

**CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE SCRUTINY  
SUB-COMMITTEE****18 OCTOBER 2006**

Chairman:	* Councillor Mark Versallion	
Councillors:	* G Chowdhury * B E Gate * Mitzi Green * Jean Lammiman * Julia Merison	* Narinder Singh Mudhar * Joyce Nickolay (6) * Dinesh Solanki * Mrs Sasi Suresh (3) * Jeremy Zeid
Voting Co-opted:	(Voluntary Aided)  † Mrs J Rammelt * Reverend P Reece	(Parent Governors)  * Mr H Epie * Mr R Sutcliffe

\* Denotes Member present  
(3) and (6) Denote category of Reserve Members  
† Denotes apologies received

**PART I - RECOMMENDATIONS****RECOMMENDATION 1 - Terms of Reference**

Members received the terms of reference of the Sub-Committee.

**Resolved to RECOMMEND:** (to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee)

That the terms of reference of the Children and Young People Scrutiny Sub-Committee be amended, as set out at Appendix 1 to the minutes.

**PART II - MINUTES****15. Attendance by Reserve Members:**

**RESOLVED:** To note the attendance at this meeting of the following duly appointed Reserve Members:-

<u>Ordinary Member</u>	<u>Reserve Member</u>
Councillor David Perry Councillor Yogesh Teli	Councillor Sasi Suresh Councillor Joyce Nickolay

**16. Declarations of Interest:**

**RESOLVED:** To note that the following interests were declared:

<u>Member</u>	<u>Nature of Personal Interest</u>
Councillor Jeremy Zeid	Councillor Jeremy Zeid declared a personal interest in that it was likely that he would soon be appointed to the Governing body of Priestmead School.

**17. Arrangement of Agenda:**

**RESOLVED:** That (1) in accordance with the Local Government (Access to Information) Act 1985, the following agenda item be admitted late to the agenda by virtue of the special circumstances and grounds for urgency detailed below:-

<u>Agenda item</u>	<u>Special Circumstances/Grounds for Urgency</u>
AOB – Children Looked After – Green Paper (Summary, Action taken by the Council, and reaction).	These documents were not available at the time the main agenda was printed and circulated as the Green Paper had not been released. Members were requested to consider this information with the work programme item.

A0B – Special meeting of the Children and Young People Scrutiny Sub-Committee – 9 January 2007

This item was not listed at the time the agenda was printed and circulated. Members were asked to consider this item so that they were aware that there would be an informal session on 4 December 2006 to formulate questions for the Special meeting on 9 January 2007.

(2) all items be considered with the press and public present.

18. **Minutes:**

**RESOLVED:** That the minutes of the meeting held on 26 June 2006, be taken as read and signed as a correct record.

19. **Public Questions:**

**RESOLVED:** To note that no public questions were put at the meeting under the provisions of Overview and Scrutiny Procedure Rule 8 (Part 4F of the Council's Constitution).

20. **Petitions:**

**RESOLVED:** To note that no petitions were received at the meeting under the provisions of Overview and Scrutiny Procedure Rule 9 (Part 4F of the Council's Constitution).

21. **Deputations:**

**RESOLVED:** To note that no deputations were received at the meeting under the provisions of Overview and Scrutiny Procedure Rule 10 (Part 4F of the Council's Constitution).

22. **Terms of Reference of the Children and Young People Scrutiny Sub-Committee:**  
See Recommendation 1 above.

23. **Final Report of the Light Touch Review of the Education of Looked After Children:**

The Sub-Committee received a report of the Director of People, Performance and Policy, alongside a verbal report of the Chairman of the Review Group, on the findings of the review of the education of Looked after Children.

Members commended the work of the Review Group and its report. However, concern was expressed at the projected cost of an event being held to reward Looked after Children (LAC) that had emerged during the Review. Members urged that this costing be explored further. Members were also of the view that all Members should be trained on corporate parenting.

Members requested that Recommendation 5 of the report be placed before Recommendation 4, as it linked with Recommendation 3.

**RESOLVED:** That (1) the final report of the light touch review of education of Looked after Children be noted;

(2) the findings and recommendations of the light touch review, as set out in the review report, be endorsed;

(3) the report be forwarded to Cabinet for consideration at the next meeting;

(4) the Corporate Parenting Group be requested to ensure that every Member of the Council attends as many as possible Looked after Children events per year to ensure they remain in touch with looked after children and young people and fulfil their responsibilities as corporate parents;

(5) the Member Development Panel be requested to organise a seminar on corporate parenting for the current intake of Members, and consider the valuable input that the Corporate Parenting Group could play in this training;

(6) the Director of Children's Services be requested to prepare a plan of action resulting from the light touch review and report back to the Sub-Committee, at its meeting on 13 February 2007, when the relevant Portfolio Holder would also be invited to attend to participate on this matter.

24. **Update on Extended Schools:**

The Sub-Committee received a report of the Director of Lifelong Learning and Culture, which provided an update on progress regarding extended schools since the Community Schools Pilot Evaluation had been presented to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee on 30 January 2006.

Members asked for clarification on a number of issues to which officers responded as follows:

- parents who undertook voluntary work in schools should have been subject to a Criminal Records Bureau check before having unsupervised access to children;
- funding was in place to support the roll-out of the seventh extended schools cluster, but there was concern about funding in future years;
- where a children's centre was on a school site, the headteacher would oversee the management of the centre but would also appoint a manager;
- headteachers of schools in a cluster considered their school as part of a cluster group and considered needs beyond those of their individual school. All clusters had a steering group to consider the cluster's priorities and the headteachers' priorities in the allocation of funding.

A Member expressed concern about the child database that was being set up and requested that the issue of privacy be considered. An officer informed the Member that there was a small working group involved in this project.

Members raised concern about private sector providers and commented that ethical parameters should be set. Officers reported that guidance on working with partners had been issued to schools.

**RESOLVED:** That the report be noted.

25. **Verbal Feedback on the Challenge Session Looking at the Corporate Assessment and JAR self-assessment:**

The Sub-Committee received verbal feedback on the challenge session looking at the Corporate Assessment and a Joint Area Review (JAR) self-assessment. Members were informed that the JAR self-assessment had been completed and the grades had been co-ordinated with the Corporate Performance Assessment grades. The Council had submitted ten case studies and a neighbourhood study of South Harrow to the inspectors.

Members who had attended the challenge session expressed the view that the challenge panel had been productive and were pleased that, in their role as scrutineers they had been able to contribute to the document that had been produced as a result of the session.

**RESOLVED:** That the report be noted.

26. **School Food Improvement Strategy:**

The Sub-Committee received a report of the Director of Strategic Services (People First) which informed Members of the progress made in relation to the new food-based standards, with special reference to the provision of drinking water in schools. Members were informed that the Council was actively promoting the provision of drinking water in schools but many children, particularly in high schools, had expressed the view that they did not want to drink water during lessons. Also, the Council could not control the way in which schools provided the water as it was not providing funding.

It was reported that where capital improvements were being undertaken, adequate provision would be ensured.

In response to questions from Members about the provision of free school meals, an officer explained that headteachers had commented that some meals provided by caterers barely met the required standard. Also, the increase in government funding was minimal. The officer also explained that around the country it had been noticed that where the meal options had been changed to healthy options, there had been a significant drop in the uptake. However, in schools where there was a holistic approach to healthy eating, this scheme had been more successful.

**RESOLVED:** That the report be noted.

27. **Consultation Draft of the Refreshed Community Plan:**

The Panel received a report of the Director of People, Performance and Policy, which asked Members to consider and make comments on the consultation draft of the refreshed Community Plan. An officer explained that the Community Plan would replace the Community Strategy and set out the way in which Harrow would develop over the next 15 years. Consultation was taking place with over 70 community groups and Members. Members of the Sub-Committee were invited to provide comments individually or as a Sub-Committee before 27 October 2006.

Members requested that low-level lighting for parks be considered and that a reference to litter should be made in the report. It was also suggested that the bullet point 'Increase the uptake of sexual health services' needed to be rephrased.

**RESOLVED:** That the report and comments be noted.

28. **Work Programme:**

The Sub-Committee received a report of the Director of People, Performance and Policy, which asked Members to consider and agree the main topics for inclusion in the work programme for 2006/07 and consider the scheduling of longer term topics for the four-year programme of work (2006-2010).

**RESOLVED:** That (1) Members of the Sub-Committee, who had agreed to conduct a review on School Nursing, conduct a Challenge Panel and report back to the Sub-Committee at its special meeting on 9 January 2007;

(2) Key Performance indicators be considered as an agenda item, annually;

(3) Parent Partnership Services be considered as an agenda item at a future meeting of the Sub-Committee;

(4) School Meals and Water Provision be considered as part of the joint review being undertaken by the Adult Health and Social Care and Children and Young People Scrutiny Sub-Committees in 2007;

(5) the Sub-Committee monitor general music provision in the latter part of Year 2.

29. **Any Other Business:**

(i) **Children Looked After – Green Paper**

Members received tabled documents on the Green Paper on Children Looked After. It was reported that in the Green Paper, the Council had been mentioned for good practice.

**RESOLVED:** To note the report.

(ii) **Special meeting of the Children and Young People Scrutiny Sub-Committee – 9 January 2007**

Members were reminded that there would be an informal session on 4 December 2006 to formulate questions for the Portfolio Holder question and answer session on 9 January 2007.

**RESOLVED:** That (1) the Portfolio Holders for People First and Issues Facing Young People be invited to attend the Special meeting on 9 January 2007 for the question and answer session;

(2) all other Portfolio Holders be notified of the date of the above meeting in case they were be invited to attend the meeting on 9 January 2007, following the formulation of questions on 4 December 2006.

- (iii) Co-optees  
Members thanked the two co-optees on the Sub-Committee who would cease to be co-optees on 21 October 2006.

30. **Extension and Termination of the Meeting:**  
In accordance with Overview and Scrutiny Procedure Rule 6.7 it was

**RESOLVED:** To continue until 10.10 pm.

(Note: The meeting having commenced at 7.30 pm, closed at 10.03 pm)

(Signed) COUNCILLOR MARK VERSALLION  
Chairman

APPENDIX 1**Children and Young People Scrutiny Sub-Committee**

The Children and Young People Scrutiny sub-committee has the following powers and duties:

- a) **to hold relevant Portfolio Holders to account on a regular basis:**
- b) to develop a work programme for scrutiny of the children and young people related functions of the Council and partners in consultation with the Overview and Scrutiny Committee;
- c) to have specific responsibility for policy development and scrutiny of the following functions:
  - Every Child Matters outcomes (including health)
  - Education Authority functions
  - Youth participation and engagement
  - Youth offending
  - 0 – 19 learning
  - Early Years Services
  - Extended Schools
- d) to hold the HSP and its management groups to account for the delivery of the Local Area Agreement;
- e) to review and make reports and recommendations to the Executive and the Council in respect of the functions within its terms of reference;
- f) assist the Council and the Executive in the development of the budget and policy framework by analysis of policy issues;
- g) **conduct research and consultation including with community and other appropriate stakeholders in the analysis of policy issues and possible options:**
- h) to consider, report and make recommendations on any matter within the Sub-Committee's terms of reference affecting the area and/or those who live **in**, work **in**, or travel through Harrow;
- i) to conclude reviews promptly, normally within 6 months;
- j) to contribute to the annual report of the work of scrutiny.