

CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

1st March, 2010

PRESENT – Councillor Lister (in the Chair); Councillors Armstrong, Burton, Chapman, Curry, Davies, Francis, Galletley, Long, J. Lyonette and Richmond. (9)

APOLOGIES – David Moyes and Canon Bamber. (3)

ALSO – Councillor Hughes (Cabinet Member).

NON-STATUTORY CO-OPTEES – Mr. R. Egan, Mr. T. Fisher, Mr. N. Rees and Mrs. C.J. Taylor. (4)

NON-VOTING CO-OPTEE – Ms. S. Lund. (1)

ABSENT – Mr. M. Frank and Mrs. V. Mitchell

OFFICERS IN ATTENDANCE – George McQueen, Assistant Director (Planning and Resources), Andrew Dunn, Assistant Director, School Improvement and Development, Paul Richardson, Head of 16-19, Helen Ellison, 14-19 Partnership Manager and Mary Sweeney, Children’s Accommodation Manager all within the Department of Children’s Services.

CYP59. DECLARATION OF INTERESTS – Councillor Lister declared a personal and non-prejudicial interest in Item CYP62 below as she is a Member of the QE Sixth Form College Board, and Councillor Long declared a personal and non-prejudicial interest in Item CYP62 below as she is a Member of the Darlington College Board. Both Members took no part in the discussions thereon.

CYP60. APPOINTMENT OF CHAIR – RESOLVED – That Councillor Lister be appointed Chair of this Scrutiny Committee for the remainder of the Municipal Year 2009/10.

CYP61. MINUTES – Submitted - The Minutes (previously circulated) of the meeting of this Scrutiny Committee held on 11th January, 2010.

RESOLVED – That the Minutes be approved as a correct record.

CYP62. CHANGES TO POST 16 EDUCATION - The Director of Children’s Services submitted a report (previously circulated) to advise Members of the changes to post 16 education and the impact on the local authority and post 16 education providers in Darlington.

As from 1st April, 2010 responsibility for commissioning of learning provision for young people transferred from the disbanded Learning and Skills Council to the local authority. The responsibility for commissioning training for learners aged 19 and over transfers to the new Skills Funding Agency (SFA). Commissioning of Apprenticeships will rest with the National Apprenticeship Service.

RESOLVED – That the report be noted.

CYP63. OFSTED INSPECTIONS OF CHILDREN’S HOMES AND SHORT BREAK CENTRE FOR DISABLED CHILDREN – OUTCOMES – The Director of Children’s Services submitted a report (previously circulated) to inform Members of the outcome of Ofsted Inspections of Children’s Homes and the Short Break Centre for disabled children.

It was reported that since July 2009 three children’s homes and the short break centre have been inspected by Ofsted as part of ongoing inspections in line with the requirements of the Care Standards Act 2000 and all the provisions have been deemed to be a sound provision with the short break centre for disabled children deemed a strong provision. Ofsted found areas of strength in every setting.

Members of the Committee examined the full report of Ofsted and raised questions of officers on the areas deemed to require action including access to telephone land lines; private and confidential information contained within the home logs; regulation 33 visits; and the staffing issues at one particular home which officers advised Members has now been resolved.

RESOLVED – That the report be noted.

CYP64. ANNUAL UNANNOUNCED INSPECTION OF CONTACT, REFERRAL AND ASSESSMENT ARRANGEMENTS WITHIN DARLINGTON BOROUGH COUNCIL CHILDREN’S SERVICES – OUTCOME OF INSPECTIONS – The Director of Children’s Services submitted a report (previously circulated) to advise Members of this Scrutiny of the outcome of the Ofsted unannounced inspection of contact, referral and assessment arrangements within Children’s Services which took place during January, 2010.

It was reported that the inspection had identified no areas for priority action but highlighted some areas for development which are currently known to the service and the subject of current work. Members questions were in relation to the areas for development including caseload pressures; the domestic abuse referral system and the computer recording system.

Members requested a report back to this Scrutiny in six months time to provide an update on the areas for development raised within the submitted report.

RESOLVED – (a) That the report be noted.

(b) That an update report be submitted to this Scrutiny Committee in six months time.

CYP65. WORK PROGRAMME 2009/10 – Pursuant to Minute CYP64/Apr/09, 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 remainder of the Municipal Year 2009/10.

The submitted report gave the background to the work programme and it was requested that Members give consideration to a schedule (also previously circulated) which had been compiled detailing the dates of meetings of this Scrutiny Committee together with those plans, strategies and reviews which could be considered at each of those meetings.

Reference was made to a the Task and Finish Review Group on Language Learning Provision and councillor Long reported that a meeting is to be arranged with Ruth Bernstein to advise the Members of the Group on the English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) Action Plan.

With regard to the Multi Use Games Areas Review Group, it was reported that a meeting of the Group is to be arranged to meet with Ashley Hill, locality Co-ordinator in Children's Services who has been working on, along with Cultural Services, a information document for schools to sit alongside the Community Use Agreements.

With regard to the visits to the Redhall Turnaround Centre Pam Sayer has been approached to provide suitable dates for small groups of Members to visit the Centre. These dates to be circulated to all Members of this Scrutiny Committee in due course.

A Member raised a question in relation to the new Ofsted Framework and it was agreed to submit a report to the next meeting.

With regard to sustainable schools, it was reported that the Economy and Environment Scrutiny Committee had undertaken a visit to Northwood School and it was proposed that a future meeting of this Scrutiny Committee could be held at the School to include a presentation from the Head on the agenda.

RESOLVED – That the Work Programme 2009/10 be noted.

CYP66. POLICY REVIEW - (1) Review of Progress on Policy Review Items – There was no progress to report.

(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 from the Executive to report.

CYP67. 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.