

CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

11th January, 2010

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

APOLOGIES – Councillors Chapman, J. Lyonette and Mr. C. Taylor; Canon Bamber. (3)

ALSO – Councillor Hughes (Cabinet Member) and Ms. D. Leigh, Interim Principal, Darlington College of Technology.

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

NON-STATUTORY CO-OPTEES – Mr. R. Egan, Mr. T. Fisher, D. Moyes and Mr. N. Rees. (4)

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

ABSENT – Mrs. V. Mitchell

OFFICERS IN ATTENDANCE – Murray Rose, Director, George McQueen, Assistant Director (Planning and Resources), Andrew Dunn, Assistant Director, School Improvement and Development, Mervyn Bell, Head of Youth Service all within the Department of Children's Services; and David Goodchild, Policy Advisor, Chief Executive's Department.

CYP49. DECLARATION OF INTERESTS – There were no declarations of interest reported at the meeting.

CYP50. MINUTES – Submitted - The Minutes (previously circulated) of the meeting of this Scrutiny Committee held on 9th November and the Special Urgent meeting held on 23rd November, 2009.

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

CYP51. CONGRATULATIONS TO COUNCILLOR HUGHES - RESOLVED – That the congratulations of this Committee be extended to Councillor Hughes on her recent appointment to Cabinet as the portfolio holder for Children's Services and to thank her for the invaluable hard work and commitment shown to this Scrutiny Committee over the past years.

CYP52. CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE SCRUTINY PERFORMANCE REPORT 2ND QUARTER 2009/2010 – The Assistant Chief Executive submitted a report (previously circulated) to give Members of this Scrutiny Committee an opportunity to scrutinise and monitor the four service plans for which this Committee is responsible including those elements of the Sustainable Community Strategy 'One Darlington : Perfectly Placed' and the Local Area Agreement for which this Scrutiny have responsibility.

The submitted report outlined that for the four service plans ie. Children and Families, Partnerships, Planning and Resources and School Improvement and Development, the overall aggregated target was being achieved with the Partnership plan showing above target performance. There are 150 indicators in the four service plans and of these 45 are above target, 68 on target and 32 are showing below target performance. Data is unavailable for five indicators.

Discussion ensued around the indicators performing below target and Members discussions and questions arose in connection with NI071 – Children missing from home or care; NI148 – Care leavers in education, employment or training; NI059 – Percentage of initial assessments of children’s social care carried out in less than 7 days; and Local Area Agreement indicator NI075 – Achievement of 5+ A*-C grades at GCSE or equivalent including English and Mathematics; and National Indicator Set indicator NI089a – Number of schools requiring special measures.

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.

CYP53. WORK BEING UNDERTAKEN WITH YOUNG PEOPLE – David Cox, The Forum Music Centre attended the meeting and gave a presentation on the work being undertaken at The Forum.

The Forum was established in May 2004 and provides recording, rehearsal and performance facilities and a creative space and an exciting social environment. Since opening the Forum has ran a range of programmes and activities for young people and adults which include Newblood Live which is a Live Music Event for 13 to 17 year olds which attracts a full house, hosting Durham Music Services and Darlington and Dales Youth Orchestra, Darlington College BTEC, activities for learning difficulties, community events and various workshops and activity programmes.

Over the past years The Forum has been developing into a high technology creative environment and David outlined to the Members how the Forum had evolved and its plans for the future which ultimately is to become an independent learning centre (academy) specialising in vocational learning and business and enterprise growth.

The newly formed Community Interest Company Humantics CIC formed in October 2008 has plans to take ownership of the Forum Music Centre and with support from this authority are in the final stages of a bid to One North East including additional match fund bids from other organisations such as Futurebuilders England.

RESOLVED – That the thanks of this Committee be extended to David Cox for his interesting and informative presentation.

CYP54. DESTINATION OF SCHOOL LEAVERS – Mervyn Bell, Head of Youth Service gave a verbal update on the position with Year 11 School Leavers.

Members were presented with statistical information at the meeting regarding school leavers for 2007, 2008 and 2009 highlighting their destination into either full time education, work based training, employment with training, employment other (including part time and voluntary), not in education, employment or training available to the labour market, not in education employment or training not available to the labour market, known to have moved away and no responses to repeated follow up.

It was highlighted that out of the 1304 school leavers for 2009, 81.8% were in full-time education, 7.7% in work based training and 3.1% in employment with training. The remaining 7.4 % (relating to 88 school leavers) in the remaining categories. These figures are on a par with the other Tees Valley authorities and the good figures are reflective of a strong NEET Reduction Partnership in place within the authority putting real officers in place for our young people.

RESOLVED – That the statistical information provided at the meeting be noted.

CYP55. BUILDING SCHOOLS FOR THE FUTURE – The Director of Children's Services submitted a report (previously circulated) to update Members of this Scrutiny Committee on progress with Darlington's Building Schools for the Future (BSF) Programme.

It was reported that the Council's bid to be brought forward in the BSF Programme to Wave 7 has been successful and detailed work was now being commenced with Partnerships for Schools, the body responsible for the allocation of all capital funding, and with stakeholders in Darlington on the rebuilding and remodelling of Branksome, Hurworth and Longfield schools and the creation of a managed service for ICT, which other schools can share.

The submitted report outlined the rationale behind seeking early inclusion in the BSF programme; factors included in the Bid; and progress to date by the BSF team who will be responsible for stakeholder consultation and project management.

RESOLVED – That the report be noted.

CYP56. 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 report on the 16-19 Agenda which had previously been requested by Members of this Committee and it was agreed that a report would be brought to the next meeting scheduled for 1st March, 2010.

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

CYP57. POLICY REVIEW - (1) Review of Progress on Policy Review Items – (a) Language Learning Task and Finish Review Group – The Director of Corporate Services submitted a report to outline progress made to date on the Task and Finish Review.

RESOLVED – That progress be noted.

(b) School Standards Task and Finish Review Group – The Director of Corporate Services submitted a report to outline progress made to date on the Task and Finish Review.

RESOLVED – That progress be noted.

(c) MULTI USE GAMES AREAS (MUGA’S) REVIEW GROUP – The Director of Corporate Services submitted a report to outline progress made to date on the Review Group.

RESOLVED – That progress be noted.

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

(3) Responses of the Executive to Reports of this Scrutiny Committee – Internet Safety Task and Finish Review Group – The Director of Corporate Services submitted a report to outline the responses of Cabinet in relation to the recommendations made by this Committee in respect of internet safety advise to all children, young people, parents and carers.

RESOLVED – That the responses of the Executive be noted.

CYP58. 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.