

Halesowen Area Committee - 2nd July 2008

Joint Report of the Director of Adult Community and Housing and the Director of Children Services

Progress of Elected Member Visits to Adult and Children's Social Care Establishments 2007/08

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 2007/8 and to inform Committee about actions taken in response to Member comments
2. To seek nominations from the Committee for Members to carry out visits to Social Care establishments during 2008/09.

Background

3. Each Area Committee nominates pairs of Members who are willing to undertake visits to Adult and Children's Social Care establishments. A list of residential and day care establishments for adults and children across the Borough is attached as Appendix 1.
4. 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
5. The visits also assist Members in fulfilling their role as Corporate Parents of Looked After Children.
6. All Members participating in the rota of visits must have received training in the role and satisfactory Criminal Records Bureau clearance.
7. Training to assist the process for 2008/9 will be arranged and provided to Members.
8. The rota process and the delivery of training is managed within the Policy, Performance & Resources Unit of the Directorate of Adult, Community & Housing Services. Over a period of time Members have made suggestions to improve the process and these have been incorporated into the Protocol determining the responsibilities of Members and officers. The Protocol is attached as appendix 2.

9. Staff of the Policy, Performance & Resources Unit provide Members with
- a copy of the Protocol for Members and Officers
 - a schedule of visits to be undertaken during the period
 - a reminder of scheduled visits to establishments
 - 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.
10. Members completed proformas are sent to the relevant Assistant Director for comment and response. Appendix 3 provides details of the visits carried out by Members of the Halesowen Area Committee and the response provided by the relevant Assistant Director.
11. 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 6 individual establishments for nominated Members to visit between September 2007 and April 2008 and all 6 visits were carried out.
 - A consistent message from all visits carried out was that of a positive relationship between service users and staff and a welcoming environment.
 - Family Assessment Centre (Children) Very positive report from Members on the care and quality of the work the assessment staff carry out with the families. Building appeared to be in good repair but staff would benefit from an extension onto the building. The Assistant Director thanked Members for their comments. The service manager has submitted plans to extend the building when funding becomes available.
 - Russell Court (Older People) Members provided a very favourable report and noted that each resident has a nominated key worker responsible for getting to know their likes and dislikes. Members commented that the building still retains its good looks despite being open for 17 years.
 - Maitland Road (Children) Members provided positive comments about the home and observed a very relaxed atmosphere and friendly banter between staff and the young people. Some refurbishment required within the home. Following Members comments a quote has been obtained for refurbishment of the kitchen.

Finance

12. There are no immediate financial implications from this report. The programme of Member visits can continue to be provided from within existing resource allocation.
13. 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

14. Members' visits to Social Care establishments assist in meeting some of the relevant requirements of the Children Act 1989 and the Care Standards Act 2000. The visits specifically enable members to effectively respond to their corporate parenting role and responsibilities.

Equality Impact

15. 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.

16. Recommendation

It is recommended that:-

- 1] That Members consider and comment on the information contained in this report and attachments.
- 2] That Members make further nominations from Committee for participation in the rota for the year 2008-2009.



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Director of DACHS

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Director of Children's Services

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List of Background Papers

Appendix 1. A list of residential and day care establishments for adults and children across the Borough.

Appendix 2 The Protocol for Members Visits.

Appendix 3 Details of the visits carried out by Members of Halesowen Area Committee.