

## **CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE SCRUTINY COMMITTEE**

27<sup>th</sup> February, 2012

**PRESENT** – Councillor Lister (in the Chair); Councillors Crudass, Curry, Galletley, L. Hughes, Hutchinson, J.M. Lyonette, E.A. Richmond and C. Taylor. (9)

**APOLOGIES** – Councillors Hutchinson, J. Vasey and Wright; and Mr. T. Fisher. (4)

**STATUTORY CO-OPTEES** – Mr. M. Frank. (1)

**NON-STATUTORY CO-OPTEES** – Mr. R. Egan and Mr. D. Moyes. (2)

**ALSO IN ATTENDANCE** – Councillor C. Hughes, Cabinet Member with Children and Young People Portfolio; and Anita Blackburn, Vice-Principal, Queen Elizabeth Sixth Form College.

**OFFICERS IN ATTENDANCE** – Jenni Cooke, Assistant Director, Children, Families and Learning.

**CYP14. DECLARATION OF INTERESTS** – There were no declarations of interest reported at the meeting.

**CYP15. MINUTES** – Submitted - The Minutes (previously circulated) of the meeting of this Scrutiny Committee held on 9<sup>th</sup> January, 2012.

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

**CYP16. WORK PROGRAMME FOR THE MUNICIPAL YEAR 2011/12** – Pursuant to Minute CYP8/Sep/11, the Director of Resources submitted a report (previously circulated) to give consideration to the work programme items scheduled by this Scrutiny Committee for the remainder of the Municipal Year 2011/12.

It was also emphasised that the work programme was a rolling programme and any Member of this Scrutiny could request an item to be included provided that a Quad of Aims had been submitted to the Scrutiny Committee prior to ensure that it contributed to the strategic aims of the Council.

Members approved the Terms of Reference for the monitoring of the recommendations from the Safeguarding Children's Inspection following a recommendation from the Monitoring and Co-ordination Group at its meeting held on 9<sup>th</sup> January, 2012. Members discussed this item at this meeting (see Minute CYP18 below).

The Chair sought Members approval for the inclusion of Alcohol and Young People onto the work programme of this Scrutiny Committee and that the views of the Monitoring and Co-ordination Group be sought thereon.

**RESOLVED** – (a) That the work programme be noted.

(b) That the Chair seek approval from the Monitoring and Co-ordination Group to include Alcohol and Young People in the work programme of the Children and Young People Scrutiny Committee.

**CYP17. CORPORATE PARENTING PANEL** – The Director of People submitted a report (previously circulated) to provide Members of this Scrutiny with information regarding the Corporate Parenting Panel. In accordance with the terms of reference approved by this Scrutiny Committee at its meeting on 5<sup>th</sup> September, 2011, Members gave consideration to areas for focus for 2012/13 to improve the work of the Corporate Parenting Panel.

The Children Act 1989 provides the legislative base for a child or young person to be ‘looked after’ by a Local Authority and the Panel was established in 1998. In 2007 the Darlington Corporate Parenting Panel was reviewed to extend its membership and have a clear remit with a focus on performance and outcomes. Following the recommendations of the Peer Review in 2011, the role of the Corporate Parenting Panel has been looked at again to ensure it is fulfilling its responsibilities towards this group of children and young people.

Members discussed the remit of the Corporate Parenting Panel; extending its membership to involve other agencies and the possible introduction of named substitutes to address the issues with attendance; developing a clear reporting mechanism; ways to involve the young people; and publishing an Annual Report of the Panel. It was emphasised that all Members had a responsibility as a ‘corporate parent’

Following Members discussions it was proposed that a Task and Finish Review Group be established to address and discuss in further detail the current role of the Corporate Parenting Panel taking into account the recommendations of the Peer Challenge. It was also agreed that the Task and Finish Review Group should include the current Members and officers of the Corporate Parenting Panel.

**RESOLVED** – (a) That the report be received.

(b) That a Task and Finish Review Group be established to review the Corporate Parenting Panel

**CYP18. ANNOUNCED INSPECTION OF SAFEGUARDING AND LOOKED AFTER SERVICES** – The Director of People submitted a report (previously circulated) to inform Members of the outcome of the Ofsted inspection of ‘Safeguarding Services and Provision for Looked After Children’ and the identified key strengths and areas for improvement.

The Inspection assessed services provided individually and jointly by Darlington Borough Council; County Durham and Darlington NHS (Primary Care Trust); County Durham and Darlington Foundation Trust; Tees, Esk and Wear Valley Foundation Trust; Durham Constabulary; and any voluntary or private sector providing working with children and young people in the Borough focusing on safeguarding outcomes. The Action Plan contained actions for all the other agencies involved.

Overall the inspectors judged service provision to be adequate. Out of the 18 outcome judgements made, nine were graded good and nine were graded as adequate.

Members examined the Action Plan which had been developed from the Ofsted recommendations for action immediately, within three months and within six months and will continue to receive regular monitoring update reports on the progress of the Action Plan. The Action Plan will also be monitored by the Local Safeguarding Board. The Assistant Director, Children, Families and Learning reported that for the actions contained within the Action Plan relating to the Council, all were either completed or in progress for completion.

**RESOLVED** – (a) That the report be received.

(b) That Members approve the Action Plan.

(c) That Members use the areas identified for consideration to help inform their short and medium term work programme.

(d) That this Scrutiny Committee receive regular monitoring update reports.

**CYP19. POLICY REVIEW – REVIEW OF PROGRESS OF POLICY REVIEW ITEMS - (1) Children and Families Early Intervention and Prevention Review Group** – Submitted – The note of the meeting of the Children and Families Early Intervention and Prevention Review Group held on 13<sup>th</sup> February, 2012 (previously circulated), established to examine children and families early intervention.

**RESOLVED** – That the progress of the Review Group be noted.

**(2) Attendance at Reception and Key Stage 1 Review Group – Final Report** – The Director of Resources submitted a report (previously circulated) to present the outcomes and findings of the Review Group established by the Children and Young People Scrutiny Committee to scrutinise attendance at Key Stage 1 and Reception within schools in the borough of Darlington.

**RESOLVED** – That the Children and Young People Scrutiny Committee endorse the conclusions and the following recommendations of the Attendance at Reception and Key Stage 1 Review Group :

- (a) That a publicity campaign, including leaflets and posters be introduced, as a low cost effective measure to raise awareness to parents of the importance of school attendance at Reception and Key Stage 1.
- (b) That schools be advised to commence the rolling programme of school/parent education a lot earlier and to encourage the importance of attendance at an early age. This may have an impact on attendance and allay any doubts and fears parents may have in sending their young child to School.
- (c) That this Scrutiny Committee continue to monitor progress on the recommendations with particular interest on improvements to the up-take of the Flexible Free Entitlement.