

**Stourbridge Area Committee**

**15<sup>th</sup> June 2009**

**Joint Report of the Director of Adult, Community and  
Housing Services and the Director of Children's Services**

**Progress of Elected Member Visits to Adult and  
Children's Social Care Establishments 2008/9**

**Purpose of Report**

1. To provide the Committee with information about the progress of visits to Adult and Children's social care establishments undertaken by Members during 2008/9.
2. To inform Committee about actions taken in response to Member visits and their comments.
3. To identify issues arising from the members visits and seek Members' views.

**4. That Members make further nominations from Committee for  
participation in the rota for the year 2009-2010.**

**Background**

4. Each Area Committee nominates pairs of Members to undertake visits to Adult and Children's Social Care establishments. A list of residential and day care establishments for adults and children is attached as Appendix 1.
5. Under the protocol for Members visits Cabinet members are not involved in the annual programme of visits; last year Stourbridge Area Committee had four Cabinet members within it, reducing the number of available members. We are grateful to Councillor Harris from Brierley Hill for assisting this year. Every assistance will be provided to members of the Stourbridge Committee to ensure that they can smoothly and effectively carry out visits with members of the same committee, or, where that is not possible with the involvement of members of another committee
6. The purpose of the visits is to assist Members in reviewing the residential and day care service delivery to Adults in establishments

managed by the Directorate of Adult Community & Housing Services and to Children in establishments managed by the Directorate of Children's Services

7. The visits also assist Members in fulfilling their role as Corporate Parents of Looked After Children.
8. All Members participating in programme of visits must have received training in the role and satisfactory Criminal Records Bureau clearance.
9. Training to assist the process for 2009/10 will be arranged and provided to Members.
10. The process and the delivery of training is managed within the Policy, Performance & Resources Division of the Directorate of Adult, Community & Housing Services. Over a period of time Members have made suggestions to improve the process and these have and will be incorporated into the Protocol determining the responsibilities of Members and officers. The current protocol is attached as appendix 2.
11. Officers of the Policy, Performance & Resources Division provide Members with
  - a copy of the Protocol for Members and Officers
  - a schedule of visits to be undertaken during the period
  - reminders of scheduled visits
  - a proforma for completion at each visit
  - background information about each establishment, in terms of purpose and staffing
  - a copy of the comments made by Members on the previous visits.
12. Members completed pro formas are sent to the relevant Assistant Director for comment and response. Appendix 3 provides details of the visits carried out by Members and the response provided by the relevant Assistant Director.

Examples of issues arising and specific action taken in response to Members comments:- Please refer to appendix 3 for full details

- In total there were six individual establishments for nominated Members to visit between October 2008 and April 2009; all of which were completed. Thank you to those members who undertook visits.

- New Swinford Hall: - Members passed on positive feedback from residents and of their own interactions of the relationship between staff and residents in the home. Members also complimented the low level of staff turnover and high degree of training undertaken. Some rooms were identified for upgrading and extra car parking was recommended.

Members were thanked for their positive comments. The Assistant director confirmed the high level of training and the stability of the staff group. The Home manager will be asked to consider the suggestions of improvements to some rooms and an increase in the level of car parking.

- Woodside Day Centre: - Members commented on the extremely positive feedback from service users describing the opportunities for service users as “the best range of activities we have observed”.

Comment was made on the desirability of more space and CCTV equipment at the entrance of the building

The Assistant Director thanked members for their positive comments and gave information on CCTV and space.

- Maitland Road: - Members commented positively on attitude of staff and residents. Also on activities and facilities. Some past difficulties with local youths gravitating towards home but this is being managed.

Concern also expressed about planned zebra crossing outside of home and the impact this will have.

The Assistant Director thanked members for their report. The impact of the zebra crossing on the home has been addressed; parking is now in place at the side of the building.

- Adshead Road: - Members spoke positively of the work being undertaken with residents at the time of the visit. Good staff morale and working relationships with young people in placement were observed. Comments were made re need for replacement garden fence and bathroom refurbishment.

The Assistant Director thanked members for their report and the positive comments that they had made.

Members were assured that monies have been identified for both the garden fence and bathroom work.

- Parkes Street: - Members spoke positively on the quality of care and opportunities for service users, also giving positive feedback on training and development. Members commented that

residents appeared very happy with level of care. Improvements to structure of the home were suggested so that residents would have improved play areas.

The Assistant Director thanked members for their feedback. Suggested improvements are to be considered by the Head of Service.

- 14 St James's Road: - Members reported positively on their visit, citing activities available to the young people and the work undertaken with the specialist fostering project. Members also commented on a good relationship with neighbouring houses and the Elderly Persons' Home next door. Members also commented on the good balance and range of meals available to young people.

Assistant Director's response is pending.

### **Finance**

13. There are no immediate financial implications from this report. The programme of Member Visits can continue to be provided from within existing resource allocation.
14. On occasion, Member comments and recommendations will have additional cost implications. These are forwarded in the first instance to the Technical Support Services and where appropriate to the Property & Steering Capital Group for consideration.

### **Law**

15. Members' visits to Social Care establishments assist in meeting some of the relevant requirements of the Children Act 1989 and the 1948 National Assistance Act.

### **Equality Impact**

16. The visits to establishments are intended to assist officers in ensuring that services are delivered in a fair, equitable and service user focused manner. The visits provide opportunities for Members to consult with a wide ranging group of people with varied needs, abilities, disabilities, age, gender and ethnicity.

### **Recommendations**

17. That Members consider and comment on the information contained in this report and attachments.

18. That Members make further nominations from Committee for participation in the rota for the year 2009-2010.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Linda Sanders'.

**Linda Sanders**  
**Director of Adult, Community & Housing Services**

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Jane Porter'.

**Jane Porter**  
**Interim Director of Children's Services**

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