
OVERVIEW OF CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

1. Since the last ordinary meeting of Council, the following are the main areas of work that have been undertaken by the Children and Young People Scrutiny Committee:-
 - (a) **Youth Offending Service – Plan, Performance and Priorities** – We received a presentation from Rita Taylor, Head of Service, Darlington Youth Offending Service on the Darlington Youth Offending Service with particular emphasis on the services provided to reduce offending and re-offending by young persons. The presentation included the background information on the Youth Offending Service, the Youth Justice Plan and the Criminal Justice Act 1998. This included examination of the partners with whom the Youth Offending Service work in the provision of service at Pre-Court, Post-Court and Performance and Quality levels. Members were particularly interested to learn more about influence of alcohol and under-age drinking on first time offending, the work with the Drug Action Team and general issues around the prevention of offending and re-offending. Following a very informative and discussion provoking presentation and discussion, Members of this Scrutiny have agreed that there are certain areas that Members wished to pursue further. To this end, the Committee have agreed to undertake a full Committee Task and Finish Review in order to examine the following: the Parenting Strategy, the Safer Schools Partnership, the contribution of the Clarevaux Trust and Police liaison in order to learn more about the Council and our partners work together to try to minimise youth offending. These specific areas are those which this Scrutiny Committee has performance indicator monitoring responsibility. It is therefore the intention of the Scrutiny Committee to bring together representatives from the policy areas listed and partner organisations mentioned to inform committee’s discussion and facilitate an exchange of views which may lead to recommendations to Cabinet on this very important matter.
 - (b) **Use of Multi Use Games Areas (MUGA’s) Task and Finish Review Group** – Members of this Task and Finish presented their final report with conclusions to Scrutiny on 9th March, 2009 with the recommendation that investigations continue as part of a full Review. Members of the Group felt that there was sufficient evidence to warrant a more thorough investigation and there were a number of concerns that the Group want to explore in more details by way of a full Review. Regular updates will be received by Scrutiny during this Review.
 - (c) **Work Programme 2008/09** - The Committee considered the Work Programme for the Municipal Year 2008/2009, and examined Cabinet’s Forward Plan, in order to identify areas of particular interest or concern and have included various reports for future meetings.

Councillor Cyndi Hughes
Chair of Children and Young People Scrutiny Committee

Since the last meeting of Council, I have attended the following:-

- Met with Director of Children's Services for policy briefing.
- Attended Monitoring and Co-ordination Meeting
- Attended meeting with Darlington Football Club representatives about Youth Work Initiative on "Football in the Community".
- Met with Assistant Director of Children's Services for pre-agenda briefing.
- Attended the Darlington Arts Festival at Carmel College
- Read to children at Paradise Playgroup on World Book Day.