

## **LIFELONG LEARNING SCRUTINY COMMITTEE**

18th June, 2007

**PRESENT** – Councillor Hughes (in the Chair); Councillors Armstrong, Davies, Francis, Galletley, Lawton, Lister, Long, Richmond, A. J. Scott and Walker. (11)

**STATUTORY CO-OPTees** – Canon Sheila Bamber and Mr. M. Frank. (2)

**NON-STATUTORY CO-OPTees** – Mr. R. Egan, Mr. D. Moyes and Mr. R. Bennett. (3)

**OFFICERS IN ATTENDANCE** – Murray Rose, Director of Children’s Services, Gill Walker, Assistant Director, Children’s Services, Steve Thompson, Assistant Director, Community Services, Rachel Jones, Head of School Place Planning and Assets Team and Anita Hamer, Co-ordinator for Pupil Support Service.

**ALSO IN ATTENDANCE** – Mark Cain and Jo Dawson, Representatives from Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS).

**APOLOGIES** – Mr. K. Cotgrave, Mr. T. R. Fisher and Mrs. H. Ellis. (3)

**ABSENT** – Ms. S. Robinson. (1)

**LLL4. DECLARATION OF INTERESTS** – Canon Sheila Bamber declared a personal and non-prejudicial interest in Minute 9 and Minute 10 below.

**LLL5. MINUTES** – Submitted - The Minutes (previously circulated) of the meetings of this Scrutiny Committee held on 26th March 2007 and 17th May 2007.

**RESOLVED** - That the Minutes be approved as a correct record.

**LLL6. TIMINGS OF MEETINGS FOR THE MUNICIPAL YEAR 2007/08 - RESOLVED**  
– That the timing of ordinary meetings of this Scrutiny Committee for the remainder of this Municipal Year be at 4.00 p.m.

**LLL7. CHILD AND ADOLESCENT MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES UPDATE - OVERVIEW** – Pursuant to Minute LLL37(2)(g)/Oct/06, in relation to the work conducted by the Behaviour Support Task and Finish Review Group, Members of the Committee received a presentation from representatives from the Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service (CAMHS). Members were informed of the key policy and service issues that drive the CAMHS agenda in Darlington, the national policy in relation to service provision and how the programme is involved with the Every Child Matters agenda. Members also received an overview of the local Strategy and Implementation Plan, including the key priorities in relation to the engagement of young people, learning and development and the EDUC/CAMHS scheme, and information on the CAMHS Early Intervention Strategy.

Discussion ensued on the relationship between resources and needs, and the audit of need recently conducted; the level of support offered by the Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service; the availability of training; and the process of diagnosis.

**RESOLVED** – That the representatives from CAMHS be thanked for the overview given.

**LLL8. DOSH - OVERVIEW** – Members of the Committee received an overview from the Assistant Director, Community Services, on the Youth Opportunity Fund, marketed in Darlington under the name ‘DOSH’. The Assistant Director outlined the nature of the scheme and introduced representatives of the Youth Committee, who are responsible for making decisions in relation to requests for funding.

Discussion ensued on the learning opportunities available for those young people involved in the Youth Opportunity Fund; the integrated working with the Children’s Services Department; the Youth Participation Strategy; the criteria applied by the Youth Committee in making a decision; and how young people can get involved in the scheme.

**RESOLVED** – That the Assistant Director, and Youth Committee, be thanked for the overview given.

**LLL9. EASTBOURNE CHURCH OF ENGLAND ACADEMY – PROJECT UPDATE** – The Director of Children’s Services submitted a report (previously circulated) to update Committee Members on the project to establish the Eastbourne Church of England Academy in Darlington.

The submitted report outlined the recent developments that had taken place. These included the submission of the finalised version of the Outline Business Case to Partnership for Schools (PFS) at the end of April; the submission of a revised Outline Business Case on 25th May 2007, following early feedback; the submission of the Funding Agreement by the Sponsors; the conditional grant of approval by the School Organisation Committee on the 27th April 2007; the increase in funding by the Partnership for Schools; the revision to the procurement method for academies and the attendance of the six Framework Design and Build Partners at a Preview Day on 19th June 2007; the establishment of a Transition Working Group; and staffing implications and developments.

Discussion ensued on the proportion of work being conducted by the Council compared to that being conducted by the Sponsors, and the timescales involved in ensuring that a full staff is in place by September 2007.

**RESOLVED** – That the content of the report be noted.

**LLL10. THE VISION AND ETHOS FOR THE EASTBOURNE CHURCH OF ENGLAND ACADEMY** – The Director of Education for the Diocese of Durham, and David and Anne Crossland, submitted a report (previously circulated) to inform Members of the vision and ethos for the Eastbourne Church of England Academy.

The submitted report outlined the three strands of the vision for the Academy. The strands focus on learners, the Academy itself and the wider community. The report also highlighted the development of an Academy Development Plan based on the vision, and the key pieces of work identified under the plan.

The Director of Education for the Diocese of Durham reported that the structure of the Governing Body was now taking shape and that plans were in place to develop a Parent Council and a Stakeholder Reference Group.

Discussion ensued on the admissions policy in relation to religious upbringing; the specialism of Business and Enterprise; and the proposed aspirational targets.

**RESOLVED** – That the content of the report be noted.

**LLL11. RELOCATION OF THE PUPIL REFERRAL UNIT (PRU) AND EDUCATION OTHER THAN AT SCHOOL (EOTAS) SERVICES TO THE FORMER RISE CARR PRIMARY SCHOOL** - The Director of Children's Services submitted a report (previously circulated) to inform Members of the progress on the development of an integrated Pupil Referral Unit (PRU) and Education Other Than At School (EOTAS) Service through the refurbishment of the former Rise Carr Primary School.

The submitted report stated that the Planning Committee had approved the revised plans and granted planning permission and listed building consent for the development, outlined the tender process that had now commenced and provided a revised timescale for the development. The report also presented the financial implications and provided information on proposed consultation.

The Head of School Place Planning and Assets Team reported that the tendering process had been completed since the submission of the report, and that a contractor had now been appointed. It was also reported that the school had suffered some structural damage in the previous year and had become a target for vandalism.

Discussion ensued on the staff requirements in the Pupil Referral Unit and the possible use of Closed Circuit Television (CCTV) to monitor the site.

**RESOLVED** – That the content of the report be noted.

**LLL12. UPDATE ON SCHOOL ATTENDANCE AND EXCLUSIONS IN DARLINGTON** - The Director of Children's Services submitted a report (previously circulated) to inform Members of the school attendance and exclusion levels within Darlington for this academic year to date.

The submitted report outlined an overall improvement compared with the figures at this time in the academic year 2005/2006, the slight difference between the performance of boys and girls, the reasons for absence and the increased use of sanctions. The report highlighted concerns in relation to the number of exclusions, and outlined the strategies in place to reduce these figures.

Discussion ensued on persistent absence schools; comparisons with neighbouring authorities; the figures relating to travellers attendance; the high absence rate in Year One and the reasons for this; and the lack of pupil engagement.

**RESOLVED** – That the content of the report be noted.

**LLL13. WORK PROGRAMME 2007/08** - The Director of Corporate Services submitted a report (previously circulated) requesting that further consideration be given to this Scrutiny Committee's Work Programme and review topics for the 2007/08 Municipal Year.

**RESOLVED** – That the content of the report be noted.

**LLL14. POLICY REVIEW - (1) Review of Progress on Policy Review Items – Health and Safety in Schools Task and Finish Review Group** – The Director of Corporate Services submitted a report (previously circulated) to provide an update on the progress of the Health and Safety in Schools Task and Finish Review Group.

The submitted report outlined the work conducted to date and the ongoing work proposed.

**RESOLVED** - That the approach of the Health and Safety in Schools Task and Finish Review Group be endorsed.

**(2) Review Items Final Report Back** – There were no reports to consider.

**(3) Responses of the Executive to Reports of this Scrutiny Committee** – There were no responses to consider.

**LLL15. EXECUTIVE CALL-IN - (1) Call-In Items Relating to Key Decisions of the Executive** - There were no call-in items.

**(2) Other Call-In Items** - There were no call-in items.

**LLL16. BEST VALUE - MONITORING OF PROGRESS ON BEST VALUE REVIEW AND IMPROVEMENT ACTION PLANS** - There was no progress to be reported back to this meeting