

**CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE SCRUTINY COMMITTEE**

20th September, 2010

**PRESENT** – Councillor Burton (in the Chair); Councillors Cossins, Curry, Davies, Francis, Lyonette and Richmond. (7)

**APOLOGIES** – Councillors Armstrong, Galletley, Lister, Long; Mr. Fisher and Mr. Egan.

**NON-STATUTORY CO-OPTEES** – Mr. Moyes, Mr. Rees and Mr. Taylor. (3)

**STATUTORY CO-OPTEES** – Mr. M. Frank.

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

**ABSENT** – The Ven. S. Bain, Mrs. Mitchell and Mr. Grant.

**OFFICERS IN ATTENDANCE** – David Goodchild, Policy Advisor within Chief Executive's Department; Julian Kenshole, Head of Policy and Performance, Jenni Cooke, Assistant Director – Children and Families, Melanie Stainthorpe, Admissions Manager, Rachel Jones, Head of School Place Planning and Assets Team, Nigel Pell-Ilderton, Lead Officer School Development and Improvement, Wendy Ripley, Assistant Director Schools, Improvement and Development, Gill Walker, Assistant Director – Partnerships, Chris Archer, Head of Service, Early Years and Childcare and Sure Start within Children's Services Department; Neil Drew, Leisure and Arts Manager, Emma Reah, Sport and Physical Activity Development Manager within Community Services Department.

**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 28th June, 2010.

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

**CYP16. CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE SCRUTINY COMMITTEE**

**PERFORMANCE REPORT 4TH QUARTER 2009/10** – The Assistant Chief Executive submitted a report (previously circulated) for Members to scrutinise the four service plans for which we are responsible for and also those elements of the Sustainable Community Strategy for which this Scrutiny have responsibility.

It was reported that the overall aggregated target for the four service plans was being achieved, with the Partnership plan showing above target performance. Data was available for 139 indicators at quarter 4 with 39 performing above target, 67 on target and 36 below target. Using the latest date there were 152 indicators in the four service plans at quarter 4, 43 were

performing above target, 70 on target and 38 below target. Data was unavailable for one indicator.

Discussion ensued around the indicators performing below target and Members questions were in connection with LI1294 the percentage of schools achieving the National Healthy Schools Status and NI062 the percentage of looked after children with 3 or more placements during the year.

**RESOLVED** – (a) Members note the performance against the service plans.

(b) Set up task and finish review groups as necessary to scrutinise performance in identified services and/or for individual performance indicators as decided.

(c) Consider performance against the Sustainable Community Strategy and Local Area Agreement for those indicators which the Committee is responsible for scrutinising and note the overall performance, with reasons for under performance.

(d) Note the performance of all national indicators linked to all scrutiny committees where data is available.

**CYP17. CHILDREN’S SOCIAL CARE SERVICES COMPLAINTS, COMPLIMENTS AND COMMENTS ANNUAL REPORT 2009/10** – The Director of Corporate Services submitted a report (previously circulated) to examine the Annual Children’s Services Care Complaints, Compliments and Comments Annual Report 2009/10 and the breakdown of complaints, compliments and comments received for Children’s Social Care during 1st April, 2009 and 31st March, 2010.

There is a legal requirement for the Council to publish an annual report on Children’s Social Care complaints for consideration by Council members. It was highlighted that the most common complaints received concerned staff attitude and behaviour and this was attributed to changes in social workers which was now being addressed as part of a recruitment issue. Out of 25 complaints received, eight were upheld, four partially upheld, seven not upheld, two were inconclusive and one was ongoing at the time of writing the report. Members were advised that as a result of all complaints received actions are identified to look at the processes and ensure that the quality of service improves.

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

**CYP18. REVIEW OF CHILDREN’S SERVICES (SOCIAL CARE) CHILDREN’S HOMES** – The Director of Children’s Services submitted a report (previously circulated) to provide Members with an update following the most recent Ofsted Inspections and to provide an overview/evaluation of the strengths and concerns in relation to the current service.

It was reported that since May 2010, two children’s homes and the short break centre for disabled children have been inspected by Ofsted, in accordance with the requirements of the Care Standards Act 2000. The provision was found to be satisfactory in three of the inspections, but inadequate in the case of one children’s home and the areas which were deemed as requiring action or where recommendations were made have been the subject of focused work with

managers and staff in the children's homes. Members also examined in detail the overview of the recent inspections and the action plans outlined to address any issues.

It was reported that in the last five years 24 young people have left residential care with positive outcomes however since August 2007 there has been a 41% increase in demand for residential provision for young people with complex needs who are not able to live successfully in the current provision offered by this Council in the smaller homes and external provision is required to meet the demand.

It was also reported that there are currently two workstreams being undertaken by the Children's Services Project Team looking at the residential services and potential options for service provision and this will include looking at the current model to determine cost effectiveness and identify the demands for future residential services. The Regional Improvement and Efficiency Partnership have also initiated a project "The Tees Valley Sub-Regional Commissioning Review of Residential Provision" to review the commissioning of residential provision in the North East with the aim of attracting new providers and improving the range of service provision. The plan is expected to be completed by April, 2011.

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

**CYP19. ANNUAL REPORT OF THE LOCAL ADMISSION FORUM 2010** – The Director of Children's Services submitted a report (previously circulated) to present the Annual Report of the Local Admissions Forum 2010 which outlined some of the Admission to School practices and procedures this authority operated for the previous academic year.

The submitted report had been presented to the Local Admissions Forum for their consideration and approval before it was cleared by the Director of Children's Services and forwarded to the Office of The Schools Adjudicator before the deadline of 30th June.

The submitted report outlined key areas of interest pertinent to the admissions process in Darlington; gave details of the number of families who have exercised their right to appeal; the provision of school places and the Fair Access Protocol. It was reported that for the 2010/11 period, 92% of families were allocated a place at a secondary school of their preference, whilst at primary school entry the figure is 94%.

Members questions were in relation to the number of successful appeals at St. Aidan's and the reasons for this; the use of temporary addresses used by families in an attempt to secure a place in the school of their choice and the practices in place by the Admissions Team to investigate and alleviate this problem; and admission arrangements for children with disability and accessibility issues.

**RESOLVED** – That the report and Annual Report of the Local Admission Forum 2010 be noted.

**CYP20. EDUCATED OTHER THAN AT SCHOOL (EOTAS)** – The Director of Children's Services submitted a report (previously circulated) on Darlington's EOTAS (Education Other Than at School) services which included information on The Phoenix Centre, a pupil referral unit for permanently excluded pupils; The Bridge, a pupil referral unit for pupils who would

benefit from alternative provision with a focus on vocational opportunities; the Home and Hospital Teaching Service for young people with severe medical problems; and Elective Home Education of which there were currently 120 pupils whose parents have elected to educate at home.

It was reported that the majority of those parents who have elected to educate at home were from travelling families, those who were unable to access a place at the school of their choice and those who believe in alternative education provision. Members discussed the options available to this authority to have these young people educated in the interim and the possible use of School Attendance Orders.

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

**CYP21. SCHOOL STANDARDS IN DARLINGTON** – The Director of Children’s Services submitted a report (previously circulated) to provide Members of this Scrutiny with the cumulative standards of attainment and achievement recorded by schools in Darlington in 2010.

It was reported that performance overall was improved. The Early Years Foundation Stage Profile had increased by 6.6% and was above target by 1.4%; the gap between the lowest 20% achieving pupils and the rest of the cohort had narrowed by 2.5%; at Key Stage 1 school performance had increased in 4 of the 11 indicators in 2010 and over a three year trend results have improved on trend for most measure and performance was comparative regionally and nationally; at Key Stage 2 thirteen primary schools did not take part in SATs testing therefore comparison had been difficult however comparing year on year teacher assessments it was reported that the percentage of children making two levels across Key Stage 2 had risen from 79% to 86.9% in English (up 70%) and from 84.9% to 87.5% in mathematics (up 2.6%). Darlington is ranked 11th out of 132 compared to other local authorities which returned results; and at Key Stage 4 for 2010 56.4% of pupils achieved five or more A\* to C grades including English and Maths compared to 52.9% in 2009.

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

**CYP22. COMMUNITY USE OF SCHOOL FACILITIES** – The Director of Community Services and the Assistant Director of Children’s Services submitted a report (previously circulated) to outline progress to date on the Community Use of School Facilities, including Multi Use Games areas.

It was reported that in December 2009 the Sport and Physical Activity Strategy and the Playing Pitch Strategy were formally approved by this authority and a fundamental element of the action plans of both of these documents was to improve the availability of sport and physical activity facilities by ensuring that school buildings are open for use by the local community beyond the school core day. Community use of school facilities is also one of the strands of the Extended Services core offer.

Members of this Scrutiny have been undertaking a review of community use and MUGA’s but this was put on hold when Members were advised that there was work ongoing to put in place support for schools to be able to make their facilities available and that a Community Use Guidance document was being developed to give schools a step-by-step guide to opening up

their facilities. The document covers the key elements of the process of opening the school for community use and the need for a Community Access Agreement (CAA) which is the agreement between this authority and the school and gives details of which facilities are available and also commits to the type of activity that will be supported. Where MUGA's are on school sites the Community Access Agreements will also reflect the access arrangements to those facilities on school sites.

**RESOLVED** – (a) That this progress to date be noted.

(c) That as part of the ongoing Review of Multi-Use Games Areas members receive an update on the discussions with school governors with regard to the Community Access Agreements where MUGA's are on school sites.

**CYP23. WORK PROGRAMME 2010/11** – Pursuant to Minute CYP76/Apr/10, 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 2010/11.

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.

**RESOLVED** – That the Work Programme 2010/11 be noted.

**CYP24. 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 final reports.

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

**CYP25. 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.