am

**Present:**

**Statutory Partners:**

**Newport City Council:** Councillor D Wilcox (in the Chair); W Godfrey (Chief Executive); T McKim (Partnership Manager); N Dance (PSB Coordinator) E Wakeham , K Duffin

**Aneurin Bevan Health Board:** N Prygodzicz

**South Wales Fire and Rescue Service:** J Scrivens

**Natural Resources (Wales):** S Morgan

**Invited Partners:**

**Welsh Government:** A John

**Heddlu Gwent Police:** Supt M Williams

**Public Health Wales:** W Beer

**Office of Police & Crime Commissioner;** J Cuthbert, L Webber,

**GAVO:** M Featherstone

**RSLs:** C Doyle

**University of South Wales** – T Griffin

**Apologies:** K Dew (Aneurin Bevan University Health Board), C Davies (Natural Resources Wales) J Williams (Heddlu Gwent Police), N Davies (Probation Service), S Aitken (Public Health Wales), H Williams (University of South Wales)

No	Item	Action
1	Minutes	N Dance

	<p>The Minutes of the meeting of the Public Services Board held on 20 June, 2017 were confirmed as a true record.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Re Minute 6: Terms of Reference – N Dance reported that the financial resources clause had been simplified. The terms of reference would be circulated to members and published on the One Newport website.</li> <li>• Re Minute 8: Scrutiny of the PSB – T McKim reported that Welsh Government had issued new guidance to Scrutiny Committees regarding PSB scrutiny. The guidance would be taken into account in preparing a summary note for PSB members on their roles and responsibilities with regard to scrutiny.</li> <li>• Re Minute 13: Apprenticeships - Members were requested to return any outstanding questionnaires regarding apprenticeships so that a potential PSB apprenticeship model could be developed.</li> </ul>	<p>T McKim</p> <p>All</p>
<p><b>2</b></p>	<p><b>Local Well-being Plan Development</b></p> <p>The Board considered progress to date on the development of the Local Well-being Plan and the further steps proposed for the Plan to be in place by 3rd May 2018.</p> <p>The next step was a series of workshops with wider partners to identify interventions to address the PSB's thirteen emerging priorities.</p> <p>Well-being objectives also needed to be developed to reflect where the PSB considered collective action could be taken to impact positively on the state of well-being of the area.</p> <p>Members commented on the need to connect local people with the Plan and agreed that this would best be achieved through engagement work focused on the interventions.</p> <p><b>Agreed</b></p> <p>That the PSB identifies a number of key cross-cutting interventions that would span the 13 priorities and maximise contribution to all the Well-being Goals.</p>	<p>Sub group:</p> <p>T McKim, E Wakeham, J Scrivens, L MacDonald, A Robinson</p>
<p><b>3</b></p>	<p><b>Scrutiny of the PSB</b></p> <p>As part of the newly agreed process for scrutiny of the PSB, the Chair of the Performance Scrutiny Committee – Partnerships, Councillor Majid Rahman, had written to the PSB following the Committee's inaugural meeting.</p>	

	<p>The letter outlined the Committee’s comments on the PSB’s Single Integrated Plan Annual Report, noted that the Scrutiny Committee had received the Local Well-being Assessment for information and outlined the timetable for receipt of reports from the PSB going forward.</p> <p>Councillor Rahman attended the meeting as part of the process of developing links between the Scrutiny Committee and the PSB. He indicated that the discussions with SIP theme leads regarding the Annual Report had been robust and helpful.</p> <p>The Board indicated that it wished to work positively with the Scrutiny Committee. The Chair suggested that PSB members may wish to attend a meeting of the Scrutiny Committee to see how it operates. Individual PSB members, including NRW, University of South Wales, the Police and Crime Commissioner, offered to present to Scrutiny on the work they do. Councillor Rahman indicated that he would be inviting PSB members to present to the Committee.</p> <p><b>Agreed</b></p> <p>That this minute be shared with the Scrutiny Committee.</p>	<p>T McKim</p> <p>N Dance</p>
<p><b>4</b></p>	<p><b>PSB Sub-groups – Terms of Reference</b></p> <p>The Board considered a report which proposed amendments to the terms of reference (ToRs) of the PSB’s sub-groups.</p> <p>Members commented on the need to include reference to public involvement and participation in the ToRs for the Community and Engagement Group.</p> <p><b>Agreed</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i. To change the name of the Single Integrated Plan (SIP) Board to the ‘One Newport Strategy &amp; Performance Board’; to extend the membership of the Board to include all statutory members (Newport City Council; Aneurin Bevan University Health Board; South Wales Fire &amp; Rescue Service; and Natural Resources Wales); and to approve the updated roles &amp; responsibilities.</li> <li>ii. Statutory members to nominate representatives to sit on the Strategy and Performance Board</li> <li>ii. To approve the revised terms of reference for the Well-being Plan Sub-group, the Single Integrated Plan Theme Board and the Single Integrated Plan Priority Working Group.</li> </ul>	<p>Statutory members</p>

	<p>iii. To approve the revised terms of reference for the Community Engagement Group subject to referencing public involvement and participation.</p> <p>iv. To note that the delivery theme boards will be reviewed in April to reflect the requirements of the Wellbeing Plan.</p>	T McKim,
<b>5</b>	<p><b>Single Integrated Plan – Quarter 1 Performance Report</b></p> <p>The key themes within the Single Integrated Plan were:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Economy &amp; Skills</li> <li>• Health &amp; Wellbeing</li> <li>• Safe &amp; Cohesive Communities</li> </ul> <p>A performance dashboard had been compiled for each of the themes for the first quarter and each was circulated to the PSB. The dashboards set out a summary of performance under the headings:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Key achievements &amp; successes</li> <li>• Underperformance &amp; risks</li> <li>• Key performance measures</li> <li>• Plans for next quarter</li> </ul> <p>Lead Officers updated the PSB on progress and responded to questions.</p> <p><b>Pill Action – Update</b></p> <p>Supt Matt Williams updated the Board on the range of action underway in Pill. This included a number of high profile police operations, and joint activity with partners and the community, such as Operation Absorb, which had received positive feedback.</p> <p>Initiatives were developing which focused on young people and life choices.</p> <p><b>Agreed</b></p> <p>To note the reports.</p>	
<b>6</b>	<p><b>Letter from Newport Business Improvement District</b></p> <p>Will Godfrey reported that a letter had been received from Newport Now, the Newport Business Improvement District (BID), regarding anti-social behaviour in the city centre. This was a collective matter for the PSB and it was considered that the Manager of Newport Now should be invited to a future meeting to discuss the BID's concerns.</p> <p>Members requested an update on the City Centre</p>	

	<p>Masterplan to gain a fuller understanding of what was proposed.</p> <p><b>Agreed</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i. To invite the Manager of Newport Now to a future meeting of the PSB to discuss the BID's concerns.</li> <li>ii. To receive a presentation on the City Centre Masterplan at a future meeting.</li> </ul>	<p>W Godfrey</p> <p>B Owen</p>
<b>7</b>	<p><b>Information Station</b></p> <p>W Godfrey reported that NCC had been approached by the Welsh Government (WG) to view the Information Station in the city centre as a potential location for the National Software Academy (NSA) - a WG / Cardiff University partnership project. The Academy was now expanding and required new premises in order for it to remain in Newport.</p> <p>The Information Station (branded One Newport Information Station) provides some NCC services and a limited number of partner services.</p> <p>The intention is to lease the top three floors of the building to NSA. Steps will be undertaken to ensure that this would not impact on One Newport partnership teams.</p> <p><b>Agreed</b> To note the information.</p>	
<b>8</b>	<p><b>Gwent Police Strategic Intelligence Assessment</b></p> <p>This item was removed from the agenda.</p>	
<b>9</b>	<p><b>Welsh Carbon Budgets: Call for Evidence</b></p> <p>A Call for Evidence had been issued by the UK Committee on Climate Change (UKCCC) which would inform the advice they provide to Welsh Government on setting carbon budgets and interim targets for Wales.</p> <p>A PSB response, prepared and submitted by NCC and NRW ahead of the 11 September deadline, was tabled for information.</p> <p><b>Agreed</b> To note the response.</p>	

<b>10</b>	<b>Forward Work Programme</b>  The forward work programme was submitted. Members were requested to advise of any further items.	
<b>11</b>	<b>Meeting dates</b>  21 November 2017 – Civic Centre 12 December 2017 – City Campus, University of South Wales	