
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) **Scrutiny Performance Report 2nd Quarter 2009/2010** – We continue 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. 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.

(b) **The Forum and Humantics Community Interest Company** – David Cox gave an interesting presentation on work being undertaken at The Forum since its establishment in May, 2004 and the various facilities provided including 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.

We were also advised of 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.

(c) **Destination of School Leavers** – Mervyn Bell, Head of Youth Service presented Members with statistical information on school leavers for 2007, 2008 and 2009 and 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 are reflective of a strong

NEET Reduction Partnership in place within the authority providing real offers for young people.

- (d) **Building Schools for the Future** – We are delighted that the Council’s bid to be brought forward in the BSF Programme to Wave 7 has been successful and detailed work is 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.
- (e) **Work Programme 2009/10** - The Committee considered the Work Programme for the Municipal Year 2009/2010, and examined Cabinet’s Forward Plan, in order to identify areas of particular interest or concern or potential areas for Review.
- (f) **Review/Task and Finish Review Groups** – Progress reports continue to be received with regard to the Multi Use Games Area Review Group and the School Standards and Language Learning Task and Finish Review Groups.

With regard to the Internet Safety Task and Finish Review Group, established as a matter of urgency following the tragic death of Ashleigh Hall, I am pleased to report that Cabinet have endorsed and supported our recommendations to ensure the provision of internet safety advice to all children, young people, parents and carers. The Director of Children’s Services welcomed our recommendations and will ensure that resources are made available to support their implementation.

Children and Young People Scrutiny Committee