
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) **Corporate Parenting Panel Review Group** – We have concluded our review to examine the Corporate Parenting Panel and its role taking into account the recommendations of two external inspections carried out in July and November, 2011 and have approved a number of recommendations to forward to Cabinet regarding membership; dates of future meetings; allowing named substitutes; an annual report to be presented to Council; and for this Scrutiny to receive regular updates on the work of the Children in Care Council..
- (b) **School Organisation Plan 2012-17** – We have examined the draft School Organisation Plan 2012-17 and received a very informative presentation from the Placements and Asset Manager and the School Place Planning Manager to provide us with a clear overview of current and future pupil place planning across the Local Authority. The presentation outlined how the Local Authority keeps the provision of school places under review as the school population fluctuates and how pupil forecasting is carried out taking account of population changes (including future births), expected housing delivery and housing growth sites across the borough, expected housing delivery and housing growth sites across the Borough, parental preference and net inward migration.

The draft Plan highlights that there is a more urgent need for primary school places in Reception classes as there are only just enough places currently for the number of new children applying to our primary schools each year. In our secondary schools, there are projected to be enough places to meet demand for the period covered by this current plan. Future School Organisations Plans will include, where necessary, proposals to deal with any possible shortfall of secondary school places. We will continue to monitor the progress of the School Organisation Plan and the need for school places across the whole of the Borough of Darlington.

- (c) **Ofsted and Care Quality Commission Inspection Action Plan** – Following the Ofsted multi-agency Inspection of ‘Safeguarding Services and Provision for Looked After Children’ in November, 2011, we have continued to monitor the progress of the Action Plan which had been developed from the Ofsted recommendations. Following the inspection it was agreed that the multi-agency partnership of the Local Safeguarding Children Board (LSCB) would monitor the actions identified for agencies namely Darlington Borough Council, NHS County Durham and Darlington PCT and County Durham and Darlington Foundation Trust. The updated Action Plan we considered was presented to the LSCB in July 2012 and we will continue to receive further updates. We were pleased to note that the immediate actions had been

completed and the actions to be completed within 3 months were either completed or on-going.

- (d) **Work Programme** – We continue to give consideration to the Work Programme for this Committee and taking into account the ambitious programme of change across the Council and the key role of Scrutiny in ensuring that the programme is able to deliver the service improvements and the budget savings necessary.

- 2. Since the last meeting of Council I have attended various meeting with Officers.

Councillor Eleanor Lister
Chair of Children and Young People Scrutiny Committee