



# **Meeting of the Children's Services Scrutiny Committee**

**Thursday, 26<sup>th</sup> June, 2014 at 6.00pm**

**In Committee Room 2 at the Council House, Priory Road, Dudley**

## **Agenda - Public Session**

**(Meeting open to the public and press)**

1. Apologies for absence.
2. To report the names of any substitute Members serving for this meeting.
3. To receive any declarations of interest under the Members' Code of Conduct.
4. To confirm as a correct record and sign the minutes of the meeting held on 9<sup>th</sup> April, 2014.
5. Annual Scrutiny Programme 2014/15.
6. Summary of work undertaken by the Children's Services Scrutiny Committee in 2013/14
7. Overview of the work carried out by the Children's Services Directorate.
8. Composition and Membership of the Children's Services Scrutiny Committee.
9. To answer questions submitted under Council Procedure Rule 11.8 (if any)

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be "P. Z.", is written over a horizontal line.

**Director of Corporate Resources**

**Dated: 18<sup>th</sup> June, 2014**

**Distribution:****Members of the Children's Services Scrutiny Committee:**

Councillor Mottram (Chair)

Councillor Cooper (Vice Chair)

Councillors Attwood, Billingham, Bradley, Casey, Islam, Marrey, C Perks, Scott-Dow and Simms; Mrs Ward, Reverend Wickens; Mr Taylor; Mr Lynch or Mr Nesbitt, Mrs Verdegem or Ms Sinden; Mrs Coulter and Mr Ridney.

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- The Democratic Services contact officer for this meeting is Steve Griffiths, Telephone 01384 815235 or E-mail [steve.griffiths@dudley.gov.uk](mailto:steve.griffiths@dudley.gov.uk)

## **CHILDREN'S SERVICES SCRUTINY COMMITTEE**

Wednesday, 9<sup>th</sup> April, 2014 at 6.00 pm in Committee Room 2 at the  
Council House, Dudley

### **PRESENT:-**

Councillor Marrey (Chair)  
Councillor Boleyn (Vice-Chair)  
Councillors Bills, Hill, Islam, J Martin, Perks, Mrs Simms, Vickers and Mrs Walker,  
Mr Nesbitt, Ms Sinden, Mr Taylor and Mrs Verdegem.

### **OFFICERS**

Assistant Director of Adult, Community and Housing Services (Housing Management) – Lead Officer to the Committee, Interim Director of Children's Services, Ms T Brittain and Mr H Powell, Interim Assistant Directors of Children's Services (Education Services), Divisional Lead, Looked after Children and Divisional Lead, Social Work (all Directorate of Children's Services) and Mrs K Buckle (Directorate of Corporate Resources)

### **WITNESSES GIVING EVIDENCE TO THE SCRUTINY COMMITTEE**

West Midlands Strategic Leader, Preventing Violence against Vulnerable People, Mr Stephen Rimmer and Detective Chief Inspector, Sandwell and Dudley Child and Adult Abuse Lead, Public Protection Unit, Ms Jenny Skyrme and Inspector Ms G Davenport, Partnerships Team.

#### **25      APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies for absence from the meeting were received on behalf of Councillors Arshad and Casey, Mrs Coulter, Mr Lynch, Mr Ridney and Reverend Wickens.

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#### **26      SUBSTITUTE MEMBERS**

It was reported that Councillor J Martin was serving in place of Councillor Casey for this meeting of the Committee only.

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#### **27      DECLARATION OF INTEREST**

No Member made a declaration of interest in accordance with the Members' Code of Conduct.

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#### **28      MINUTES**

## RESOLVED

That subject to the inclusion of Mrs Verdegem in Minute no 15 – Apologies for Absence, the minutes of the meeting of the Committee held on 18<sup>th</sup> February, 2014 be approved as a correct record and signed.

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### 29 PUBLIC FORUM

No issues were raised under this item.

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### 31 APPROACHES TO CHILD SEXUAL EXPLOITATION – WITNESSES AND DEBATE

The Committee heard representations from the following witnesses, who had been invited to have a dialogue with Members with regard to Child Sexual Exploitation in order to determine best practices to work collaboratively to address these issues in Dudley.

- (a) A presentation was made by Mr S Rimmer the West Midlands Strategic Leader on preventing Violence against vulnerable people.

During the course of the presentation Mr Rimmer made the following points:-

- He referred to his role and the work undertaken in relation to key threats and risks across the region in relation to child sexual exploitation.
- He reported that the cases of child sexual exploitation were increasing and referred to the collective responsibility to protect those who were most vulnerable in society and discharging this responsibility through prevention, protection and the justice system.
- That early intervention was of paramount importance and the aims to make perpetrators feel as vulnerable as their victims.
- A more integrated approach was required with more information sharing with partners in order to detect perpetrators of child sexual exploitation.
- He referred to the victims of child sexual exploitation, advising that they did not see themselves as victims due to the grooming processes, which included manipulation and coercion and the imbalance of power which limits the victim's options.

- The threat of child sexual exploitation together with statistical information, profiling, the number of reported cases and research into the issue were outlined and the uncertainty surrounding the number of cases and the volume of those cases, in effect it was unknown “how big the iceberg and how big the tip”.
- He referred to the child sexual exploitation incubator advising of the number of families who had discovered their children viewing violent, sexually explicit, upsetting or inappropriate content on the internet stating that the average age of children viewing this material was just over four years. The rate at which technology was advancing and the confidence of young children using that technology being a factor and percentage of parents who had not installed parental controls on smart phones and who had never spoken to their children about the dangers of using the internet were referred to.
- Concerns were raised that the average age of perpetrators would reduce due to the advancement of technology, with the average age currently being 25 to 30, a generation who did not have such technology at their fingertips.
- The implementation of a regional child sexual exploitation framework and standards were outlined together with the work of the Chief Executive and the Director of Children’s Services in order to develop those standards which were to be authorised by Safeguarding Boards. The major role of schools being equipped and ideally placed for preventative work and identifying victims and those who were at risk was referred to.
- The safeguarding training in order to identify those at risk in certain hotels was referred to and that direct community engagement was required in order to identify and safeguard those at risk.
- The challenges in relation to child sexual abuse were outlined with reference to capacity as demand rises and the continuing need for partnership work involving an element of trust and community engagement which must be both genuine and proportionate.

Arising from the presentation the following comments were made by Members:-

- The impact of data protection on information sharing;
- The further need for intelligence sharing and the expansion of communication;

- The involvement of schools, the requirement of training in schools and the establishment of a set of standards were required;
- The impact on schools given the limited resources and the requirement to work to a set curriculum;
- The requirement of information sharing and data being provided to Members by the Safeguarding Board;
- The requirement of training and standards to be implemented in primary schools in order for early intervention work to be undertaken to protect those who were at risk, vulnerable and already victims of child sexual exploitation;

In responding to comments made the West Midlands Strategic Lead on preventing violence against vulnerable people advised that:-

Information sharing was evolving and following the implementation of a framework and standards child sexual exploitation groups would be established in order to track information and ensure that work was being carried out with cases being followed up by referrals to appropriate groups and sources.

There were some statutory responsibilities on schools, however further work was required in schools and information had been forwarded to some educational establishments in relation to safeguarding and the protection of those vulnerable.

There was a requirement to take to prevent a major case in the Borough occurring.

That the Safeguarding Board had a clear responsibility to ensure children were protected and that Safeguarding Boards were subject to inspection by Ofsted.

In relation to working with schools there was a programme available which was interactive and focused on self esteem, respect and understanding relationships and that work could be undertaken if a number of schools across the Dudley Borough wished to become involved.

The Interim Director of Children's Services advised that the Safeguarding Board produced an annual report and that there was a Quality and Performance Group and a Vulnerable Children's Activity Group who met regularly to scrutinise and develop actions around the CSE Agenda.

In responding to a Member's question the Interim Director also stated that Faith Groups had policies in place to deal with cases of child sexual exploitation.

- (b) A presentation was made by Detective Chief Inspector Jenny Skyrme, the Sandwell and Dudley Child and Adult Abuse Lead, Public Protection Unit, West Midlands Police.

Detective Chief Inspector Skyrme referred to the work she conducted across all four Black Country Boroughs dealing with children who were either at risk of significant harm or had been significantly harmed, advising that she was the Senior Statutory Partner who sat on the Dudley Safeguarding Board.

She also referred to the early intervention work of her colleague Inspector Davenport.

During the course of her presentation Detective Chief Inspector Skyrme referred to the following:-

- The service transformation in her organisation following the introduction of Programme Paragon, which highlighted that there was a requirement to investigate systems and undertake a service transformation project with a team of consultants in order to streamline services.
- The impact of Operation Yewtree and the Jimmy Saville affect that saw a rise in serious sexual offences being reported.
- A graph was displayed in relation to the organisational restructure in the West Midlands Public Protection Unit with reference being made to the additional Officers that had been redeployed in order to deal with the extensive case levels.
- Details of special teams that were to be formed in order to focus on domestic abuse and the formation of a new Sexual Offences Team were noted.
- What this meant for Dudley was outlined and included the provision of a specific Public Protection Team, the number of detectives that would be involved and the work that they would be involved with. Timescales in relation to the phased implementation were displayed.
- It was noted that there were two types of child sexual exploitation, physical child exploitation and online child sexual exploitation with the latter involving online grooming and physical child exploitation was defined as sexual exploitation of a child under 18 years of age, with that young person receiving something as a result of the performance of sexual activities.

- It was stated that child sexual exploitation was not a crime in itself however details of other criminal offences that were committed as they were associated with the exploitation were outlined and details of these were displayed.
- That those who were abused had a perverse sense of loyalty and love towards their abusers and there were organised criminals who operated in groups and threatened, terrorised and emotionally blackmailed their victims and there was an actual role reversal where a grooming adult wished to take the attention away from their victim which in turn would take away the attention from the abuser.
- A case was referred to whereby a sixteen year old looked after child, (not in Dudley) who as a result of previous circumstances had no self-esteem or respect had been targeted by a group of youths who befriended her and subsequently sexually exploited the child. As the sexual activities had been deemed to be consensual a different approach had been adopted to deal with the perpetrators whereby other offences were investigated such as anti social behaviour, vehicle and bail checks.
- That locations around hotels in relation to licensing, health and safety and fire regulations could be investigated should they be hotspots for child sexual exploitation.
- Child Sexual Exploitation was dealt with by a partnership approach with Dudley operating a good approach to such exploitation. That there was local policing through Operation Sentinal where training was provided on the recognition of child sexual exploitation in order for early intervention and signposting work being undertaken.
- The work with partners such as the Community Safety Team, Children's Homes, hotel staff, joint media strategies and Young Person's Officers within schools was referred to.
- It was noted that 51% of victims from problem profiles had never been looked after children, which evidenced that this child sexual exploitation was not a stereotypical problem.
- The Dudley Safeguarding Board's structure was outlined and statistical evidence in relation to child sexual exploitation crime rates throughout the West Midlands were displayed.
- It was noted that different strategies and tactics would be put into place in different localities and new low level child sexual exploitation co-ordinators would be appointed in order to deal with those young people missing from home in order to detect and prevent low level exploitation which would prevent those vulnerable becoming future victims.



- Challenges for the Police and their partners were outlined including intelligence and information exchange and data sharing, joined up work across the Borough, cross border arrangements for out of borough placement offences, the investigation of child protection systems which were designed for familial issues and not sexual exploitation, mindsets of practitioners and gaps in service providers for 16 to 18 year olds.

Arising from the presentation Members asked questions and Detective Chief Inspector Skyrme advised as follows:-

- That conviction rates were low and work was being conducted with the Crown Prosecution Service to investigate different offences and that governance was required in relation to for example taxis who collected children unaccompanied.
- Local Policing do attend schools to provide information on child sexual exploitation.
- Grant aid was available to deal with offences of trafficking and details in relation to trafficking were outlined together with the use of legislation in order to secure a conviction for such an offence.

The Interim Director of Children's Services advised that Child Protection had bespoke training for teachers and agreed to impart the observations and comments of Members in relation to the requirement to disseminate information onto teaching staff who work on the front line with children regarding the recognition and reporting of concerns regarding possible child sexual exploitation.

RESOLVED:

That the information contained in presentations on approaches to child sexual exploitation and as reported on at the meeting be noted.

Members reported orally on their visits to establishments and services involved in tackling sexual exploitation including visits to Street Teams, Respect Yourself – Teenage Pregnancy Service and a meeting with the Divisional Lead for Looked after Children and Missing Children and attendance at Training awareness sessions.

Member's comments and observations in relation to their visits were noted and the Chair requested Members to forward their comments and observations to either himself or the Vice-Chair in order that a report could be prepared and submitted to the next meeting of the Committee for further consideration.

The Chair thanked Officers, Presenters and Members for their contribution to the meeting and requested that weaknesses outlined be targeted especially in relation to the work that should be conducted with schools in relation to child sexual exploitation.

The Interim Director of Children's Services undertook to present a report to a future meeting of the Committee in relation to Safeguarding data.

#### RESOLVED

- (a) That the information reported on and feedback from Member visits together with Members comments, be noted.
- (b) That Members be requested to forward their comments and observations in relation to their visits to the Chair/Vice Chair.
- (c) That the Chair and Vice Chair be requested to submit a report on the feedback from Member Visits to a future meeting of the Committee.
- (d) That the Interim Director of Children's Services be requested to submit a report on Safeguarding data to a future meeting of the Committee.

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#### STANDARDS REPORT – PERFORMANCE DATA

This item was deferred to a future meeting of the Committee.

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#### DUDLEY SCHOOLS OFSTED OUTCOMES

This item was deferred to a future meeting of the Committee.

The meeting ended at 8.55 pm

CHAIR

**Children's Services Scrutiny Committee – 26<sup>th</sup> June, 2014**

**Report of the Lead Officer and the Director of Corporate Resources**

**Annual Scrutiny Programme 2014/15**

**Purpose of Report**

1. To consider and endorse the suggested items for inclusion in the Annual Scrutiny Programme for detailed consideration by this Scrutiny Committee during 2014/15.

**Background**

2. As in 2013/14, meetings of this Scrutiny Committee have been scheduled, on the dates below, primarily to facilitate consideration of the quarterly performance management reports and the detailed scrutiny of the Council's revenue budget proposals in November -
  - Thursday, 25<sup>th</sup> September, 2014 – 6pm
  - Wednesday, 19<sup>th</sup> November, 2014 – 6pm
  - Wednesday, 21<sup>st</sup> January, 2015 – 6pm
  - Thursday, 12<sup>th</sup> March, 2014
3. Scrutiny Committees were introduced into Dudley Council last year and there is a report elsewhere on this agenda that summarises the work undertaken by the Committee Members. The work plan is intended to build onto that work and was suggested by Members of that Committee.

The items identified are:

- Childhood Neglect
- Early Help Offer
- Special Educational Needs Reforms.

For your information the above items were agreed and recommended by the Overview and Scrutiny Management Board on the 11.6.14

4. Appendix 1 gives more detailed information on the topics set out in the Annual Scrutiny Programme for 2014/15 as referred to in paragraph 3 above.

**Finance**

5. The costs of operating the revised scrutiny arrangements will be contained within existing budgetary allocations.

## **Law**

6. Scrutiny Committees are established in accordance with the provisions of the Local Government Act 1972 and the requirements of the Council's Constitution, which was adopted under the Local Government Act 2000, subsequent legislation and associated Regulations and Guidance.

## **Equality Impact**

7. Provision exists within the recommended scrutiny arrangements for overview and scrutiny to be undertaken of the Council's policies on equality and diversity.

## **Recommendation**

8. Members are asked to endorse and recommend that the issues as contained in the Annual Scrutiny Programme for 2014/15, as referred to in paragraph 3 and Appendix 1.



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**Diane Channings**

**Lead Officer**

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## **List of Background Papers**

**Report to Overview and Scrutiny Management Board – 11<sup>th</sup> June, 2014 – Annual Scrutiny Programme 2014/15**

Children's Services Scrutiny Committee	
<b>Portfolio</b>	Cabinet Member for Children's Services
<b>Area for Scrutiny</b>	Childhood neglect
<b>Link to Council Plan</b>	Young People Health and Wellbeing Caring for the Elderly and Vulnerable
<b>Context</b>	Over 50% of children on a Child Protection plan and a similar number of looked after children are supported due to neglect occurring within their birth family. The long term effects of neglect are well known in relation to poor outcomes for children and it is critical that professionals have the right tools to assess and intervene appropriately and that the Directorate has a range of family support services to address this issue.
<b>Rationale</b>	This is an area of work which is targeted on very vulnerable children and is a central core of our safeguarding to address the needs of vulnerable children and to keep them safe. It requires a partnership approach and it is also an area of work which needs to be addressed from a broader perspective concerning issues relating to child poverty and economic well being.
<b>What are we asking from the Scrutiny Committee?</b>	To understand and review the data relating to the incidents of neglect and child poverty within the Borough and to identify cross cutting themes and recommendations as to how this can be tackled in the future.

Children's Services Scrutiny Committee	
<b>Portfolio</b>	Cabinet Member for Children's Services
<b>Area for Scrutiny</b>	Early Help Offer
<b>Link to Council Plan</b>	Young people Health and Wellbeing People being served better
<b>Context</b>	The development of early support services will ensure that children and families have the right support at the right time. The overall ambition is to reduce reliance on more intervention services and enable children to achieve permanency and stability within their care arrangements. It will also in the longer term have the effect of cash avoidance and reduce budget pressures on high cost services.
<b>Rationale</b>	In 2013/14 the Children's Services Scrutiny Committee undertook a specific piece of work around the redesign of children's centres. The restructuring will be implemented from September 2014 and will be the core of our early support services working with partners to develop and deliver an early help offer 0-18. Scrutiny of this area of work will build on the involvement of Scrutiny Committee in the children's centres developments and provide a critical view of how well the children's centres are delivering within this context.
<b>What are we asking from the Scrutiny Committee?</b>	To assess the impact of the children's centre restructure and review and support the delivery of early support within the broader corporate and partnership arena.



Children's Services Scrutiny Committee	
Portfolio	Cabinet Member for Children's Services
Area for Scrutiny	SEN Reforms
Link to Council Plan	Young People Health and Wellbeing
Context	<p>The Children and Families Act 2014 sets out new legal duties to implement changes to arrangements for supporting young people with special educational needs and disabilities. This includes the delivery of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Local offer - which needs to be published detailing provision of services for children and young people who are disabled or who have SEN with a 0-25 focus</li> <li>- Education and Health Care Plans - local authorities will be required to consider requests for assistance with special educational needs and co-ordinate services around a child or young person</li> <li>- Joint Commissioning - local commissioners will be required to work together in the interests of children and young people with special educational needs and disabilities</li> </ul>
Rationale	<p>The new requirements under the Children and Families Act require a review and implementation of a new 0-25 special needs system which will require significant systems change, partnership working and a determination to consult with and engage families and providers of local services.</p>
What are we asking from the Scrutiny Committee?	<p>To understand the requirements laid on the local authority in this area of work. To understand the local authority's implementation plan and to comment and make recommendations regarding the future delivery of services for 0-25 SEND. Scrutinising priorities determined by the local authority and the resource allocation to support SEND.</p>

**Children's Services Scrutiny Committee – 26<sup>th</sup> June 2014**

**Report of the Lead Officer**

**Summary of work undertaken by the Children's Services Scrutiny Committee 2013/14**

**Purpose of report**

1. To provide Members with a summary of the work undertaken by this Committee in the 13/14 municipal year.

**Background**

2. The work programme undertaken by the Children's Scrutiny Committee 13/14 was as follows:
  - Safeguarding Standards within the Borough and Children's Services contribution
  - Early intervention strategy for the Borough.
3. The Committee undertook its work in a variety of ways, including formal and informal meetings, establishment of a shaping group, visits, listening to expert witnesses and service users.
4. Minutes of all the Scrutiny Meetings are available and new Members to this Committee may find it useful to read these for background purposes as the following is only a brief summary.
5. Children's Centres

The conclusion from the work undertaken was:

Staff, volunteers and families should be proud of the excellent work that goes on in our children's centres. They are embedded in our community and offer the potential to deliver immediate and ongoing benefits to our children and their families. An early intervention strategy is paramount to dealing with inequalities and ensuring that all children can have the best start in life.

The testimony of parents given to members of this committee during visits to children's centres and at a formal meeting demonstrated the life changing nature of early intervention. In austere times, local authorities and their partner agencies cannot afford to act in isolation is necessary or desired, the best possible outcome should be the aspiration for our children and the identifiable outcomes.



6. Safeguarding and child trafficking

Safeguarding training was undertaken by all Members of the Scrutiny Committee and training arranged for all Members of the Council.

It was concluded and recommended that Safeguarding and Child Exploitation training should be mandatory for all Councillors both to raise awareness and ensure that everyone is on alert.

Recommended that a Multi Agency Confidentiality Exchange Agreement be set up to ensure all data is available and shared.

Recommended that there was continued liaison and awareness campaigns with hotel managers and staff around the need to be part of the programmes – Safeguarding Kite Mark and Say Something if you See Something. It was evident that hotel staff were key to tackling child/sex abuse.

Recommended that closer links were made with the 'Street Teams' and that they were invited to present their 'education programme to all schools and colleges in the Borough to educate on how to recognise potential dangers.

Recommended that schools should be encouraged to engage and work with the Child line Schools service.

### **Finance**

7. This report in itself has no financial implications.

### **Law**

8. Scrutiny Committees are established in accordance with the provisions of the Local Government Act 1972 and the requirements of the Council's Constitution, which was adopted under the Local Government Act 1972 and the requirements of the Council's Constitution, which was adopted under the Local Government Act 2000, subsequent legislation and associated Regulations and Guidance.

### **Equality Impact**

9. Provision exists within the recommended scrutiny arrangements for overview and scrutiny to be undertaken of the Council's policies on equality and diversity.

### **Recommendations**

10. Members are asked to note the contents of this report.



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Assistant Director

Housing Services – Lead Officer

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## **List of Background Papers**

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**Children's Services Scrutiny Committee – 26<sup>th</sup> June 2014**

**Report of the Interim Director of Children's Services**

**Overview of the work carried by the Directorate of Children's Services**

**Purpose of Report**

1. To enable Scrutiny Committee to gain an understanding of the range of work and responsibilities undertaken by the Directorate of Children's Services.

**Background**

2. The work of the Directorate is delivered through a wide and varied statutory basis and many elements of the service are highly regulated. There are considerable risks associated with service delivery within the Directorate relating to harm to vulnerable children, attainment and aspiration and reputational risk to the Council.
3. The Directorate of Children's Service is working in the context of:
  - a) Increased demand for service
  - b) Higher and increased regulatory and statutory requirements upon the Directorate
  - c) More expectations of our performance by regulators such as OfSTED and the general public
4. In order to explain the nature of provision this report now goes through the main service areas in each of the three divisions of the Directorate together with the Director Support Team (Asset Management).

**Education Services Division**

5. Education Services has a portfolio of statutory duties provided to schools and young people. On behalf of the Council, Education Services undertake statutory duties in relation to sufficiency of places in school and early years settings, admissions, non-attendance and assessment of pupil performance, monitoring and challenging the performance of schools and settings. Other statutory duties include special educational needs, educational achievement of looked after children, monitoring the wellbeing and education provision for children whose families have elected to home

educate and to provide education for pupils who are at risk, or are excluded from schools. There is a range of school improvement support available on a traded or part-traded basis. There are some specialist services available for children with learning and physical disabilities.

### **Educational Quality Services**

6. Educational Quality Services provides support to teachers, managers and governors in settings that are subject to regulation by OfSTED. As well as helping to ensure that the quality of education in the borough is as good as possible, these services support individual settings that are at risk of adverse OfSTED judgements, or which have received adverse judgements and need to make accelerated progress in order to gain a judgement of "good". The local authority itself is subject to inspection in this area

### **Integrated Youth Support**

7. Integrated Youth Support provides a range of services for young people - Youth Service, Information Advice and Guidance, Youth Offending Service, Teenage Pregnancy. These services are all targeted on the most vulnerable young people where there is a risk of significant harm or vulnerability associated with offending, worklessness and poor aspiration and achievement. There is a growing problem within the borough of young people who are not engaged in positive activities e.g. education, training and/or employment, drifting into harmful and criminal activities.

### **Education Traded Services**

8. A relatively small amount of provision to schools is traded. As such it is schools that meet the cost of this, not the Council. We are seeking ways in which we can optimise the returns from this trading so as to reduce the need for savings in other areas. It should be noted that some element of trading will ensure that local services are available at immediate notice when schools require support; such as when they are judged as *requiring improvement* or *inadequate*.

### **Children and Families Division**

9. Children and Families has a portfolio of services which provide support to children, young people and their families. This includes universally delivered provision through to targeted support for children in need, vulnerable children and those with additional needs. The emphasis is on early identification of need and providing integrated support when extra help is required. Children and Families also lead on parenting support and the provision of specialist services for those children for whom the Council has a statutory responsibility relating to child protection and children in care.

### **Social Work Services**

10. Social Work Services support and provide protection to the most vulnerable children and young people in the Borough. Safeguarding those children is the Directorate's highest priority. This service responds to concerns that a child is in danger of significant harm and undertakes child protection enquiries with Police colleagues. The service provides support to children who are subject to a child protection plan and

children who are on the edge of care, or who are taken into care, and become the responsibility of the local authority and to whom the Council has a corporate parenting responsibility.

### **Looked After Children Services**

11. Looked after Children Services make a range of provision to those young people in the care of the Council which includes the provision of a range of placement options such as fostering and adoption. The service manages five Council run children's homes and is responsible for commissioning placements from independent sector providers to meet the needs of looked after children. There are a range of support services for care leavers and the management of supervised contact arrangements for children in care with their birth families.

### **Family Support Services**

12. Family Support Services are predominantly engaged in the provision of early help and preventative activities to reduce the risk of children experiencing significant harm or neglect and/or entering care. Many of the services are provided through our network of Children's Centres, parenting programme management and targeted family support. In addition the nationally funded Troubled Families programme is also located in this part of the division. This is a "high profile" project subject to scrutiny by the Department of Communities and Local Government (DCLG). Included within this portfolio is the management of our Adventure Playground.

### **Quality and Partnership Division**

13. Quality and Partnership is concerned with supporting the Directorate's work to comply with internal and external performance review, scrutiny and regulatory frameworks, and promoting our work in partnership with other agencies, especially in order to improve the safety, health and well being of children and young people.

### **The Safeguarding & Review Unit**

14. The Safeguarding & Review Unit (S&RU) fulfils a diverse range of functions in supporting the Directorate of Children's Services, the Council and the work of Dudley Safeguarding Children Board (DSCB). The unit focuses on reviewing the safety of children, particularly those in need of protection, and securing good outcomes for children in care. It is responsible for providing independent chairing of child protection conferences, statutory looked after reviews, foster home reviews and complex strategy meetings, and support to inter-agency working arrangements in respect of safeguarding children & young people.

### **Health and Well Being**

15. Health and Well Being contains a range of Council provided and traded services. Catering and Client Services and a large part of Educational Psychology provision are traded.
16. This part of the division also includes our Parent Partnership Service, elements of provision for children and young people with disabilities to ensure that they and their families enjoy the best possible health and well being, and coordination of our partnership activity with all other agencies, including the NHS, schools and the police.

## **Commissioning**

17. The Commissioning function supports all areas of Children's Services to strengthen commissioning and procurement practice at all stages of the commissioning cycle. It also includes specific commissioned services including the Travel and Transport Service and Dudley Grid for Learning, and our General Management Team.

## **Workforce Development**

18. The Workforce Development Service supports the whole Directorate in order to ensure that our personnel are properly prepared and enabled to carry out their duties and to achieve the best possible outcomes for children and young people.

The service focuses on:

- Implementing and creating effective strategies to ensure successful workforce development
- Developing effective cross divisional and partnership working practices
- Linking workforce development to identified current service priorities
- Establishing clear information about the skills of current workforce and use gap analysis information to plan further development
- Clear leadership development

## **Policy, Performance and Information Services**

19. The Policy, Performance, and Information Service teams deliver services to the public and employees. They include the executive support team which provides business support to the Director and Assistant Directors, policy development and implementation, performance management and reporting, including data capture and analysis, supporting and challenging the performance of others and supporting the use of IT systems, information governance and effective use of technology, coordination of activity on internal and external inspection, review and audit, equality and diversity, and quality assurance and development.

## **Director Support; Asset Management**

20. The work of this service includes fulfilling a number of key statutory obligations including ensuring that all minimum standards for the maintenance, access to and health and safety of school premises are adhered to and to ensure effective place planning to provide sufficient pupil places for all primary, secondary and special schools, instigating the statutory processes around alterations to maintained schools,

closure of schools and transfer of land upon a change of school category. The Service also ensures that all capital investment work to the Council's assets including refurbishment and new build is delivered in an innovative and up to date approach whilst considering all relevant legislation and industry guidelines.

## **Finance**

21. The Directorate of Children's Services has a Local Authority net budget of £70.6m for 2014/15 financial year. Within the budget of £70.6m, £11.4m is non-controllable, giving a controllable budget of £59.2m. The local authority budget funds activity across all of the divisions.
22. The Directorate also receives various grant funding for work on areas such as; Troubled Families (£350k), Youth Offending Service (£570k), SEN Reform (£361k), Adoption Reform (£258k), Music Education Hub Grant (£372k) and Education Services Grant (£5,140k). All values quoted are for 2014/15 financial year.
23. The final main source of funding is the Dedicated Schools Grant. For 2014/15 financial year the total grant is £235.7m (including academies). Of this £26.4m of the grant is allocated to the central services outlined above, largely funding activity within the Education Services Division. The remainder of £209.3m is to fund the activity of schools.

## **Law**

24. The key legislation underpinning the Directorate are the Children's Acts 1989, 2004 and 2006, Education and Inspection Act 2006, Children and Families Bill 2014

## **Equality Impact**

25. The work of the Directorate of Children's Services supports parents, families, communities and partner agencies in providing safe homes and environments, security and stability for all children and young people in the Borough. In partnership with schools the Directorate contributes to the raising of attainment and aspiration for all children and assists in narrowing the gap between all children and vulnerable groups. It has a major role to fulfill in relation to adulthood.

## **Recommendation**

26. The Children's Services Scrutiny Committee note the content of the report and determine from the information provided if there are any additional areas of scrutiny which they would wish to identify as a focus for the 2014/15 municipal year programme for scrutiny.



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**Pauline Sharratt**  
**Interim Director of Children's Services**

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**Children's Services Scrutiny Committee – 26<sup>th</sup> June, 2014**

**Report of the Lead Officer and Director of Corporate Resources**

**Composition and Membership of the Children's Services Scrutiny Committee**

**Purpose of Report**

1. To receive the decision of the Overview and Scrutiny Management Board regarding the composition and membership of the Children's Services Scrutiny Committee.

**Background**

2. The Overview and Scrutiny Management Board have indicated its wish to review the composition and membership of the Children's Services Scrutiny Committee, to ensure that the Committee remains fit for purpose and to enable it to move forward with a wider focus than just educational issues. The Management Board had particular regard to the number of non-elected Members who serve on the Committee. The Board, at its meeting held on 29<sup>th</sup> April, 2014, requested a report on a review of the composition and membership of the Committee, pending which it was also resolved that the Committee's existing co-opted members remain unchanged and that an appropriate recommendation be made to the Annual Meeting of the Council on the 5<sup>th</sup> June, 2014. The recommendation was duly approved.
3. The Committee currently comprises 11 elected Members, appointed in accordance with the proportionality requirements, five non-elected, voting Members and five non-elected, non-voting Members. The non-elected, voting, Members are stipulated by law and comprise one representative of each of the Church of England and Roman Catholic denominations, appointed by the Worcester Diocesan Education Committee and the Archdiocese of Birmingham, respectively, and one parent governor from each of the primary, secondary and special education phases. While there are legal stipulations regarding certain issues relating to parent governor representatives, there is discretion for local authorities to agree the number and type of such representatives.
4. In relation to non-elected, non-voting, Members there is no legal requirement to appoint.
5. On consideration of the above information, and the history to the appointment of the non-statutory Members of the Committee and its predecessors, as set out in the report submitted to the meeting, the Overview and Scrutiny Management Board, at its meeting held on 11<sup>th</sup> June, 2014, resolved to recommend the Council as set out in paragraph 7 below.

6. At the Management Board meeting, there was a strong cross-party consensus that the existing co-opted membership is no longer appropriate for all meetings given the wider remit of the Children's Services Scrutiny Committee to look at social care issues not just education. Comments were also made that the current Committee is "too big" and leads to too much focus on education.
7. Accordingly, the Overview and Management Scrutiny Board resolved to recommend the Council:  
"That the statutory co-opted members be retained but that the Children's Services Scrutiny Committee establish a pool of specialist/key contacts who can be invited to attend to advise the Committee or give evidence at specific meetings depending on the topics under discussion"  
The recommendation will be considered at the meeting of the Council to be held on 7<sup>th</sup> July, 2014.
8. The Overview and Scrutiny Management Board had in mind that contacts could include a wide range of educational/social care professionals/faith groups/disability groups/trade unions/people from other Boroughs etc etc. The Committee would have the discretion to invite people according to the topic under debate at the time.

### **Finance**

9. Except members of the Committee are able to claim expenses for the attendance of meetings, there are no direct financial implications.

### **Law**

10. Section 111 of the Local Government Act, 1972 authorises the Council to do anything which is calculated to facilitate or is conducive or incidental to the exercise of any of its functions.
11. The relevant provisions regarding the appointment of non-elected, voting and non-voting members are contained in the Local Government and Housing Act, 1989, and associated regulations. Members with a voting entitlement do not affect Committees insofar as proportionality of membership is concerned.
12. The provisions regarding the requirement for Church representatives to be appointed to Council Committees dealing with education are contained in DfE Circular 19/1999 and to appoint Parent/Governor representatives to those Committees in the Education (Parent Governor Representatives) Regulations, 1999, as superseded by the 2001 Regulations of the same name.
13. The requirement to appoint Church Representatives, as indicated above, remains as does the requirement to appoint elected Parent/Governor representatives. The Council has discretion regarding the number and nature of Parent/Governor representatives to be elected, the period of office and responsibility for the election arrangements.

### **Equality Impact**


14. This report complies with the auspices of the Council on Equality and Diversity.

### **Recommendation**

15. That the decision of the Overview and Management Scrutiny Board review on the membership of the Children's Services Scrutiny Committee, as set out above, be received and noted.



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**Lead Officer**



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**Director of Corporate Resources**

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### **List of Background Papers**

Minute No. 28 of the meeting of the Overview and Scrutiny Management Board held on 29<sup>th</sup> April, 2014 and the report submitted to the Management Board meeting held on 11<sup>th</sup> June, 2014.