
OVERVIEW OF CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

1. Since the last meeting of the Council, the following are the main areas of work the Children and Young People Scrutiny Committee has undertaken :-
 - (a) **Children and Families Early Intervention and Prevention** – Members have previously agreed to undertake a review of Early Intervention and Prevention and by way of an introduction to the service, David Mason, Acting Head of Family Support, gave a presentation which defined Early Intervention; outlined the national context and reports commissioned by national Government including national pressures; outlined the local context and the pressures on the Council to achieve savings yet improve the quality of life for Children, Young People and their families; and explained to Members the national initiative to introduce ‘Troubled Families Teams’ aimed at turning the lives around of 120,000 by 2015. The Review will focus on local service development; examine areas of good practice locally and nationally; examine multi-agency working and the challenges; and consider the economic case for early intervention.
 - (b) **Annual Assessment of Darlington Children’s Services** – We considered by way of referral from Cabinet, the Annual Assessment of Darlington Children’s Services and the Ofsted summary of inspection judgements with particular attention on the areas for further improvement. The overall judgement of the inspection was that the service is performing well however there were some areas for further improvement and we have agreed to include within our work programme a monitoring role of performance on these areas which includes the provision of good child minders, the overall quality of secondary school provision to include the effect of the number of academies and the issues with the Pupil Referral Unit; and the IT issues with screening of referrals from the police and assessment of risks to children in cases of domestic abuse.
 - (c) **Medium Term Financial Plan 2012/13 to 2015/16** – Members considered the conclusions and recommendations contained in the final report of the Task and Finish Review Group which was established to scrutinise the budget proposals contained in the Medium Financial Plan 2012/13 to 2015/16 relevant to this Scrutiny Committee and the future impact on the services faced with the budget savings. Following discussion Members approved the recommendations of the Review Group which will be forwarded to the Efficiency and Resources Scrutiny Committee. We will continue to monitor the impact of the services affected by the budget proposals.

- (d) **Attendance at Key Stage 1 and Reception Task and Finish Review Group** – Members of the Review Group have met again on 6th December and spoke with officers from the Development and Commissioning Services for 12-19 and 0-11; the 0-19 Service Co-ordinator; the Family Support Officer Area 3; and the Traveller Education Service. The Review Group are now in a position to complete it's final report.
 - (e) **Work Programme 2011/12** – We have given further consideration to the Work Programme for this Committee for the Municipal Year 2011/12 and have agreed to include within the Work Programme for Children and Young People Scrutiny Committee a monitoring role on the performance against the targets to be included in the Action Plan following the recent Safeguarding Inspection.
2. Since the last meeting of Council I have attended :
- (a) The official opening of 'The Box' in Priestgate;
 - (b) An interview with Ofsted as part of the recent inspection; and
 - (c) Various meetings with officers.

Councillor Eleanor Lister
Chair of Children and Young People Scrutiny Committee