

Councillor Mary Jones
Chair, Scrutiny Programme Committee

Please ask for: Councillor Elliott King
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Our Ref: EK/HS
Your Ref:
Date: 15 January 2020

Dear Cllr Jones

Thank you for your letter dated 23 December 2019. Please find response below.

In relation to Flying Start, provide more information on the framework for parenting support;

Parenting Support in Swansea is co-funded from both Flying Start and Families First Programmes to ensure a Swansea wide offer of parenting provision regardless of age or geographical area. The outreach element of Flying Start provides parenting provision for families with children aged 0-4 living outside of Flying Start areas.

For Flying Start entitlement and any parenting outreach, the offer of support is determined by the needs identified in through referrals to ensure that the support is provided and a timely response matched to the individual needs of parents facing challenges in their parenting. As a service we offer families a pathway of support in line with the family support continuum of need. The three categories of support are as follows:

Family Advice and Support (Drop in)

These provide the families with an opportunity to explore any difficulties they are facing in one of the many settings across Swansea. As a service we promote the inclusion of both parents attending these sessions wherever possible, exploring the needs of the family and assessing motivation to change.

Group Support Programmes

The aim of group support through accredited programmes, is to achieve resilience and motivation as well as enhancing parenting skills, self-esteem and managing children's behaviour.

One to one support (Family Support)

The more intensive offer of one to one support enables the family to identify a plan that will help address issues impacting on their ability to parent positively. The emphasis continues to be on achieving and building resilience factors, whilst assessing motivation and developing problem solving skills using a solution focused approach.

In relation to NEETS Reduction, we were interested to know more about the plans for Looked After Children / Care Leavers and the type of specific support that is likely to be provided, as well as any other measures to reduce NEETS;

The Children's Commissioner's publication 'Hidden Ambitions '(February 2017) set out "*Wales' commitment to young people leaving care.*" The document highlights that care leavers need the same sort of opportunities, assistance and support that all parents try to give their children as they start to make their way in the world.

Hidden Ambitions calls for local authorities to place '*more focus*' on developing young people's skills for independence. "*Local Authorities should be like large Family Businesses in terms of their role as Corporate Parents of looked after young people. They should be prepared to offer all of the children under their care bespoke access to training and job opportunities in their many areas of employment.*"

It is our intention to realise this ambition through positive action and arrangements, making better use of available resources both within and outside of the local authority. This will be explored through a pilot for our Looked After Children/Care Leavers utilising a partnership between the following agencies:

- Social Workers (Swansea Council)
- Young Persons Advisors (Barnardo's)
- Cam Nesa Post16 Lead Workers (Swansea Council ESF)
- Working Wales Careers Advisors (WG)
- Welsh Government Work Based Learning Provider (Private Sector)
- Swansea Working & Beyond Bricks and Mortar (Swansea Council)
- All Local Authority Departments

Communities First Legacy funding will provide an eight week pilot programme, split into two blocks of four weeks (Phase One and Phase Two) of skills development for identified young people. The aim of the programme is to broaden aspirational goals through building confidence, and increasing motivation to work.

Phase one of this pilot programme will concentrate on the interests, abilities and needs of each learner. This phase will also consider independent living skills, and incorporate elements of work skills such as 'budgeting when working', and 'what employers want'. Throughout Phase One partners will work collaboratively to identify and overcome challenges/obstacles, whilst sharing and learning good practice.

In Phase Two, learners will consider requirements of the work place and prepare for work experience opportunities. Swansea Working and Beyond Bricks and Mortar colleagues will source opportunities within the local authority departments to provide real time workplace experiences for learners.

Working Wales staff and local Work Based Learning providers will help extend this experience through Welsh Government funded provision such as Traineeships* and Apprenticeships. (Traineeships are fully funded non-employed opportunities for under 18's, whilst Apprenticeships are employed opportunities that require departmental contribution).

This pilot is a great opportunity to support our leaving care population to take steps towards becoming economically active and stable, whilst also benefiting Local Authority departments by providing a workforce to meet their medium and long-term responsibilities.

We currently in the process of identifying the cohort of 6 to 8 young people to start the pilot programme which will then be evaluated to inform further work.

In relation to Play Opportunities:

- please share / signpost us to the latest Play Sufficiency Assessment.

Under the Child & Families (Wales) Measure 2010, each Local Authority is required to undertake a Play Sufficiency Assessment every three years. The 2019 Assessment reports on a series of RAG graded measures as well as consultation and engagement with service users and partners. The Assessment details what is going well in Swansea and what areas will require work over the next 3 years. This was approved by Cabinet on the 18th July 2019. Details can be found at the following link:

<https://democracy.swansea.gov.uk/mglIssueHistoryHome.aspx?IId=33429&LLL=0>

- confirm whether there has been any increase in Play Therapy provision over the last year.

We do not specifically capture the specific spend on play therapy. However the overall spend on therapy has increased year on year and an internal therapy team has been in place for two years, consisting of a Psychologist, and three therapists. One of the therapists has undertaken specialist play therapy training. In addition the post adoption support service is now in place, and again this can offer a wide range of therapeutic support to our most vulnerable children.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'EJ King', with a long horizontal stroke extending to the right.

**Y Cynghorydd/Councillor Elliott J King
Aelod Y Cabinet dros Wasanaethau Plant/ Cabinet Member for Children's Services
(Early Years)**

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'Smp', written in a cursive style.

**Y Cynghorydd/Councillor Sam Pritchard
Aelod y Cabinet dros y Gwasanaethau Plant (Pobl Ifanc)/Cabinet Member for
Children's Services (Young People)**