

OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY BOARD

29 JULY 2008

CHILDREN AND LEARNING SCRUTINY PANEL - PROGRESS REPORT

PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

1. To provide members of the Overview and Scrutiny Board (OSB) with an update on the work of the Children and Learning Scrutiny Panel.

RECOMMENDATION

2. That the Overview and Scrutiny Board notes the updated position.

BACKGROUND

3. Since the last update report to OSB, the Children and Learning Scrutiny Panel has met once, on 3 July 2008. At that meeting, the panel considered an overview from the Deputy Director of Children, Families and Learning Intervention and Safeguarding) on its new topic for investigation - namely Children Looked After in the context of the recent Government White Paper "Care Matters: Time for Change."
4. Members considered information in respect of the very wide areas of responsibility covered by the white paper. The panel determined that if the whole of the white paper's implications were to be considered, the resulting scrutiny review was likely to be massive and potentially unmanageable. It was therefore agreed to examine some key aspects of the paper insofar as they affect the council's corporate parenting responsibilities, which the panel agreed as follows:

- Training and support for foster carers.
 - The Council's involvement with external organisations in promoting employment opportunities for young people not in employment, education or training ("NEET").
 - Existing arrangements for assisted/supported lodgings.
 - Support for children looked after in respect of emotional and mental health issues
5. In addition, the scrutiny panel agreed that the title of its investigation should be amended to reflect its narrower remit. The panel will therefore now examine "Corporate Parenting Responsibilities". Terms of reference for the panel's investigation are scheduled to be submitted to its next meeting.

COUNCILLOR JAVED ISMAIL

CHAIR OF THE CHILDREN AND LEARNING SCRUTINY PANEL

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