

Select Committee on Children's Services – 17th June, 2010

Report of the Lead Officer to the Committee

Terms of Reference and Rules of Procedure of the Committee and Associated Matters including the Work Programme and Working Groups of the Committee for 2010 - 2011

Purpose of Report

1. To receive the Terms of Reference and Procedure Rules applicable to this Committee and details of associated matters, and to consider the work programme and the appointment of Working Groups.

Background

2. Article 6 of the Council's Constitution provides for the appointment of five Select Committees, including the Select Committee on Children's Services.
3. The terms of reference of the Select Committees are referred to in that Article and more fully in Table 1 of the Select Committee Procedure Rules. In respect of this Committee they provide for the Committee to fulfil all the functions of a Select Committee as they relate to Children's Services and in particular the functions of the Council under the Children Act 2004, and associated regulations and guidance including (a) the roles and responsibilities of relevant partnerships and (b) listening and involving children with the objective of improving the wellbeing of children in the Council's area by development the 'Every Child Matters' outcomes. Article 6 also prescribes the general role of Select Committees and their specific functions, including those relating to scrutiny.
4. The Select Committee Procedure Rules are contained in Part 4 of the Constitution. Procedure Rule 3 sets out details of Education representatives, both voting and non-voting. Legislation and regulations, entitle the Church and parent governor representatives to vote at meetings of the Committee on matters relating to education. As indicated, these arrangements have been incorporated into the Council's Constitution.
5. The relevant extracts from the Constitution are set out in Article 6 (pages B11 – 14); the terms of reference of the Committee (page D63), the Select Committee Procedure Rules (pages D54 – D62); and the Scrutiny Protocol for Select Committees (pages F42 – F47).

The Constitution can be accessed by the following link:

[Public Documents](#)

Alternatively, hard copies of the extracts can be supplied on request to Democratic Services on (01384) 815236 or e mail to richard.sanders@dudley.gov.uk.

6. Members are also asked to note that other bodies concerned with Children's Services include the following:
- (a) Schools Forum – which acts as a consultative body on the Local Management of Schools, schools budgets and other issues relating to schools.
 - (b) Corporate Parenting Committee – the Committee comprises a membership of elected members and officers from each directorate of the Council. Its purpose is to ensure that the Council is delivering its corporate parenting responsibilities for children in the care of the Council. It does this within the context of the wider children's agenda promoting an early intervention approach to reduce the need for children to become looked after. The Committee has a link to the Children in Care Council to ensure that the child's voice is heard and able to influence service developments. The Committee also provided the governance arrangements for the monitoring of performance against the priorities of the Children and Young People's Plan as they relate to Looked After children.
 - (c) Admissions Forum – this is a statutory body comprising representatives of the various admissions authority within the Borough with a remit to monitor and co-ordinate admissions policies across the Borough.
7. It is proposed that the work programme for 2009/10 include consideration of the following issues at the meeting of the Select Committee indicated:

17th June, 2010

Directorate Strategic Plan and Children and Young People's Plan
Annual Report on Adoption
Annual Report of the Safeguarding Board
Quarterly Reporting
Dudley Changes to the Children's Trust

16th September 2010

Child Poverty
Think Family
Unannounced Inspection
New Government Initiatives
Quarterly Reporting
Complaints and Compliments Report
Annual Report on Equality and Diversity

11th November 2010

Aiming High for Disabled Children
14-19 Commissioning
Quarterly Reporting
Health – Transforming Services

26th January 2011

School Improvement
Vision 2025 - Update
Budget for 2011/12

23rd - March 2011

Standards Report – Schools
School Inspection Report
Inspections
Quarterly Reporting
Funding and Commissioning 16-19 years
Primary Plan

- 8 Members will recall that during last years programme, some Members expressed "dissatisfaction with the scrutiny process". With this in mind, the Chairman proposes that Members liaise with the Vice Chairman with ideas/suggestions they may want to have considered by the full Select Committee with a report of the Vice Chairman coming to the September meeting.

In previous years, the Select Committee has appointed working groups. In consultation with the Chairman, such groups are considered to have a limited value and the proposal this year is to bring any substantive items to the full Select Committee and to dispense with working groups.

Finance

9. This report has no direct financial implications.

Law

10. The relevant provisions regarding the Constitution are contained in Part II of the Local Government Act 2000, together with Regulations, Orders and Statutory Guidance issued by the Secretary of State.

Equality Impact

11. This report complies with the policies of the Council on equality and diversity.
12. Children and young people have not been consulted in the preparation of this report, but it will be necessary to consult with them and perhaps appoint representatives of them to serve on certain Working Groups.

Recommendation

13. That the Terms of Reference Rules of Procedure and Protocol relating to the Select Committee be received and noted, together with the associated information referred to in paragraph 6 above.
14. That the work programme set out in paragraph 7 of this report be approved and that members be invited to refer any issues they consider to be included to the Vice Chairman for a report back in September.
15. That no working groups for 2010/11 be established and instead, any substantive

issues be brought to the full Select Committee

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Bill Baker". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first letter of each word being capitalized and prominent.

.....
Bill Baker

Lead Officer to the Committee

Contact Officer: Bill Baker – Ext. 4800

Background Papers

17. The Council's Constitution.