



SCRUTINY BOARD (CHILDREN'S SERVICES)

Meeting to be held in Civic Hall, Leeds on
Thursday, 19th April, 2007 at 9.30 am

(A pre-meeting will take place for ALL members of the Board at 9.00 a.m.)

MEMBERSHIP

Councillors

- J Bale (Chair) - Guiseley and Rawdon
- J Chapman - Weetwood
- B Cleasby - Horsforth
- R D Feldman - Alwoodley
- A Harrison - Garforth and Swillington
- V Kendall - Roundhay
- J Lewis - Kippax and Methley
- L Mulherin - Ardsley and Robin Hood
- K Renshaw - Ardsley and Robin Hood
- B Selby - Killingbeck and Seacroft

Co-opted Members (Voting)

- Mr E A Britten - Church Representative (Catholic)
- Prof P H J H Gosden - Church Representative (Church of England)
- Mr R Greaves - Parent Governor Representative (Secondary)
- Mr C Macpherson - Parent Governor Representative (Special)
- Mrs S Knights - Parent Governor Representative (Primary)

Co-opted Members (Non-Voting)

- Mr T Hales - Teacher Representative
- Ms C Foote - Teacher Representative
- Mrs S Hutchinson - Early Years Development and Childcare Partnership Representative
- Mr P Gathercole - NCH Representative
- Ms T Kayani - Youth Work Partnership Representative

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A G E N D A

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1			<p>APPEALS AGAINST REFUSAL OF INSPECTION OF DOCUMENTS</p> <p>To consider any appeals in accordance with Procedure Rule 25 of the Access to Information Rules (in the event of an Appeal the press and public will be excluded)</p>	
2			<p>EXCLUSION OF THE PUBLIC</p> <p>To identify items where resolutions may be moved to exclude the public</p>	
3			<p>LATE ITEMS</p> <p>To identify items which have been admitted to the agenda by the Chair for consideration</p> <p>(The special circumstances shall be specified in the minutes)</p>	
4			<p>DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST</p> <p>To declare any personal/prejudicial interests for the purpose of Section 81(3) of the Local Government Act 2000 and paragraphs 8 to 13 of the Members' Code of Conduct</p>	
5			<p>APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE</p> <p>To receive any apologies for absence from the meeting</p>	
6			<p>MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETINGS</p> <p>To receive and approve the minutes of the previous meetings held on Thursday, 8th March, 2007 and Thursday, 29th March, 2007</p>	1 - 12

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7			<p>MINUTES OF THE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE</p> <p>To note the minutes of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee meeting held on Monday 5th March 2007</p>	13 - 16
8			<p>YOUNG PEOPLE'S SCRUTINY FORUM - 'CATCHING THE BUS'</p> <p>To receive a report from the Head of Scrutiny and Member Development which details the draft final version of the Young People's Scrutiny Forum inquiry report, entitled 'Catching the Bus', for Members' approval</p>	17 - 36
9			<p>IMPLEMENTING THE CHILDREN ACT: APRIL 2007 UPDATE</p> <p>To consider a report from the Director of Children's Services which updates the Board on a wide range of issues relating to the implementation of the Children Act in Leeds</p>	37 - 54
10			<p>THE JOINT AREA REVIEW AND THE CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE'S PLAN REVIEW</p> <p>To consider a report from the Director of Children's Services which seeks to update Members on the progress made in relation to the preparation for the inspection of children's services later this year, and also invites Members to consider the Board's engagement in the ongoing review of the Leeds Children and Young People's Plan</p>	55 - 60
11			<p>SCRUTINY BOARD DRAFT STATEMENT - DEPARTMENTAL COMMUNICATIONS</p> <p>To receive a report from the Head of Scrutiny and Member Development which invites the Board to formally agree the draft statement which relates to Departmental Communications</p>	61 - 68

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12			<p>SCRUTINY BOARD DRAFT STATEMENT - 14-19 REVIEW OF EDUCATION AND TRAINING PROVISION IN LEEDS</p> <p>To consider a report from the Head of Scrutiny and Member Development which invites the Board to formally agree the draft statement which relates to the Review of 14-19 Education and Training Provision in Leeds</p> <p>(Draft Statement to Follow)</p>	69 - 70
13			<p>ANNUAL REPORT 2006/2007</p> <p>To receive a report from the Head of Scrutiny and Member Development which details a draft version of the Board's contribution towards the Scrutiny Board Annual Report for Members' approval</p> <p>(Draft Annual Report to Follow)</p>	71 - 72
14			<p>MINUTES OF EXECUTIVE BOARD</p> <p>To note the minutes from the Executive Board meeting held on Wednesday, 4th April 2007</p>	73 - 82

Agenda Item 6

SCRUTINY BOARD (CHILDREN'S SERVICES)

THURSDAY, 8TH MARCH, 2007

PRESENT: Councillor J Bale in the Chair

Councillors J Chapman, B Cleasby, R D Feldman,
A Harrison, V Kendall, J Lewis, K Renshaw and B Selby

**CO-OPTED MEMBERS:
(VOTING)**

Mr E A Britten	- Church Representative (Catholic)
Prof P H J H Gosden	- Church Representative (Church of England)
Mr C Macpherson	- Parent Governor Representative (Special)
Mrs S Knights	- Parent Governor Representative (Primary)

**CO-OPTED MEMBERS:
(NON-VOTING)**

Ms C Foote	- Teacher Representative
Mr P Gathercole	- NCH Representative
Ms T Kayani	- Leeds Youth Work Partnership Representative

108 Chair's Opening Remarks

The Chair welcomed all in attendance to the March meeting of the Scrutiny Board (Children's Services).

109 Declarations of Interest

The following Members declared personal interests in relation to agenda items 9 and 10 due to their respective positions as either school or college governors (Minute Nos. 114 and 115 refer):-

Councillors Bale, Chapman, Cleasby, R D Feldman, Harrison, Kendall, J Lewis, Selby, Mr E A Britten, Mr C Macpherson and Mrs S Knights.

Councillor Cleasby and Professor P H J H Gosden both declared personal interests in relation to agenda items 9 and 10 due to being members of the School Organisation Committee (Minute Nos. 114 and 115 refer).

Mr C Macpherson declared a personal interest in relation to agenda item 9, as his daughter attended the North West Specialist Inclusive Learning Centre (SILC). (Minute No. 114 refers).

Councillor Kendall declared a personal interest in relation to agenda item 11, due to being a member of the Skyrack Adoption Panel (Minute No. 116 refers).

Mr P Gathercole declared a personal interest in relation to agenda item 11, due to being a representative of NCH, an organisation which acted as an

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adoption agency and provided services to looked after children (Minute No. 116 refers).

Ms C Foote declared a personal interest in relation to agenda item 10, due to being a member of the JTUC (Minute No. 115 refers).

Mrs S Knights declared a personal interest in relation to agenda item 11, due to being a Foster Parent (Minute No. 116 refers).

A further declaration of interest was made at a later point in the meeting (Minute No. 114 refers).

110 Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence from the meeting were received on behalf of Councillor L Mulherin, Mr T Hales and Mrs S Hutchinson.

111 Minutes of the Previous Meeting

RESOLVED – That the minutes of the meeting held on 8th February 2007 be approved as a correct record.

112 Minutes of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee

RESOLVED – That the minutes of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee meeting held on 5th February 2007 be noted.

113 Members' Questions

As prior notice had been received from Members, the Head of Scrutiny and Member Development submitted a report which afforded Scrutiny Board Members the opportunity to put questions to the relevant Director, or the Director's nominee.

Keith Burton, Deputy Director of Children's Services, Commissioning and Partnerships, was in attendance to answer Members' questions.

(a). In the light of the **Unicef report** that ranked the UK bottom of a league table for child wellbeing across 21 industrialised countries, do the officers think that we are setting our aspirations too low? Are there any plans for looking at best practice in the highest achieving countries (Netherlands, Sweden, Denmark and Finland)?

In response, the Deputy Director of Children's Services, Commissioning and Partnerships, advised Members of what he believed to be the four main issues arising from the report in relation to the delivery of Children's Services in Leeds. In summary, the four main issues were:-

- The importance for a country to place a greater cultural emphasis upon children, young people and the family unit;
- That those societies with low poverty levels, less inequality and greater social mobility tended to feature positively within the report, as such social conditions enabled the aspirations of children and young people to be maximised, which was in contrast to some countries where children's

aspirations were often eroded, due in part to the generations of poverty which often existed;

- The emphasis placed in the UK upon narrow areas of academic achievement and standardised testing, which had resulted in a competitive culture being embedded within education, in addition to under achievement in certain areas;
- The need to ensure that the aspirations of children and young people were maximised, a priority which the Deputy Director of Children's Services, Commissioning and Partnerships, believed had been reflected in recent policy development, through the establishment of initiatives such as 'Every Child Matters'.

A question and answer session resulting from the response then ensued. The main areas of debate were as follows:-

- The need to ensure that the emphasis of any future initiatives was placed upon a child's enjoyment in addition to achievement;
- Members noted the general success in the report of countries with smaller populations;
- The role of the **Children and Young People's Plan** in helping to improve the services provided to children and young people in Leeds when compared to the rest of the UK;
- The need to promote greater levels of peer support amongst young people in order to reduce problems such as bullying;
- The actions which could be taken via the '**Narrowing the Gap**' initiative to address the culture of low level aspiration which had developed in certain communities and the importance of such projects as EASEL in this context;
- The five outcomes which formed part of the Every Child Matters agenda, and the need to ensure that such outcomes were operational;
- The social and economic pressures currently placed upon parents, and how such pressures impacted upon today's children and young people;
- The need to ensure that children were not viewed merely as economic units when considering the provision of services.

(b). What **Contact Centre** provision does Social Services fund to enable separated parents to exercise contact arrangements properly?

In response, Members learned that there was no direct Local Authority provision for those seeking advice following marital break up, and that involvement in parental contact with children only happened where Social Services was involved due to a child being at risk or in care.

Having noted the arrangements for the wider services provided in this field, in addition to the support provided by voluntary organisations, the Deputy Director of Children's Services, Commissioning and Partnerships, noted Members' concerns and undertook to investigate further whether an increase in contact centre provision might reduce the levels of delays which had been experienced in private law cases.

The Board acknowledged the response which had been submitted and requested that a response in relation to the further work requested was submitted to a future meeting of the Board, if possible prior to the end of the municipal year.

(Councillor Renshaw joined the meeting at 9.40 a.m. during the consideration of this item)

114 **Specialist Inclusive Learning Centres (SILCs)**

Further to Minute No. 20, 13th July 2006, the Board received an update on the progress made by Education Leeds in relation to the action plan which had been drawn up in response to the publication of the Scrutiny Board's inquiry report into Specialist Inclusive Learning Centres (SILCs). The findings of the Scrutiny Board working group, a body which had been established to monitor the progress made in relation to the action plan, were also detailed for Members' consideration.

Carol Jordan, Strategic Manager, Behaviour and Attendance, and Paul Barker, Inclusion and SEN Team Leader, both of Education Leeds, were in attendance to answer Members' questions.

Following a brief overview of the information detailed with the report, a question and answer session ensued. The main areas of debate were as follows:-

- Members clarified whether a debate with all stakeholders concerning the principles and future direction of the SILC strategy had begun;
- The need to ensure that a clear strategy which reflected the changing needs of the service and which struck the correct **balance between inclusion and integration** was established in relation to the future provision of the SILCs;
- Members raised concerns regarding the timescales assigned to several of the responses within the action plan, sought clarification on the reasons for such lengthy timescales and highlighted the impact that such timescales may have upon service users in the interim;
- The Board sought clarification on the extent to which a funding model for the SILCs could be established, bearing in mind the service's ongoing structural review;
- Members sought further clarification on the arrangements for a proposed **funding model** for the SILCs, in order to ensure that the problems which had been experienced in the past would not occur again;
- With regard to the delays which had been experienced, Members enquired whether such delays had been caused by the degree of uncertainty which surrounded the SILC's long term funding arrangements;
- Members emphasised the importance of **effective communication** with all stakeholders and made enquiries into the number, level of parental involvement and effectiveness of the **Parent Forums** which had been established;
- Members noted that the **Portage Team** had nearly doubled the number of families receiving the service since 2005, asked whether this increase had been due to a reduction in the regularity of visits made by the team to

service users and sought clarification over the vacancy in the team which was to be filled after two years;

- The Board referred to the **accessibility of information** relating to the range of services available to children with special educational needs, asked whether such information was available from one source and whether enough was being done to provide 'clear, co-ordinated and updated information';
- The actions being taken to ensure that the Choice Advisor interfaced with those families who were most in need of information and guidance;
- Members emphasised **the difference between informing and consulting with service users** and highlighted the need to ensure that effective consultation on any proposed change to service delivery was undertaken;
- The Board emphasised the demands which were being placed upon those employees who taught children with special educational needs, raised concern at the amount of **training** in this field which was aimed at teaching assistants and highlighted the pressures currently placed upon teachers which restricted them from undertaking such courses.

In conclusion, Members stressed the need for the Scrutiny Board's successor to continue to monitor this issue, especially in relation to the short term recommendations made by the Scrutiny Board in addition to the **longer term structural and funding arrangements**.

RESOLVED –

- (a). That the report and information appended to the report be noted;
- (b). That the Scrutiny Board and its successor, continue to monitor the progress made by Education Leeds in relation to the recommendations of the Scrutiny Board following its inquiry into the Specialist Inclusive Learning Centres.

(Mrs S Knights declared a personal interest in relation to this item, due to being a member of the North West SILC Parents Forum)

115 The Implications of Trust Schools for the Local Authority - Inquiry Session Two

Further to Minute No. 104, 8th February 2007, a report was submitted by the Head of Scrutiny and Member Development which detailed the information to be considered as part of the second formal session of the Board's inquiry into the Implications of Trust Schools in Leeds.

Appended to the report for Members' information were the agreed terms of reference for the Scrutiny Board inquiry, in addition to a range of information from Children Leeds, the Schools Commissioner, Department for Education and Skills, Garforth Community College, Trinity and All Saints College, Temple Moor High School Science College and David Young Community Academy.

Carol Gray, representing the Schools Commissioner, Department for Education and Skills, Dirk Gilleard, Deputy Chief Executive, Education Leeds,

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Richard Smith, Team Leader, Governor Support, Education Leeds, Keith Burton, Deputy Director of Children's Services, Commissioning and Partnerships, Paul Edwards, Head Teacher, Garforth Community College, Ian Garforth, Chair of Governors, Garforth Community College, Ros McMullen, Principal, David Young Academy, Martin Fleetwood, Principal, Temple Moor High School Science College and Tony Sheppard, Chair of Governors, Temple Moor High School Science College, were all in attendance to answer Members' questions and submit evidence to the Board.

Having received a summary of the information submitted on behalf of the Director of Children's Services, representatives of the Schools Commissioner, Garforth Community College, David Young Academy, Temple Moor High School Science College and Education Leeds all submitted their views in relation to the impact that the introduction of Trust Schools could have in Leeds.

A question and answer session concerning the evidence which had been submitted then followed. The main areas of debate were:-

- Members made enquiries into the impact on a school if the school's Trust status was terminated;
- Having raised concerns relating to the possible impact that the **admissions policies** of Trust Schools could have upon children with learning difficulties and the extent to which the Local Authority would have control over such policies, Members noted that Trust Schools would be bound by the School Admissions Code;
- Clarification was sought on several issues including the provision of **safeguards** relating to the establishment of Trust Schools, the number of Trust School pilots which were located in **inner city areas**, the level of restrictions which would be placed upon those looking to become partners of Trust Schools and how such partners would be restricted from promoting their own financial interests. In response the Board was advised of the legislative provisions for such concerns, and in relation to the number of Trust Schools located in inner city areas, Members noted that further information on this issue would be provided;
- Members sought further information on the **barriers to cooperation** which existed in the current model of education provision and enquired how the introduction of Trust Schools would improve provision in the future;
- The Board then discussed the proposed involvement of the Learning and Skills Council and Primary Care Trust in the **Garforth Trust School pilot** and made enquiries into the impact that such involvement would have upon other schools in the area;
- The flexibility of contracts for schools built via the Private Finance Initiative (PFI) and Building Schools for the Future (BSF) programmes and whether such schools had the potential to acquire Trust status in the future;
- Members asked to what extent the **terms and conditions of staff working** in Trust Schools would be protected;
- Members raised concerns over the implications that the potential establishment of two Trusts in East Leeds would have upon other schools in the area;

- In response to Members' enquiries relating to the **sale of land and assets** by a Trust School, Members were advised that although the regular restrictions still applied, the sale of land and assets would be permitted so long as the appropriate consultation was undertaken with the school's governing body and that any revenue received was reinvested back into the school;
- Members then made enquiries into the timescales relating to the finalisation of relevant guidance concerning Trust Schools.

RESOLVED –

- (a). That the report and information appended to the report be noted;
- (b). That the issues raised during the second formal session of the Board's inquiry into the Implications of Trust Schools for the Local Authority be incorporated into the draft version of the Board's final report.

(Mr C Macpherson, Mrs S Knights, Councillor Renshaw, Councillor Harrison, Ms T Kayani, Councillor Chapman and Councillor Feldman left the meeting at 11.50 a.m., 12.05 p.m., 12.10 p.m., 12.25 p.m., 12.30 p.m., 12.35 p.m. and 12.40 p.m. respectively)

116 Inquiry into Adoption in Leeds

A report was submitted by the Head of Scrutiny and Member Development which sought the Board's approval of the final draft version of the Scrutiny Board (Children's Services) report into Adoption in Leeds.

A final draft version of the Scrutiny Board inquiry report in addition to a summary of the evidence considered during the inquiry was appended to the covering report for Members' consideration.

RESOLVED –

- (a). That the contents of the report be noted;
- (b). That the Scrutiny Board (Children's Services) inquiry report into Adoption in Leeds be approved.

117 Work Programme

The Board received a report from the Head of Scrutiny and Member Development which detailed the Scrutiny Board's Work Programme for the remainder of the municipal year.

Appended to the report for Members' information was the current version of the Board's Work Programme, an extract from the Forward Plan of Key Decisions for the period 1st March 2007 to 30th June 2007 which related to the Board's remit, together with the minutes from the Executive Board meeting held on 9th February 2007.

Following a wide ranging discussion which related to the greater emphasis currently being placed upon a mixed economy of education provision in Leeds, Members proposed that the range of issues discussed could be considered in more detail by the Scrutiny Board's successor in the new municipal year.

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RESOLVED – That the contents of the Board’s Work Programme, as appended to the report, be noted.

118 Date and Time of Next Meeting
Thursday, 29th March 2007 at 10.30 a.m.
(Pre-meeting scheduled for 10.00 a.m.)

(The meeting concluded at 12.55 p.m.)

SCRUTINY BOARD (CHILDREN'S SERVICES)

THURSDAY, 29TH MARCH, 2007

PRESENT: Councillor R D Feldman in the Chair

Councillors J Chapman, B Cleasby, V Kendall
and J Lewis

**CO-OPTED MEMBERS:
(VOTING)**

Mr E A Britten	- Church Representative (Catholic)
Prof P H J H Gosden	- Church Representative (Church of England)
Mr R Greaves	- Parent Governor Representative (Secondary)
Mrs S Knights	- Parent Governor Representative (Primary)

**CO-OPTED MEMBERS:
(NON-VOTING)**

Mr T Hales	- Teacher Representative
Ms C Foote	- Teacher Representative
Ms T Kayani	- Leeds Youth Work Partnership Representative

119 Appointment of Chair

RESOLVED – That Councillor R D Feldman be appointed Chair of the Scrutiny Board (Children's Services) for the duration of this meeting, as Councillor Bale, the appointed Chair of the Scrutiny Board for the 2006/07 Municipal Year had submitted his apologies for absence from the meeting.

(Councillor R D Feldman took the Chair)

120 Declarations of Interest

No declarations were made at this point, however two declarations of personal interest were made at later points in the meeting (Minute No. 122 refers).

121 Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence from the meeting were received on behalf of the Chair, Councillor J Bale, Councillors A Harrison, L Mulherin, K Renshaw, B Selby, Mr C Macpherson, Mr P Gathercole and Mrs S Hutchinson.

122 Review of 14-19 Education and Training Provision in Leeds

A report was submitted on behalf of the Chief Executive of Education Leeds which provided Members with further information on the 14-19 Review of Education and Training Provision in Leeds, as had previously been requested by the Board. The report from the Chief Executive of Education Leeds had previously been submitted to Executive Board on 24th January 2007 for consideration.

Appended to the report for Members' information was an extract from the Review of 14-19 Provision in Leeds, which had been prepared by Cambridge Education in November 2006. A complete version of the Review had been circulated to Members for information prior to the meeting.

Dirk Gilleard, Deputy Chief Executive, and Gary Milner, 14-19 Strategy Co-ordinator, both of Education Leeds, were in attendance to answer Members' questions.

Having received an overview of the main points detailed within the report, a question and answer session ensued. The main areas of debate were as follows:-

Sixth Forms

- Members raised concerns about the impact of the proposed **changes in Sixth form funding** from April 2008. They agreed with officers that there was an urgent need for a proactive plan to mitigate the effect of these changes and secure continuity of provision for young people;
- In particular, the Board emphasised the important role of smaller inner city Sixth Forms, stating that such environments had been very beneficial for young people from deprived socio-economic backgrounds who may not have felt confident enough to attend a larger institution.

Proposed Rationalisation of the Further Education Estate

- Members asked how a proposed **centralised Further Education college** would operate in practice, and how such proposals would ensure that a wider provision of services was available to all young people residing throughout the city;
- The Board discussed the tension between the desire to **remove duplication** and the need to ensure an adequate range of **provision in local areas** for students to access;
- Concerns were raised over the ways in which the proposed rationalisation of Further Education provision would impact upon those residing on the outskirts of Leeds, in addition to those who were currently underachieving;
- Members made reference to the **Leeds Learner Entitlement**, enquired how the rationalisation of Further Education would enable 'access to the widest choice of learning pathways' and asked how attainable the vision for the Learner Entitlement was;
- The Board raised concerns over the effectiveness of a single Principal overseeing a large number of different sites.

Multi Agency Collaboration

- The Board stated that the joined up thinking which had been referred to as an outcome of the review was only evident within the realms of traditional education, and highlighted the need to ensure that a wide range of **facilities from various agencies** were fully utilised when providing education and training to 14-19 year olds, for example youth services, libraries and sports facilities. In response, the Board was advised that negotiations with the Youth Service were currently being undertaken to ensure that an extensive youth offer was developed;

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- Members emphasised the importance of embedding a more co-ordinated and **multi-agency approach** when developing the revised provision, in order to ensure that the opportunities available to young people were maximised.

Service Provision for Students and Pupils

- The Board raised concerns over the provision of education and training for those young people with **special educational needs**, and the need to recognise that often they would transfer to higher level courses at a later stage than their peers. Members felt that the review needed to address their specific needs more explicitly;
- Members emphasised the need to develop young people's '**soft skills**' to equip them for adult life and work, and the need for future models of provision to adequately address this aspect of learning;
- The Board asked about the impact that the proposals would have upon those young people who were achieving average attainment levels in traditional subjects;
- Members raised concerns over the **long term costs to society** if the educational needs of **disaffected and disengaged young people** were not met;
- The Board emphasised the need to ensure that appropriate **transportation links** were established throughout the city which would assist all young people, including those residing in the outskirts of Leeds, to access appropriate provision. Members also emphasised the need to ensure that **co-operation with neighbouring Local Authorities** on this issue was undertaken.

Reorganisation Process

- Members were very concerned about the apparent **lack of consultation with young people** to date, and were also concerned to learn about the limited consultation requirements which would apply to the Learning and Skills Council's formal proposals for reorganisation;
- Having enquired whether the review of Further Education would lead to **redundancies**, Members were assured that redundancies would be avoided at all costs;
- Members highlighted the need to ensure that appropriate levels of support and resources were provided to all the institutions concerned by Education Leeds and the Learning and Skills Council, so that the **transition** could be managed successfully.

Green Paper 'Raising Achievement'

- Members were concerned that some families would face financial difficulty as a result of lost income if young people were required to stay in education until the age of 18 as proposed in the Green Paper. They felt that the financial support currently available to students and their families would need to be reviewed;
- Members referred to the provision of **apprenticeships** in Leeds, made enquiries into the level of training received, in addition to the financial incentives which currently existed for young people undertaking such programmes. In response, Members noted the ways in which

apprenticeships had developed in recent years, with reference being made to the revised funding arrangements which were now in place.

General Observations

- Reference was made to the proposals relating to a revised mechanism for monitoring **performance**, moving away from an institution based system. Members were advised that such proposals were aimed at ensuring that all young people in Leeds were encouraged to engage in Further Education, with the most appropriate curriculum being offered to each individual;
- The Board also recognised the importance of the ICT infrastructure and the development of Individual Learning Plans as a tool to help achieve the aims of the 14-19 review;
- Members were concerned about the implications of the review for the provision of **adult learning opportunities**;
- Members made reference to the currency of some of the statistics detailed within the Review. In response, Members noted that the next report which was intended to be submitted to Executive Board would provide a more up to date set of statistics.

In conclusion, the Board reiterated the major issues which had been discussed, and emphasised the need for future reports to include more operational and practical information on the **implementation of change**.

RESOLVED – That the contents of the report and Members' comments arising from the report be noted.

(Mrs S Knights declared a personal interest in relation to this item, due to having three children currently undertaking Further Education and Mr E A Britten declared a personal interest in relation to this item, due to being a Governor of Notre Dame Sixth Form College, which had featured within the report)

(Councillor J Lewis and Mr E A Britten both left the meeting during the consideration of this item at 11.25 a.m. and 11.55 a.m. respectively)

- 123 Date and Time of Next Meeting**
Thursday, 19th April 2007 at 9.30 a.m.
(Pre-Meeting scheduled for 9.00 a.m.)

(The meeting concluded at 12.15 p.m.)

OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

MONDAY, 5TH MARCH, 2007

PRESENT: Councillor G Driver in the Chair
Councillors B Anderson, J Bale, B Cleasby,
P Grahame, T Leadley and R Pryke
Apologies Councillor B Lancaster

81 Declaration of Interests

The following declarations of interest were made:-

Councillor Anderson – General Fund Financial Health Monitoring 2006/07 – Housing Revenue Account Budget 2007/08 – personal interest in his capacity as a Director of Leeds West/North West Homes ALMO (Agenda Items 8 and 12, Min No 83 refers)

Councillor Grahame - General Fund Financial Health Monitoring 2006/07 – Housing Revenue Account Budget 2007/08 – personal interest in her capacity as a resident of Swarcliffe (Swarcliffe PFI Scheme) and as Chair of Swardale Swarcliffe Eastwood Residents Association (Agenda Items 8 and 12, Minute No 83 refers)

Councillor Bale – Request for Scrutiny – Disability Equality Scheme – personal interest in his capacity as a joint carer for his disabled daughter (Agenda Item 7, Minute No 82 refers)

Councillor Leadley – (a) Request for Scrutiny – Disability Equality Scheme – personal interest in his capacity as a relative of a disabled person (Agenda Item 7, Minute No 82 refers) and (b) Planning Performance – Final Inquiry Report – personal interest in his capacity as a Member of Plans Panel West and the Development Plan Panel (Agenda Item 11, Minute No 86 refers)

Councillor Cleasby – (a) Planning Performance – Final Inquiry Report – personal interest in his capacity as a Member of Development Plan Panel (Agenda Item No 11, Minute No 86 refers) and (b) Minutes of the Executive Board Meeting, 9th February 2007 in his capacity as a Member of the Leeds Bradford Airport Consultative Committee (Agenda Item 12, Minute No 87 refers).

82 Minutes - 29th January and 5th February 2007

RESOLVED – That the minutes of the meetings held on 29th January and 5th February 2007 be confirmed as correct records.

83 Request for Scrutiny - Disability Equality Scheme

Final minutes - approved at the meeting
held on Monday, 2nd April, 2007

The Committee considered a request from a Leeds resident, Mr Doug Paulley, for an inquiry into why the City Council had not produced a formal Disability Equality Scheme under the provisions of the Disability Discrimination Act, with separate policies covering the various equality strands of race, disability, gender, religion and faith, sexual orientation and age. Other local authorities had done so, but Leeds had instead chosen to adopt an all-encompassing Equality and Diversity Strategy 2006-2008. Mr Paulley's request also made reference to other alleged defects in the Council's approach to the subject – lack of evidence gathering and insufficient involvement of disabled people in producing the current Strategy document, action plan and performance monitoring.

In addition to hearing verbal evidence from Mr Paulley and Ms Jill Jones, who accompanied him, the Committee had before them a report from the Chief Officer (Executive Support) and also took evidence from Anne McMaster and Pauline Ellis of the Council's Equality Unit.

The Committee concluded that whilst it accepted that the Council's current Equality and Diversity Strategy met the Council's legal obligations, it could not at this stage make a judgement as to whether the Council's current approach, involving an all-encompassing Strategy, could be regarded as best practice compared, say, to the Disability Equality Scheme suggested by Mr Paulley and Ms Jones. The Committee also wished to see the performance indicators and timescales associated with the Action Plan for the current Strategy.

The Committee therefore agreed that a further report was required in April, which would include information on the practices adopted by other comparable local authorities, and would also show in greater detail the Action Plan, performance indicators and timescales associated with the current Strategy, in order that the Committee was in a better position to judge whether or not further scrutiny was regarded as necessary.

RESOLVED –

- (a) That the report be noted, and Mr Paulley and Ms Jones be thanked for attending the meeting.
- (b) That a further report be submitted to the April meeting containing information relating to the approach of other similar local authorities to this subject, further explanation of the reasons behind Leeds' approach and further information in relation to the Action Plan, performance indicators and timescales to assist the Committee to form an opinion regarding best practice
- (c) That on receipt of this further report the Committee consider whether or not to recommend to its successor Committee to pursue an Inquiry in the new municipal year

84 General Fund Financial Health Monitoring 2006/07 - Month 9 Update Report

Further to Minute No 46, 6th November 2006, the Committee considered a financial monitoring report submitted by the Director of Corporate Services, first submitted to the Executive Board meeting held on 9th February 2007.

Alan Gay, Director of Corporate Services and Helen Mylan, Corporate Services Department, attended the meeting and responded to Members' queries and comments. In brief summary, the main areas of discussion were:-

- The continuing trend for year on year increases in expenditure on Social Services , and the monitoring process
- The under-estimate of the take-up by landlords of the HMO Licensing scheme
- The current financial situation of Roseville Enterprises
- Various matters included in the separate report on the HRA budget for 2007/08, including the increases in ALMO management fees, service charges for blocks of flats, additional costs in respect of Little London PFI scheme and the current surplus in respect of the Swarcliffe PFI scheme, and the effects of any possible re-financing scheme. Councillor Pryke stated an intention to pick up some matters at the Scrutiny Board (Neighbourhoods and Housing) and Councillor Grahame indicated that she would be pursuing the latter point separately outside of the meeting.

RESOLVED – That subject to the above comments, the report be received and noted.

85 CPA - Comprehensive Performance Assessment

In the light of the recent CPA announcement regarding the Council's drop from a four star to a three star rated authority, the Committee had invited Steve Clough, the Head of Policy, Performance and Improvement, to the meeting to discuss whether revisions to the performance monitoring framework, recently adopted by the OSC, required amendment. The Committee also discussed the CPA service assessment framework in general.

The Committee concluded that whilst the framework for quarterly reporting on Corporate Plan indicators which measure the delivery of the Council's priorities, together with any performance indicators which could impact on the Council's CPA score, was robust and should be continued, this could be enhanced by 'in-year' statements on predicted CPA scores. This would provide an opportunity for scrutiny to make appropriate interventions.

RESOLVED – That the existing performance monitoring arrangements adopted by this Committee be maintained, but be enhanced by timely 'in-year' predictions on CPA scores.

86 Development of Information Management in Leeds

Further to Minute 77, 5th February 2007, the Committee considered the draft final report of its review of the development of information management in Leeds and progress in implementing the recommendations of the April 2006 Inquiry Report of the Scrutiny Board (Transforming Services).

RESOLVED –

- (a) That subject to the addition of an extra recommendation regarding the proposed establishment of a Lead Member with specific responsibility for Information and Knowledge Management within the Council, the draft final report be approved.
- (b) That OSC receive six monthly update reports on this subject, in order to monitor progress.

87 Planning Performance - Final Report

Further to Minute 74, 29th January 2007, the Committee considered the draft final report of its Inquiry into Planning Performance.

RESOLVED –

- (a) That the draft final report be approved;
- (b) That a formal response to the Committee's recommendations be requested from the Chief Planning Officer;
- (c) That OSC receive regular update reports on this subject, in order to monitor progress.

88 Work Programme

The Head of Scrutiny and Member Development submitted the Committee's current work programme, updated to reflect decisions taken at previous meetings, together with a relevant extract of the Council's Forward Plan of Key Decisions and a copy of the minutes of the Executive Board meeting held on 9th February 2007.

RESOLVED – That subject to any changes necessary as a result of today's meeting, the Committee's work programme be approved and accepted.

89 Dates and Times of Next Meeting

Monday 2nd April 2007, at 10.00 am (Pre-meeting at 9.30 am)



Originator: Mark Tyson

Tel: 395 0492

Report of the Head of Scrutiny and Member Development

Scrutiny Board (Children's Services)

Date: 19 April 2007

Subject: Young People's Scrutiny Forum – Catching the Bus

Electoral Wards Affected: All

Specific Implications For:

Equality and Diversity

Community Cohesion

Narrowing the Gap

1.0 Introduction

- 1.1 In June 2006 Scrutiny Board (Children's Services) asked the Youth Council to suggest a topic of importance to young people which could be the subject of a scrutiny inquiry undertaken by young people on behalf of the board.
- 1.2 The Youth Council chose transport and a Young People's Scrutiny Forum was then created to carry out this inquiry.
- 1.3 In order to involve as wide a range of young people as possible, it was decided to invite young people from ROAR (Reach out and Reconnect) to join the forum. As a result the Young People's Scrutiny Forum consisted of young people who had volunteered from both the Youth Council and from ROAR.
- 1.4 In September 2006 the Young People's Scrutiny Forum met for the first time and decided to concentrate its inquiry on bus services in Leeds.
- 1.5 The Young People's Scrutiny Forum concluded its deliberations on 8th March 2007. A copy of its draft final report is attached as Appendix 1.

2.0 Recommendations

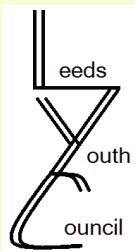
2.1 The Board is requested to:-

- (i) Consider the forum's request that the board help ensure that the report is distributed widely and given appropriate consideration.
- (ii) Approve the forum's final report and recommendations.
- (iii) Request that officers formally respond to the forum's recommendations in July 2007.

Draft

Young People's Scrutiny Forum

Catching the bus



Scrutiny Board (Children's Services)
April 2007





Summary

Draft

We were given the opportunity to do a scrutiny review of a topic of our choice.

We chose bus services in Leeds.

We wanted to help remove some of the barriers young people face when using buses.

We thought the barriers were:

- ▣ The cost of travel
- ▣ The reliability of buses
- ▣ The routes buses take and the frequency of service
- ▣ The cleanliness and condition of buses
- ▣ Feeling unsafe catching buses
- ▣ The relationship between bus drivers and young people

We sent out a questionnaire asking young people what they thought and 309 responded by our deadline.

We found out that the cost of travel was by far the biggest barrier young people experience. 89% of young people said that cheaper fares would make them catch the bus more often and 61% of them said cost was the most important factor. This was true for all young people but particularly for those from Inner Leeds.

We discovered that young people in London got their bus travel free of charge and that parents reported that this had led to 59% of 14 and 15 year olds using the bus more often.

We spoke to officers from Metro, First Bus, Leeds City Council's Development department and Children's Services Unit.

We made lots of recommendations for change to improve things but think that unless big changes are made many young people's lives will be limited by transport barriers. As a result and in line with pensioners, disabled people and young people in London, we would like bus travel for all young people to be free of charge.

This is our main recommendation:

That the Youth Council and ROAR lead a campaign with one aim - to achieve free bus travel for all young people - and that everyone who works with and for young people joins with and supports them in achieving it.

The Young People's Scrutiny Forum

Background

- 1 In June 2006 Scrutiny Board (Children's Services) asked the Youth Council to suggest a topic of importance to young people which could be the subject of a scrutiny review under taken by young people on behalf of the board.
- 2 The Youth Council chose transport.
- 3 A Young People's Scrutiny Forum was then created to carry out this inquiry.
- 4 In order to involve as wide a range of young people as possible, it was decided to invite young people from ROAR to join the forum. ROAR (Reach Out and Reconnect) is the Children Leeds partnership of services providing the opportunity for children and young people to influence strategic decision making.
- 5 As a result the Young People's Scrutiny Forum consisted of young people who had volunteered from both the Youth Council and from ROAR.

What we did

- 6 At our first meeting in September 2006, we, the Young People's Scrutiny Forum, decided to concentrate our inquiry on bus services in Leeds.
- 7 The aims of our inquiry were:
 - ☐ To find ways of increasing the number of young people catching the bus across the city by identifying the barriers they encountered
 - ☐ To work in partnership with service providers and others to identify solutions
 - ☐ To ensure the voices of young people in Leeds were heard with regard to transport issues
- 8 We decided to focus our inquiry on a number of themes and prioritised them into the following order:
 - ☐ The cost of travel
 - ☐ The routes, reliability and frequency of bus services
 - ☐ Feeling unsafe
 - ☐ The relationship between bus drivers and young people
 - ☐ The cleanliness and condition of buses, including graffiti
 - ☐ The extent to which young people's views were taken account of in decision making
- 9 So that as many young people's views and opinions were included as possible, we decided we needed to consult with other young people in Leeds.
- 10 We created three versions of a questionnaire, each with exactly the same set of questions: an electronic version available over the internet, a paper version and a paper version designed to be filled in by group exercise.
- 11 The questionnaire was sent to all Leeds Secondary Schools, all Leeds City Council Youth Groups and to all members of Leeds Youth Work Partnership. The questionnaire was also promoted via a number of articles in the local press and through our own friends and contacts.

- 12 309 young people responded to the questionnaire by our deadline:
- ☞ The responses came from both male and female young people:
 - 99 male
 - 145 female
 - 65 no gender given
 - ☞ There was a good variation in age:
 - 59 were 10-13
 - 88 were 14-15
 - 95 were 16-19
 - 67 no age given
 - ☞ The responses came from all over Leeds:
 - 128 from Inner Leeds, defined as post codes LS1-LS13
 - 168 from Outer Leeds, defined as post codes LS14-LS29, BD3, BD11 & WF3
 - 13 gave no post code
- 13 There is a separate report with a fuller analysis of the questionnaire and its findings available on the internet at www.leeds.gov.uk/scrutiny.
- 14 We then requested written information from First Bus and Metro:
- ☞ First Bus is the main company operating bus services in Leeds
 - ☞ Metro is the West Yorkshire Passenger Transport Authority (PTA) and Executive (PTE): its principal duty is to secure or promote the provision of a system of public transport which meets the needs of the area.
- 15 We considered this information before meeting with officers from First Bus and Metro along with officers from Leeds City Council's Development department and Children's Services unit to discuss our concerns.



Team Metro (Left) take on Team First (Right) in a transport quiz which helped focus our discussions when we met with them on 22nd February 2007.



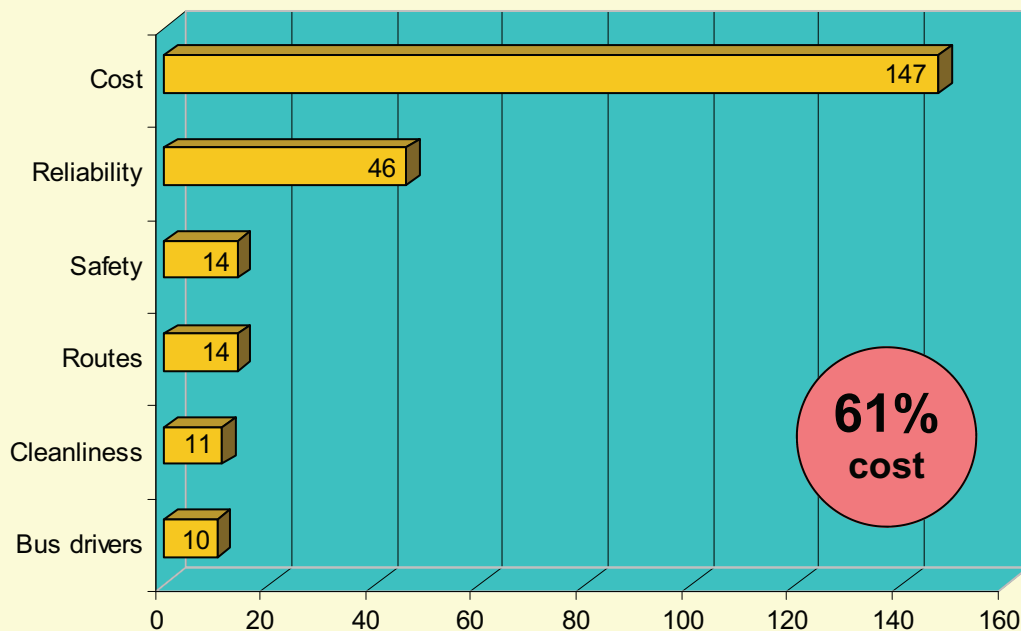
The fantastic Ladell with the scores on the doors.

- 16 This is the final report of our inquiry, its findings and recommendations.

The cost of travel

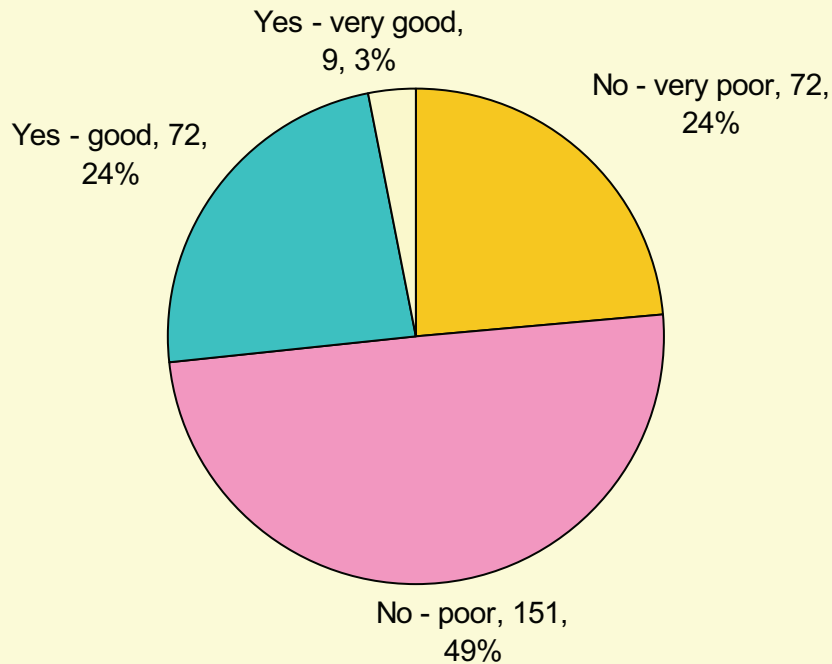
Bus fares are very poor value for money - they are very expensive for youths, they use all my pocket money.

- 17 The cost of travel turned out to be by far the biggest barrier to catching the bus facing young people.
- 18 Our survey asked: What would make you catch the bus more often? Young people were given the following options:
- ☐ Cheaper fares (Cost)
 - ☐ If the buses were more reliable (Reliability)
 - ☐ More buses going to more places (Routes)
 - ☐ Cleaner newer buses (Cleanliness)
 - ☐ If I felt safer catching the bus (Safety)
 - ☐ Friendlier bus drivers (Bus drivers)
- They were asked to choose three from the list, then rank them in order of importance.
- 19 61% of the young people put cheaper fares as the number one factor that would make them catch the bus more often. This was significantly higher than other factors.



- 20 Cost was an issue for young people from all over Leeds but more so when we looked at young people's responses from Inner Leeds:
- ☐ Inner Leeds 66% of young people put cheaper fares first (57 of 86)
 - ☐ Outer Leeds 57% of young people put cheaper fares first (85 of 150)
- 21 In fact 89% of young people put cheaper fares in the top three.

22 Also, when we asked, 'do you think bus fares in Leeds are good value for money?', 73% of young people said no, they were poor or very poor value for money.



23 We asked First Bus what could be done to reduce the cost of bus fares for young people.

24 First Bus said that it could not do much as it was a commercial company answerable to its shareholders, and that it must maintain its fares at a rate which could maintain the company's profitability.

25 They said that although bus fares had risen faster than retail prices in recent years, this was due to rising costs such as fuel prices, insurance and wages. On top of this the profitability of bus services had been hit by increased congestion and reducing numbers of people using the buses. Finally, revenue support from Government was contributing less than it had done 20 years ago.

26 First Bus said that they had recently introduced a £1.50 all day unlimited travel fare for young people and that they believed that this was very good value for money.

27 Metro said that they offered a school plus Metro card for £6.75 per week for county wide unlimited bus travel and that this represented a good deal for young people.

28 We feel that adults who work and earn a regular income need to appreciate that despite the concessionary schemes and passes available, these 'up front' prices still represent a significant barrier to many young people, who often don't have any form of income.

29 We were also informed that in Greater London the Mayor had introduced free travel on buses for under 16s. In fact, over 40% (£420m) of the support for bus fares nationally was spent in London.

30 We noted that there seemed to be one set of rules for the bus services in London where they had decided to invest a lot of money, and a different set of rules for outside London where they have not.

I think the fares are too expensive and travelling short distances by bus can cost similar to going all the way across Leeds

31 This comment is typical of many which were received as part of the consultation. First Bus provided us with a table of bus fares, an extract from which is shown in the grey table below:

Table of bus fares			
Stages	Miles	Child peak fare	Child off peak fare
1	0.5	35	35
2	1	50	50
3	1.5	75	75
4	2	75	75
5	2.5	75	75
6	3	75	75
7-10	5	105	80
11-13	6.5	105	80
14-16	8	105	80
17-22	11	105	80
23-25	12.5	105	80
26-29	14.5	105	80
30-33	16.5	105	80
34-37	18.8	105	80
38-41	20.5	105	80
42-45	22.5	105	80
46-50	27	105	80

32 Clearly those travelling short distances are paying significantly more for their transport per mile.

33 So we asked First Bus: Why is there so little difference in price between a half mile journey and a 27 mile journey? This seems very unfair to us.

34 The officers did not think that there was a good logical reason for it. They said that if they were starting a new bus service today, they would have to charge more for the first section, but not as much more as they do at the moment.

35 In fact we found out that 80% of bus journeys are between 1 mile and 3 miles. This was one reason why longer journey prices were left as they were as they only brought in a small proportion of the money received from fares.

I can chair this meeting with my eyes closed



Recommendation 1

That First Bus review its fare structure so that the fare paid better matches the distance travelled. That First Bus review its fare structure in the light of the forum's findings on the barrier cost represents to young people. And, that First Bus report its conclusions/intentions to Scrutiny Board (Children's Services) in July 2007.

Draft

- 36 We noted that most of the concessionary travel tickets available provided for unlimited travel county wide, on a particular day or for a specified time period. They also required young people to pay for the ticket up front.
- 37 We think these arrangements fail to take account of the fact that most journeys as already noted are short in distance, from A to B and back again, that many young people struggle to find enough money to pay 'up front' for one of the weekly or monthly passes, and that most young people do not spend whole days travelling around West Yorkshire. They also do nothing to encourage the less regular traveller to take the bus more often.

Recommendation 2

That Metro should investigate the possibility of developing a concessionary scheme whereby young people pay for the first few journeys in the usual way and then get one/two free (buy four, get one free for example but avoiding the need to pay up front) and report their findings/actions to Scrutiny Board (Children's Services) in July 2007.

- 38 We also noted that in South Leeds, for example, where you have two main operators, you cannot use a First Bus ticket on an Arriva bus. This meant that if your journey involved taking two buses from different companies, you would need to pay twice, even if you had purchased an all day unlimited travel ticket on the first bus you got on. In Greater London where the buses were regulated, this was not a problem.
- 39 We appreciate that bus companies are in competition with one another. However, it is in all bus companies' interests to encourage young people to use public transport and ensure it is easy and cost effective for them to do so.

Recommendation 3

That Metro and the bus companies should co-operate to develop a day pass which can be used on all buses and that Metro report progress to Scrutiny Board (Children's Services) in July 2007.



Above - The forum considering evidence provided by First Bus and Metro on 1st February 2007.



Obviously a very serious bit of our meeting with Metro and First Bus on 22nd February 2007.

- 40 Our research found that 46% of the young people surveyed did not have a young person's pass of any kind. Also, in our experience young people are not always fully aware of the concessionary schemes currently available.
- 41 The officers from Metro informed us that they advertised widely with leaflets and information available at bus stations, schools, libraries, hospitals and over 500 outlets in West Yorkshire.
- 42 They informed us that from 2003-05 they carried out six market research surveys and found that awareness of the School Plus MetroCard amongst 14-15 year olds was 71%. This figure dropped, however, to only 41% of 16-24 year olds. Awareness of the Student Plus MetroCard amongst 16-24 year olds, the most relevant product for that age range, stood at 57%.
- 43 We were surprised to find out that Metro's concessionary schemes were not advertised on buses themselves, the most obvious place to do so.
- 44 We were not convinced that there was sufficient awareness of the concessionary schemes available to young people.

Recommendation 4

That Metro reviews the effectiveness of its marketing strategies with regard to young people's concessionary schemes and report its progress to Scrutiny Board (Children's Services) in July 2007.

The routes, reliability and frequency of bus services

- 45 45% - Less than half of young people who responded to our questionnaire described buses in Leeds as reliable.
- 46 Also, in response to the question, 'what would make you catch the bus more often?', more reliable buses was the second most popular answer.
- 47 72% of young people said it was easy or very easy to get to where they wanted to go by bus.
- 48 'More buses going to more places' was the third most popular answer when the young people were asked what would make them catch the bus more often.
- 49 First Bus told us that their business in Leeds depended on the bus service being high quality and reliable. They informed us that in recent years, the company had worked hard to create a commercially viable network that could be easily understood by customers, and to ensure that as many buses as possible ran and matched their timetables as closely as possible. To do this company and depot wide action had been required.
- 50 However, in order to further improve the quality of its operations, First Bus had created their 'Bringing the Routes to Life' programme. This meant that changes to bus services would be implemented by route managers who worked in the depots, each responsible for one or two routes and in charge of the drivers who worked on them. As the route manager normally dealt with all the complaints about that route, they were in a much better position to decide what was best for the travelling public.

Buses in Leeds are very unreliable – and you never know when they are not going to show – sometimes drive straight past.

Buses in Leeds are very unreliable – they stop running too early and are never on time when you need them.



*The forum deciding what questions to ask the officers
- 1st February 2007 -*

- 51 First Bus informed us that they would be using reports from the Customer Comments system, recorded 'lost mileage' for each route (that is the number of timetabled services which do not run) and 'Real Time' punctuality data to establish priorities for investigation and action. Routes with a lot of customer complaints, high lost mileage and poor punctuality performance would be dealt with first.
- 52 We didn't think it was very clear on a bus how to make a complaint/customer comment so we asked First Bus, 'how do you make a complaint/customer comment?'. And, 'what are you doing to encourage customers to use these ways of providing you with feedback?'
- 53 First Bus admitted that they did not have a notice on the buses at the moment. However, they said that a large number of comments were made through Metroline which was advertised widely, that their name and address was on the side of the bus, that they had a website and that they were in the telephone book.
- 54 We felt that additional efforts needed to be made if young people were to be encouraged to make their views known and have them taken into account as part of the 'Bringing The Routes to Life' programme .

Recommendation 5

That Metro develop a text messaging comments and complaints system, promote this amongst young people and report progress to Scrutiny Board (Children's Services) in July 2007.

Draft



It was not all reports, meetings and work. Occasionally we had some fun.

The relative importance of other factors

55 Our survey asked: What would make you catch the bus more often? The young people were given the following options:

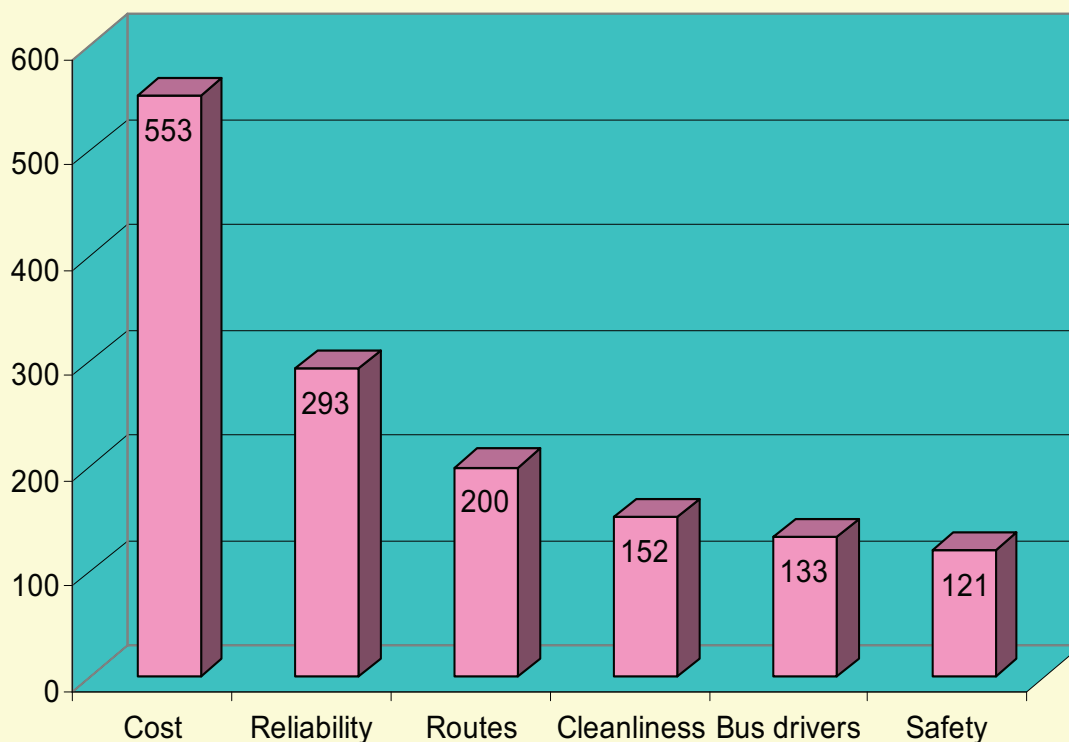
- # Cheaper fares (Cost)
- # If the buses were more reliable (Reliability)
- # More buses going to more places (Routes)
- # Cleaner newer buses (Cleanliness)
- # If I felt safer catching the bus (Safety)
- # Friendlier bus drivers (Bus drivers)

They were asked to choose three from the list, then rank them in order of importance.

56 The results in full are set out below.

	Cost	Reliability	Routes	Cleanliness	Safety	Bus drivers
Placed first	147	46	14	11	14	10
Placed second	43	59	64	38	18	20
Placed third	26	37	30	43	43	63
Total	216	142	108	92	75	93

57 If we give each answer a numerical value (1st = 3 points, 2nd = 2 points and 3rd = 1 point), we can more easily compare the relative importance the young people gave each factor overall. The results of this are set out in the chart below:



58 It seems to us that after cost and reliability, the importance of other factors as barriers to young people catching the bus more often is relatively low. Even with regard to 'more buses going to more places' (Routes) which was in third place, when asked how easy it was to get to where you want to go in Leeds by bus, 72% of young people said it was easy or very easy to get to where they wanted to go by bus.

The relationship between bus drivers and young people

59 Our survey showed that:

- **only 21%** of young people thought bus drivers were mostly or always friendly
- **only 23%** of young people thought bus drivers were mostly or always helpful
- **only 25%** of young people thought bus drivers were mostly or always polite

60 Bus drivers scored badly on our questionnaire with regard to all three criteria. In addition, they also attracted by far the largest number of negative comments.

Some are very helpful and polite whereas some are rude and blame youths for everything. Some youths do misbehave but it isn't nice when others are sometimes blamed.

When they can see people struggling with baggage/children in buggies running for buses they don't stop which is unfair.

61 However, when asked what would make you catch the bus more often, 'friendlier bus drivers' only came fifth out of the six options quite some distance below the others.

62 This indicates that although young people have a poor opinion of bus drivers they do not consider these problems as a particularly big barrier to increased bus use.

63 We asked First Bus: Our experience and our research show that bus drivers are all too often rude and unhelpful. What are you doing to improve the behaviour of this significant minority of drivers who let down the rest?

64 First Bus acknowledged the problems we were highlighting. They also pointed out that there was a small percentage of young people who caused problems on buses. In fact, we were told, the relationship between young people and bus drivers had been difficult for a long time.

A large number of them are rude, discriminating against teenagers and not at all helpful when I ran into a problem involving a half-fare pass, for example.



- 65 They said that bus drivers got just six weeks of training including a full day of customer care. They said that when faced with poor behaviour from customers on a regular basis, often people tended to lose their cool and did not respond as they should. They said that being a bus driver was not an easy job and not one with very high status, so it was difficult to get top quality bus drivers.
- 66 They said that if bus drivers were found to have behaved badly they were sent for more training and/or would be dealt with using First's disciplinary procedures. We were informed that CCTV had helped as if something did happen you could take the disk and identify the culprit, whether it was a young person or the driver.
- 67 We discovered, however, that the CCTV systems on buses did not record sound. As a result a lot of poor behaviour from both young people and bus drivers would be missed. In addition, we feel young people and bus drivers would be less likely to speak inappropriately to one another if they knew they were being recorded.

Recommendation 6

That Metro and First Bus investigate the possibility of developing CCTV systems on buses to record sound as well as pictures and report their findings to Scrutiny Board (Children's Services) in July 2007.

- 68 First Bus informed us that they employed 1100 bus drivers with a 20% annual turnover. This meant that there would be over 200 new drivers every year and there were bound to be some problematic ones within that number. They said that they did need assistance from customers to find out which ones.
- 69 We were informed that all complaints were logged onto a database from which they could pull out information about a particular driver. Specific drivers could be traced via the ticket or vehicle and if necessary referred to disciplinary procedures for continuous customer complaints.
- 70 We believe this strengthens the need to make sure bus companies have an accessible complaints and comments system young people are more likely to use.

Draft

The cleanliness and condition of buses, including graffiti

- 71 First Bus informed us that the fleet was washed daily and swept out each evening. Graffiti was removed on a daily basis where possible and every four weeks each bus was cleaned by hand inside. First Bus was investing £57 million in 2007/2008 in new buses and some of these would be coming to Leeds.
- 72 Although cleaner newer buses was the fourth most popular factor chosen that would make young people catch the bus more often, only 11 young people placed it first in their list and it scored significantly lower than the top 3 factors.
- 73 We concluded that the cleanliness and condition of buses was not a significant barrier to young people catching the bus more often.

Feeling unsafe

- 74 Our research showed us that most young people usually or always felt safe on the bus and at the bus stop nearest their home (81% and 80% respectively).
- 75 Most young people usually or always felt safe at the bus station in Leeds (71%).
- 76 Young people felt least safe at a bus stop in Leeds city centre (60% usually or always felt safe).

In Leeds city centre

'I don't often feel safe – lots of drug addicts, drunks and tramps.'

I do feel safe most of the time because there are cameras on most of the buses now but there are often kids on the buses shouting and spitting and swearing. It's not nice to see but I don't really feel that threatened.

- 77 If I felt safer catching the bus was the least popular answer when the young people were asked what would make them catch the bus more often. Only 31%, 75 of the 242 who answered this question placed it in their top 3.
- 78 We concluded that fears regarding their safety are not a significant barrier to young people catching the bus more often.

The extent to which young people's views are taken account of during transport decision making

- 79 We believe that our inquiry has produced a very clear message: Cost is by far the most significant barrier to catching the bus young people face. This is particularly true of young people from inner city areas of Leeds.
- 80 We would like this message to be disseminated to all decision makers involved in developing and running services for children and young people. We would like to ask Scrutiny Board (Children's Services) to help us ensure this report is distributed widely and given appropriate consideration.
- 81 Decision makers need to check out the availability of affordable transport when planning their services. Ideally services need to be put in accessible places so that transport issues are not a barrier to young people accessing them.
- 82 We heard that the Council had adopted a Child Impact Statement model to ensure the effect on children and young people was always considered when new policies and developments were being considered.

Recommendation 7

That the Director of Children's Services ensures that the barriers young people face with regard to transport are taken into account by ALL decision makers and that they are a key part of the Child Impact Statement process. We ask that she report back to Scrutiny Board (Children's Services) in July 2007.

The wider context

- 83 We were concerned to learn that Britain got the lowest overall score in the recent UNICEF report on Children's Welfare in the 21 richest countries of the world. In particular Britain ranked worst in terms of young people's relationships with family and peers and how likely they were to be involved in damaging behaviours such as drug and alcohol misuse.
- 84 In addition we heard that many policy makers now believed that they had, in recent years, given too much attention to narrow measures of achievement such as the 5 A*-C GCSE results. They were now thinking that as a country we need to have fuller aspirations for children and young people. In particular, this meant making sure young people had access to positive, fun and varied leisure time activities.
- 85 We learned that recently there had been a decline in the number of young people owning bicycles and becoming licensed drivers. This meant that young people were increasingly likely to depend on public transport or family vehicles to access leisure time activities.
- 86 Most importantly we heard that in the first six months (up to March 2006) since the Mayor's introduction of free travel on buses and trams for under 16s across London, parents reported that 59% of 14 and 15 year olds used the bus/tram more often and that 83% of them were doing so to access leisure activities.

- 87 In Leeds, we learned that it was the responsibility of the Director of Children's Services to see that everyone works together ensure every child has the support they need to:
- ▣ Be healthy
 - ▣ Stay safe
 - ▣ Enjoy and achieve
 - ▣ Make a positive contribution
 - ▣ Achieve economic well-being

88 It seems to us that access to affordable transport is important to all of these.

Recommendation 8

That the Director of Children's Services investigates adding travel concessions to the other benefits of the Breeze card and reports back to Scrutiny Board (Children's Services) in July 2007.

89 We also learned that the Government was changing the rules on how the money it provided for school buses could be spent. In particular it might soon be possible for young people to use the passes provided for home to school transport for other journeys.

Recommendation 9

That the Director of Children's Services orders a review of how school transport monies are being spent in Leeds to see if there is a better way in which it could be spent and reports back to Scrutiny Board (Children's Services) in July 2007.

Conclusion

90 Whereas we would obviously like to see all our recommendations implemented - for improved concessions, fairer pricing structures, better information and the rest - we believe that for many young people this will not be enough.

91 As a result and in line with pensioners, disabled people and young people in London, we would like bus travel for all young people to be free of charge.

Recommendation 10

That the Youth Council and ROAR lead a campaign with one aim - to achieve free bus travel for all young people - and that everyone who works with and for young people joins with and supports them in achieving it.

What happens next

92 We are grateful to Scrutiny Board (Children's Services) for giving us the opportunity to do this inquiry and we are pleased that they have agreed to work with the Youth Council and ROAR to follow up progress with our recommendations.

Draft

The Young People's Scrutiny Forum were:

Asma Rehman	Leeds Youth Council
Becky Duerden (Chair)	Reach Out and Reconnect
Charmaine Reynolds	Reach Out and Reconnect
David Birtle	Reach Out and Reconnect
Gurdeep Barath	Leeds Youth Council
Josh Hunt	Leeds Youth Council
Kennedy Elwen	Leeds Youth Council
Ladell Smith	Leeds Youth Council & Reach Out and Reconnect
Leanne Rivers	Reach Out and Reconnect
Matthew Jackson	Leeds Youth Council
Poppy Johnson	Leeds Youth Council & Reach Out and Reconnect
Rebecca Duerdan	Reach Out and Reconnect
Sarah Martin	Leeds Youth Council
Teresa Birtle	Reach Out and Reconnect
Thomas Martin	Leeds Youth Council



Report of the Director of Children's Service

Scrutiny Board (Children's Services)

Date: 19 April 2007

Subject: Implementing the Children Act: April 2007 Update

Electoral Wards Affected: All

Specific Implications For:

Equality and Diversity

Community Cohesion

Narrowing the Gap

1.0 Introduction

1.1 This report follows on from a number of previous update reports that have been presented to the Scrutiny Board in response to the inquiry carried out by the Children and Young People Scrutiny Board during 2005/06 into the implementation of the Children's Act 2004.

1.2 The report aims to provide Members with the following:

- An update on progress developing and embedding children's trust arrangements in Leeds.
- An update on progress in the staffing, activities and forthcoming plans of the Director of Children's Services Unit.
- An overview of key budgetary information in relation to Children's Services, as requested previously by Scrutiny Board Members.
- An insight into **a selection** of key activities that have been taking place within the children's services portfolio in recent months, particularly in relation to work that looks to engage directly with young people. This type of work is being given particular focus as it is an area emphasized in the original Scrutiny Board report into the implementation of the Children Act 2004 and because Members have shown an ongoing interest in the progress made in this area.

In addressing each of these issues in turn, the report also looks to outline the key challenges coming up in the months ahead.

1.3 This report complements other reports being presented to the Children's Scrutiny Board, particularly the report on the review of the Children and Young People's Plan for Leeds. That report will provide Members with an opportunity to learn more about

this important area of current work as well as an opportunity to talk about priorities and forthcoming challenges across the range of Children's Services. With that in mind, this report maintains a tighter focus than some previous update reports on the specific areas that Members have previously highlighted an interest in.

- 1.4. An update on the July 2006 Action Plan that followed the Scrutiny Board's inquiry is attached at appendix 1.

2.0 Developing and Embedding Children's Trust Arrangements in Leeds

- 2.1 As has been outlined in previous reports, there are a number of key elements in place in Leeds to bring partners together, share ideas and information, agree and act upon shared priorities and focus on the safety of children. The following provides a brief update on some of the key work that has recently taken place.

2.2 The Integrated Strategic Commissioning Board (ISCB)

The ISCB has met twice so far during 2007, in February and April. The Board is developing its work to bring together partners from across Children's Services who can identify where and how they can pool and/or allocate resources to supporting key priorities and strategies. It is also an opportunity for partners to identify the decision-making pathways and those who should be consulted with in taking key issues forward. Issues considered at the recent meetings have included City Centre Youth Provisions, the development of the Common Assessment Framework (CAF) and the Obesity Strategy. The feedback received about the Board's work so far has been positive, with those participating feeling that it is helping to give focus and direction to shared priorities.

2.3 The Children Leeds Partnership

The Children Leeds Partnership has also met twice so far during 2007 (with its next meeting due on 20th April). The Partnership provides an opportunity for stakeholders to come together and learn more about each others activities as well as sharing ideas and best practice, contributing to policy development and considering the strategic direction of Children's Services work. At the last two meetings areas covered have included family support developments, the work of the Youth Offending Team in light of the Prevention of Youth Crime Strategy and issues around the participation of children and young people. The willingness and enthusiasm of those taking part to share ideas and contribute has been an extremely positive aspect of this work and demonstrates the strong commitment in this area. The Partnership is still in its developments stages and as such a number of issues are currently being considered. Over the coming months work around the Partnership Board will look to find more imaginative ways to engage stakeholders with issues and will seek to get young people more involved in this work. The Partnership is also considering how to develop the groups that will sit beneath it to focus on more specific and specialised themes/areas of work and it is looking to plan the issues it looks at with a more long-term focus, so that issues are considered in the most timely way to allow partners to contribute to strategic developments.

2.4 The Safeguarding Board

The Safeguarding Board is also making positive progress. The new Safeguarding Manager, Bryan Gocke, is now in post and the appointment of an independent Chair of the Board should be completed shortly. More details will be provided for Members as they become available.

2.6 Director of Children's Services Unit Staffing Update

Significant progress has been made since the report presented in January in filling the key positions within the DCSU that will help to co-ordinate and progress the immediate changes and longer term work of Children's Services in Leeds. Within the Unit the Deputy Director for Innovation and Change, the Team and Resources Manager and the Public and Political Executive Support Manager have taken up their posts as have two of the Strategic Leaders (with the other two due to start shortly). Crucially, by time this report is presented all five of the Locality Enablers will be in post. They will play an essential role in linking the central strategic priorities for Children's Services to developments and specific situations in local areas. A copy of the structure chart for the DCSU is provided at appendix 2.

2.7 Integrating Children's Services – Supporting a Smooth Transition

The changes being made to integrate the various elements of children's services are being done in a way that is structured and clearly planned. Transition Plans are in place to guide this work, in particular in distinguishing between adult and children's social services under the new arrangements. Work is also underway towards the development of the Integrated Youth Support Service (IYSS), which should be in place by April 2008 and will bring together the Youth Service and those responsible for the provision of a Connexions Service in Leeds. Connexions work in the city will continue to be delivered by a partnership involving the City Council, Voluntary, Community & Faith based providers, and IGEN (Leeds Careers Guidance). Arrangements have also been made to support work integrating the Early Years Service and the Youth Service more effectively, recognising the need for more co-ordination between these areas. In addition, the completion of the Director of Children's Services Unit staffing will provide further opportunities to build on the good work already being done in co-ordinating Children's Services activities with partners from health and Education Leeds.

2.8 March 2007 Open Forum

The latest Open Forum, which brought together partners and stakeholders from across the city in an opportunity to network, share ideas and best practice and feed into the strategic development of Children's Services for Leeds, was held at the South Leeds Stadium on Monday March 26th. The half-day event was attended by approximately 300 people and included a speech by the Director of Children's Service that outlined the progress of the last year and the challenges ahead, a number of group activities to consider child safety issues and a variety of opportunities to share thoughts on Children's Services issues. At the time of writing this report the key outcomes from the event were still being brought together, more feedback will be provided when available and details are also being placed on the Children Leeds website.

2.9 Joint Area Review (JAR) Preparations

The Joint Area Review is the key inspection by which the quality of Children's Services in Leeds will be judged. The JAR in Leeds is due to take place in December 2007. A variety of work is underway to prepare for this, which is being co-ordinated from the DCS Unit. The review of the Children and Young People's Plan (discussed in another report) will contribute to this preparation process. The ISCB and Children Leeds Partnership have already discussed these preparations and officers have been pro-active in looking to raise awareness amongst head teachers, governors, health

partners and others involved in Children's Services work. More details on preparations for the Joint Area Review will be provided to Scrutiny Members as work progresses.

2.10 Forthcoming Challenges

At the Open Forum event in March the Director of Children's Services spoke to those present about the need to take the next step in taking the work of children's services further. With new staff and arrangements in place there is now an opportunity to move forward more efficiently in co-ordinating children's services work. Over the coming weeks work will take place to match the five Locality Enablers with one of the five wedges. This will be done through a thorough process that looks to link the individual skills, knowledge and experience of each Locality Enabler to the area where these qualities can best be put to use. As part of this process, Mariana Pexton is meeting with Area Committee Chairs to discuss related issues.

The JAR and Children and Young People's Plan Review offers an excellent opportunity for us to assess the progress we've made, review our priorities and consider future challenges. This is a significant area of current work, more details of which are in a separate report to the Board.

Work is also planned or underway to consider events and activities that will promote and inform the work of Children's Services over the coming year. This will include more Open Forums, work centred around the needs and issues of particular areas and work to engage with Elected Members through, for example a co-ordinated programme across children's services for seminars and work shops (agreed in liaison with Members). Furthermore, work on co-ordinating communications across Children's Services is being given high priority and will link in to the recommendations of the Scrutiny Boards review into this area.

3.0 Children's Services Budget Overview

- 3.1 The following information details an overall summary of the budget implications for 2007/08 within Children's Services. Whilst the cross-cutting and partnership based nature of children's services work incorporates the full range of Council activities, those for which budgetary accountability rests specifically under Children's Services are: schools and other education services (including Education Leeds); Children's Social Care; Youth Services; Early Years and the Director of Children's Services Unit.
- 3.2 The total net budget across these services for 2007/08 in £146.1m (excluding schools). Within this, £1.7m has been included to provide the infrastructure to assist the Director of Children's Services in improving outcomes for children in Leeds in accordance with Every Child Matters (see the staffing update above for more details).
- 3.3 In effect, 2007/08 will be the first full year of the children's trust arrangements in Leeds in operation. There has not yet, therefore, been the opportunity to identify significant areas of savings for realignment arising from more effective and coordinated service delivery. It is, however, anticipated that future budget reports for Children's Services will reflect a continuous realignment of resources with a concentration towards the targeted priorities contained within the Children and Young People's Plan.
- 3.4 Detailed work is currently being undertaken to review the financial reporting systems so as to ensure the budgets within Children's Services are monitored effectively in a coordinated way so that every opportunity for possible realignment towards the

priorities contained within the Children & Young People' Plan is identified and pursued.

3.5 Across the other Children's Services functions, the key budget highlights for 2007/08 include:

- Within **education**: A minimum per pupil increase of 3.7%; An increase in the Schools Standards Grant of 23% per pupil in Primary, 20% per pupil in Secondary and 11% per pupil in SILCs; Additional funding for personalisation and workforce reform.
- Within **early years and childcare services**: Funding for an additional 26 children's centres; A pilot scheme to provide 7.5 hours of free nursery education for up to 750 two year old children and extension of entitlement for free nursery education for three and four year olds from 12.5 to 15 hours per week; £275k to pilot a Budget Holding Lead Professional scheme which aims to respond more rapidly to the needs of vulnerable families.
- Within the **youth service**: funding for the continuation of the Out of School Activities Programme, in partnership with summer Breeze events, the addition of Neighbourhood Support Fund and Youth Opportunities Fund.

Further, more specific details can be provided on these and any other schemes of interest on Members request.

4.0 Engaging With Children, Young People and Their Families: Children's Services Key Activities and Progress

- 4.1 One of the key issues highlighted in the original Scrutiny report into Implementing the Children's Act and an area of particularly high priority under the new Children's Services arrangements is the importance of engaging effectively and consistently with children, young people and their families in making decisions and taking actions that will effect them. In highlighting activities from recent months the information below therefore focuses particularly on areas of work that have sought to carry out such engagement.
- 4.2 Even amongst very young children the importance of enabling them to inform decisions about their surroundings and activities is increasingly being recognised. The early years service promotes good practice in listening and responding to young children. This ensures young children's views, perspectives and feelings inform service planning and delivery, particularly in the Children's Centres and early years settings where young children spend their time being cared for and educated.
- 4.3 All Children's Centres have received training on listening and responding to young children using the visual and performing arts. This has increased awareness about offering children a range of opportunities and choices in the way they express their thoughts, feelings and perspectives, recognising the many languages of young children. There are individual examples of how children are making decisions about which resources are needed, where they go and how areas are planned in a setting. In addition the Parents Involved in Children's Learning (PILC) project supports the development of observation skills and planning for individual children's needs, recognizing the important role that trained observation skills play in listening and responding to children's needs. Furthermore, every Centre has a lead practitioner who ensures opportunities for young children to move and express themselves freely

and in one children's centre an artist is working with parents / carers and practitioners to explore ways to develop young children's creativity.

- 4.4 At school level The Leeds Healthy Schools Programme (LHSP), which has very recently been awarded Beacon Status (with work in the area of community and customer engagement and empowerment judged to be outstanding), incorporates the work of the Youth on Health Group. This provides a participative forum for young people aged from 8 – 17 who explore, find and promote solutions to health issues that are of concern to them. The Group meets every half term, Members establish the format/content for the year, including any evaluation, decide on a priority health area that concerns young people, and research views of others in school. They also regularly plan young delegates events - large meetings with a range of 'adult decision makers'. The events are run entirely by young people. Building on the work they did in 2006, the group has recently helped to launch the 2007 'Be Healthy!' initiative, which aims to encourage healthy activity across the city through the direct engagement of children and young people.
- 4.5 Within schools, the ongoing efforts towards obtaining the Stephen Lawrence Award puts pupils at the forefront of work around drawing up strong and effective policies and practices to promote race equality and community cohesion in their school. The award strives to ensure the culture and ethos of schools are such that, whatever the heritage and origins of members of the school community, everyone is equally valued and treated with respect. Young people use mediums such as poetry, raps, artwork, performance or taking assemblies to celebrate the cultural and racial diversity of the school and of the country as a whole. So far one third of all schools have achieved either level 1, 2 or 3 of the standard, one third are engaged and one third have yet to start. A recent development has seen the Morley family of schools working together collaboratively towards achieving the standard. This initiative, which has local business and community group support, was launched at an event at Morley Town Hall which involved children and young people sharing ideas and performances from across the schools.
- 4.6 More generally, young people have been actively involved in the recent development of the Leeds Youth Offer, which supports work to respond to Clause 6 of the Education and Inspections Act. Consultation with the Leeds Open Forums, the 4Children Consultancy in Leeds and the Youth Council has contributed to this process, with the Youth Council indicating that the Leeds Youth offer should be called the Breeze Youth Promise and backed up by an entitlement to a Breeze card and comprehensive information on the availability of services, opportunities and activities. To this end the Youth Service is supporting the further development of the Breeze website and the Family Hub website. A key aspect of the Promise will be a list of entitlements, for example, Youth Service entitlements might be access to youth work within a 30 minute safe journey from home, access to a Connexions Personal Advisor, access to the Duke of Edinburgh's Award Scheme, etc. It is proposed that the Breeze Youth Promise will be finalised by 31.08.07 and officially launched by September 2007.
- 4.7 There are also a number of good examples of inter-agency work across the Council that puts the needs of young people at the centre of a wide range of work. For example, in working to improve the Council's performance as a corporate carer, staff in Children's Social Services have been working with Neighbourhoods and Housing and the ALMOS on a number of measures to make improvements on housing issues that affect our looked after children and young people. This includes

- A protocol being drawn up between Environment and Neighbourhoods and Pathway Planning to maximise the availability of council tenancies for young people leaving care.
- Work being undertaken to enable named officers in Pathway Planning to have access to the ALMOs' housing record system so housing applications by young people leaving care can be tracked by social workers after a referral is made.
- ALMO and Children's Social Services staff exchanging contact details of nominated officers to maximize joined up working by the two agencies.

Housing Management Officers now meet regularly with Children's Service Delivery Managers to discuss how children and families in need can be given priority. The object of this is to clarify the lettings policy, help prevent children being taken into care because of housing reasons, help children return to families or carers more quickly following the resolution of housing issues and help foster carers who need larger homes to accommodate the children they care for (A report to facilitate this process is going to Environment and Neighbourhoods Executive Board on 14 May 2007). Hence this work puts young people's needs at the centre of a piece of work that cuts across Council services.

4.8 All of this work is complemented by the current efforts to engage with young people in revising the Children and Young People's Plan, which will be crucial to guiding the work done for children and young people over the coming years. More details on this consultation work are included in the separate report on the Children and Young People's Plan.

4.9 Young People's Participation: An Ongoing Challenge

The examples above demonstrate just a few of the many ways that work across the spectrum of Children's Services puts young people at the centre of decisions that affect them. Efforts to broaden this work are an ongoing high priority. At the latest Open Forum the Director for Children's Services highlighted the need to 'embed a significant strategic and cultural change so that children and families really feel the difference and know that their involvement is a 'given' rather than an exception'. This remains a challenge. The new arrangements now in place provide an opportunity to intensify work in this area in a number of ways including:

- Joining up existing good practice within services so that the consultation and engagement work we do is better co-ordinated and shared, avoiding duplication and 'consultation overload', but targeting the work we do so that young people *consistently* feel they are involved in decisions that affect them and particularly that the majority of young people feel like this rather than just an active minority.
- Embedding the culture of consultation with young people across the whole Council. The Director of Children's Services recognises that this was a key recommendation of the original review into 'Implementing the Children Act' and will continue to highlight the importance of this type of work at a Senior level and across all services.
- Working with our partners to ensure that they share the commitment to engaging with young people over issues that affect them and work in a way that reflects this. As the notion of a shared Children's Services for Leeds becomes embedded we hope that this priority will become fundamental to the way we work together. In the short term we are increasingly looking to

examples of where there are opportunities for this type of work and encouraging partners to do so.

At the start of May the Strategic Leader for Partnership and Participation will take up her post in the Director of Children's Services Unit. This will significantly support efforts to co-ordinate and promote the sort of approach outlined in these points.

5.0 Recommendations

It is recommended that Members note and comment on the ongoing progress of work to implement the Children's Act in Leeds and the work and changes that stem from this.

Members may also want to take the opportunity to contribute views on how the work of the Scrutiny Board can be co-ordinated with the work of Children's Services in view of the arrangements now in place and the future opportunities available.

APPENDIX 1

Action Plan – Implementing the Children Act

Recommendation	Action taken/proposed	Responsibility	Timescale
<p>1. That the Chief Executive facilitates a review in order to identify the most appropriate local democratic arrangements for the discharge of the role of Lead Member for Children’s Services (Executive Member in Leeds), including any designated member support for the role, and any consequent implications for the Executive Board as a whole.</p>	<p>Proposals to be developed including</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • an explanation of the new arrangements under the officer delegation scheme and its interrelationship with the role of Executive Member • précis of legislative requirements and statutory guidance re role of Executive Member and any support Members • explanation of implications of individual Executive member decision making • consideration of available options and identification of preferred option 	Chief Executive	Report to 6 April 2006 Scrutiny Board
<p>2. That all elected Members are made aware of the outcome of the review requested in recommendation 1, well in advance of the Leader appointing the Executive Board for the new municipal year.</p>	<p>Members will be made aware via the report to Scrutiny Board referred to above.</p>	Chief Executive	Report to 6 April 2006 Scrutiny Board

Recommendation	Action taken/proposed	Responsibility	Timescale
<p>3. That the Head of Scrutiny and Member Development produce proposals for the future management of Scrutiny in relation to Children's Services, in order to address the Board's concerns about the workload implications caused by one Scrutiny Board having such a broad remit, whilst recognising the desirability of integrated scrutiny of the Children's Services domain.</p>	<p>Proposal at AGM of Council that Scrutiny Board (Children's Services) be re-established and that a report be brought to an early Scrutiny Board meeting with proposals re effective operational arrangements for the Board to ensure its broad remit is appropriately considered</p>	<p>Head of Scrutiny and Member Development</p>	<p>July 2006 cycle of Scrutiny Board</p>
<p>4. That the Director of Legal and Democratic Services develops criteria for determining whether member or officer representation (or both) is appropriate on external bodies and partnerships relevant to the Children's Services portfolio, taking account of models from elsewhere and also the constitutional arrangements for executive decision making.</p>	<p>Review current external bodies and partnerships re children's services involving Member/officer representation.</p> <p>Identify possible future external bodies/partnerships re children's services likely to require Member/officer representation</p> <p><u>Action update (July 2006)</u> The Director of Children's Services is continuing to work with the current partnership arrangements whilst this review</p>	<p>Director of Children's Services</p>	<p>Autumn 2006</p>

Recommendation	Action taken/proposed	Responsibility	Timescale
	<p>work is undertaken (for example, a successful half-day Open Forum with more than 400 people working in the city across a wide range of organisations) and continuing the city-wide CYPSP and district arrangements.</p> <p>The review work is under way and is expected to be concluded in the Autumn, as is the review of district arrangements for Children and Young People being undertaken within the Leeds Initiative.</p> <p><u>Action update (October 2006)</u> Children's trust arrangements were agreed at the Executive Board meeting of 20 September 2006, setting out membership of bodies at a city-wide level. Work is under way to look at the most effective way to organise district level arrangements and meetings. Part of this will be discussions with each Area Committee during the October and November meeting cycles.</p>		<p>Winter 2006</p> <p>Ongoing</p>

Recommendation	Action taken/proposed	Responsibility	Timescale
	<p><u>Action update (January 2007)</u> The Children Leeds Partnership is now established and meets on a six-week cycle.</p> <p>All Area Committees have been visited by a member of the Director of Children's Services senior team and discussions opened on involvement at locality level.</p> <p>Five Locality Enabler posts are currently being recruited (one for each of the five areas) and their role will be to fully develop locality working</p> <p><u>Action Update (April 2007)</u> Locality Enablers now in post and work underway to match skills, knowledge and experience to the most appropriate areas. Wider staffing arrangements are also now in place in the DCSU that will help to engage Members more effectively in Children's Services activity.</p>		Spring 2007

Recommendation	Action taken/proposed	Responsibility	Timescale
	<p>Identify possible options for Member involvement in Children's Services portfolio generally (eg Reg 33 etc)</p> <p>Identify models from elsewhere</p> <p>Draft report to set out proposed framework for Member involvement in Children's Services including section on implications of individual decision making by Executive Members</p> <p><u>Action update (July 2006)</u> Executive Board will discuss the role of elected members as Corporate parents, including a Corporate Parenting Framework and Corporate Parenting Guarantee at the July meeting.</p> <p>During the Autumn, a series of members' Seminars has been planned (among other things) to cover the kinds of issues raised through the Scrutiny process.</p> <p><u>Action update (October 2006)</u> Executive Board approved the Corporate Parenting Framework</p>		

Recommendation	Action taken/proposed	Responsibility	Timescale
	<p>at its July 2006 meeting. This included a Corporate parenting Guarantee and a Corporate Parenting Action Plan. This included specific arrangements for overview and monitoring of Corporate Parenting, including Regulation 33 matters.</p> <p>Ten Councillors have been recruited to lead on Corporate parenting and are to receive training when the Total Respect programme is implemented.</p> <p>Two awareness-raising seminars have been held in July and September for elected members generally.</p> <p>An action plan to guide further activity has been drawn up and is monitored regularly by the Executive Member for Children's Services and the Multi-Agency Looked After Partnership (MALAP).</p>		Ongoing

Recommendation	Action taken/proposed	Responsibility	Timescale
	<p><u>Action update (January 2007)</u> The Corporate Carer's Group has now been recruited and meets regularly.</p> <p>Young people have been recruited to carry out the specialist training and are themselves undergoing training for this purpose. The member training sessions will take place in spring 2007.</p> <p>Monthly members' seminars were held during the autumn and winter of 2006 and dates for further seminars in 2007 have been set.</p> <p>Congratulatory cards and gift tokens, signed by the Children's Services Executive Board Members, have been sent to all young people gaining success in GCSE examinations.</p> <p><u>Action Update (April 2007)</u> Members seminars have taken place and dates for training sessions have been arranged during May and June.</p>		

Recommendation	Action taken/proposed	Responsibility	Timescale
<p>5. That the Director of Legal and Democratic Services ensures that awareness is raised with regards to the existing guidelines for the level of support that will be provided to Members representing the Council on external bodies and partnerships.</p>	<p>Review effectiveness of existing guidelines and include paragraph re monitoring of that support</p> <p>Upon appointment to an external body/partnership, the Member/officer will be provided with a copy of the guidelines and advised of the support provided.</p> <p><u>Action update</u> Once roles are determined, then appropriate support will be given.</p>	<p>Head of Governance Services</p>	<p>Autumn 2006</p>

Rosemary Archer
Director of Children's Services

Mariana Pexton
Deputy Director Innovation & Change

Keith Burton
Deputy Director Commissioning & Partnership

Sarah Sinclair (PCT)
Director of Planning & Commissioning for Children's & Maternity Services

John Maynard
Strategic Leader Intelligence & Innovation

David McDermott
Strategic Leader Resources & Assets

Jackie Wilson (temporary contract)
Strategic Leader Performance and Change

Barbara Newton
Strategic Leader Partnership & Participation

Jane Bell
Locality Enabler

Shaid Mahmood
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Ken Morton
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Report of the Director of Children's Services

Scrutiny Board (Children's Services)

Date: 19 April 2007

Subject: The Joint Area Review and the Children and Young People's Plan Review

Electoral Wards Affected:

Specific Implications For:

Equality and Diversity

Community Cohesion

Narrowing the Gap

1 Summary

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is twofold: firstly to provide the Board with an update on progress in preparing for the inspection of children's services during this year; and secondly to provide the basis for engaging the Board in the ongoing review of the Leeds Children and Young People's Plan.

2 Background

- 2.1 As set out in the December 2006 report, Children's services are monitored and inspected by central government, OfSTED and other inspectorates. This year Leeds will be subject to both the Annual Performance Assessment (APA) in the autumn and the Joint Area Review (JAR) inspection of children's services in December 2007. The inspection regime is currently changing which in turn requires changes to our preparations.
- 2.2 The first Leeds Children and Young People's Plan (CYPP) was published in 2006. The plan replaces many earlier statutory plans and now forms the overall citywide strategy for improving outcomes for children and young people for all local services and partners. The plan was developed with strong input from children and young people and from across the Children Leeds partnership, and runs from 2006-2009. Government guidance regarding these plans has also been changed recently.
- 2.3 The key changes to the planning and inspection arrangements for children's services are as follows:

- There are new requirements for Children and Young People's Plans in terms of consultation guidelines, new sections on school diversity and childcare sufficiency and additional focus on the needs of vulnerable groups
- The annual review of the Children and Young People's plan now forms the sole self-evaluation for APA and JAR, rather than requiring additional information.
- The Annual Performance Assessment will take place each autumn and will be an assessment of *council services'* contribution to improving outcomes. The scores from this assessment will continue to feed into the CPA judgement for the council.
- The Joint Area Review will become more limited but more focused on key areas and those where inspectors feel that local children's services are underperforming or at risk. Each inspection will always focus on *all local services* effectiveness on safeguarding and improving outcomes for both Looked After Children and those with learning difficulties and or disabilities. In addition the inspectors will highlight a small number (perhaps three or four) of further areas for investigation.
- Overall there is a much stronger emphasis through the planning and inspection guidance on impact and improving outcomes, and particularly on narrowing the gap between vulnerable groups and their peers. In support of this it is clear that inspectors will use the views of children, young people, families and partners in informing their judgements through surveys and focus groups.

2.4 In light of these changes, local plans for the review of the Children and Young People's Plan and preparations for the inspection have been changed. The revised timescales are set out below:

- April/May: CYPP review ongoing. Consultation.
- June: Sign off by Executive Board and Director of Children's Services. CYPP Review submitted 14th June. OfSTED survey of pupils in schools to inform inspection.
- September: JAR set up meeting with inspectors. Evidence and case files submitted.
- Sep/Oct: APA meeting
- November: Analysis week for inspectors to review evidence and case files.
- December: Inspectors onsite 3rd – 14th

3 Preparation for Inspection

3.1 Despite all these wider changes, local services and the wider Children Leeds partnership are making progress in reviewing the Leeds Children and Young People's plan and preparing for the inspection later this year.

3.2 Activity over the past four months includes:

- Consultation with children and young people: events have taken place to include children's views on key issues and progress, including representatives from Youth Council and ROAR
- Consultation with Members: there have been two workshops for elected members on the CYPP and all Area Committees will be engaged in the review of the plan during March and April.

- Consultation with services and schools: managers and staff from local agencies have been engaged in the ongoing review through multi-agency ‘Outcome Conversations’ and headteachers and wider staff have been invited to put forward their views in meetings and via an online survey.
- Self-evaluation and improvement planning: all key council services have undertaken an initial self-assessment against the inspection criteria and key data. In turn services have put in place improvement plans where necessary to make sure that weaknesses are being properly addressed.
- Preparing the review of Children and Young People’s plan: local partners are now engaged in developing a review of progress and updating action plans.

4 Children and Young People’s Plan Review - emerging issues

- 4.1 Due to the timescales of the review of the Children and Young People’s plan it is not possible to include a full first draft of the review in this report. Further information will be provided at the meeting once partner agencies have completed their initial drafting in mid-April.
- 4.2 However, at this point it is possible to share early information from the review which shows both the expectations of inspections as set out in the new JAR inspection criteria and the issues which are emerging from ongoing self-evaluation.

OfSTED inspection criteria	Emerging issues from CYPP Review
<p>Be Healthy</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ‘Most’ NHS child health and waiting time targets met • Good health promotion programmes making an impact on lifestyles • Mental health services multi agency, accessible, well-linked to other services • Effective maternity, community services • All checks for LAC in place • Joint commissioning, care plans for LDD children 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • APA 2006: ‘good’ • Challenges with NHS targets • Beacon Status for Healthy Schools. Wider health promotion more mixed. • Weak outcomes for teenage conceptions and sexual health • Mental health – improved referrals and waiting times. Strategy emerging • Vulnerable groups: some issues with LAC support, particularly dental care
<p>Stay Safe</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ‘Most’ children feel safe and listened to. • All local services engaged in processes and culture of safeguarding • Prevention reducing incidence of abuse • Prompt, effective assessments and care • Stable placements for LAC • Better outcomes for children on CPR than elsewhere • Good shared arrangements for sharing information and joint working 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • APA 2006: ‘adequate’ • Placement stability good, but unlikely to meet PSA target • Adoptions improved but still lower than other similar authorities • Assessment times improved, but core still below target • Consistency and quality of assessments, case management and residential care • Timeliness of reviews of LAC still low

<p>Enjoy and achieve</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improved school attendance and reduced exclusions • Children and young people are happy in life and education • Recreational, cultural and leisure facilities are wide-ranging and accessible • Majority of nursery, primary, secondary and special schools, PRUs and early years settings are good or better • 'Narrow the gap' for vulnerable groups, esp. LAC and BME groups 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • APA 2006: 'good' • Improvements in secondary school attainment but progress overall and outcomes for some groups still weak • Primary school outcomes good but not improving, particularly in schools in deprived neighbourhoods • Attendance still a challenge, exclusions reduced significantly • Positive progress across play, sports and arts though challenges with inclusion
<p>Make a Positive Contribution</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Good participation • Comprehensive range of activities, especially in 'trouble spots' • Good mentoring, guidance, personal and social development • Effective support for parenting • Good interagency community safety work esp. bullying and ASB • Youth offending rates falling, high levels of ETE for young offenders 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • APA 2006: 'good' • Young offender numbers slightly higher, low levels of ETE • Youth service – reach targets achieved, accreditation low, Youth Offer developing • Good participation arrangements and good progress • Strong overall support for personal and social development, some challenges • Some challenges on community safety, but strategies emerging
<p>Economic Wellbeing</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Decreasing poverty and worklessness • High proportion in education, employment and training • Effective 14-19 provision and strategy, high qualification levels at 19 • Wide range of childcare and good information about provision • Good interagency work on regeneration, adult and family learning • Most young people in decent housing. No use of B&B, good support for vulnerable 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • APA 2006: 'good' • 2006 NEET and unknown targets achieved, strong improvements in qualification levels at 19 • Poorer outcomes for vulnerable groups • Good range and quality of childcare though issues on uptake and impact • Wide investment and projects to support parenting, strategy emerging • Regeneration and housing investment, increasing links, decency target on track.
<p>Service Management</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ambitious partnership acting on good needs analysis • Clear priorities with emphasis on prevention and equalities • Strong partnership based on trust and 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CYPP needs analysis and participation good, emerging shared priorities • Children's trust arrangements in place • Emerging capacity and networks at locality level

<p>clear decision-making</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Effective shared management of resources, workforce, risk and performance 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Good progress on extended services and children’s centres and some wider projects • Further work required on shared management of resources, workforce, information and performance
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5 Recommendations

5.1 Scrutiny Board are asked to:

- Comment on the issues raised in the report
- Advise on the Board’s views on priorities for the CYPP Review and action planning for the next year

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Originator: K Arscott

Tel: 247 4189

Report of the Head of Scrutiny and Member Development

Scrutiny Board (Children's Services)

Date: 19 April 2007

Subject: Scrutiny Board draft statement - Departmental Communications

Electoral Wards Affected:

Specific Implications For:

Equality and Diversity

Community Cohesion

Narrowing the Gap

1.0 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 At its meeting on 14th December 2006 the Board decided to establish a working group to consider departmental communications, in response to a referral from Overview and Scrutiny Committee.
- 1.2 The Working Group met with relevant officers in March 2007.
- 1.3 Attached as Appendix 1 is a draft 'statement' from the Board arising from the working group's activity.

2.0 RECOMMENDATION

- 2.1 The Board is asked to formally agree the attached statement in relation to Departmental Communications.

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DRAFT

Draft statement of

Scrutiny Board
(Children's Services)

Departmental
Communications

Introduction



Introduction

1. At its meeting on 4 December 2006, Overview and Scrutiny Committee noted concerns regarding the nature, purpose and costs of internal Council publications and newsletters. The Committee resolved that the matter be left to the discretion of individual Scrutiny Boards to investigate in respect of their respective areas of responsibility if they so wished.
2. On 11 January 2007, Scrutiny Board (Children's Services) considered the issue of departmental communications. Members of the Board resolved that a Working Group be established to consider the issue of corporate communications published by those departments within the Scrutiny Board's remit.
3. A working group of 3 co-opted members of the Board, Mr E A Britten, Prof P H J H Gosden and Ms C Foote, met on 7 March 2007 to consider the issue of corporate communications within Education Leeds and Children's Services. The Board Members met with Officers from both departments, the Team Leader for Communications, Education Leeds and the Communications Manager, Children's Services. Prior to the

meeting the Working Group were provided with information about the Education Leeds Communications Project, currently in the implementation stage, to improve the way that the department communicates with its staff, with schools, governors, parents and carers. One of the project's stated objectives was to "increase efficiency and best use of resources in all our communications".

Comments and Recommendations



1. The Officer from Education Leeds informed the Working Group about the Communications Project, which was established to progress the recommendations of a fundamental service improvement review of the Communications Team function in 2005. The review identified the importance of the e-communications agenda in delivering more efficient and effective transactions and the need to refocus resources to achieve this. It recommended that the next stage of the review should consider how to create a more effective structure for developing the “people” dimension of an effective e-communications organisation.
2. The Working Group asked specifically about the shift from paper based to electronic information on the “Infobase” intranet. Infobase had been in existence for about five years. Only used internally at first, Infobase became available to schools around three years ago.
3. Five years ago, Education Leeds relied heavily on printed publications; weekly and quarterly bulletins to schools and internal staff newsletters, printed information for governors and headteachers. External organisations often sent in batches of printed
- leaflets and other information to be distributed to schools and this was sent via the envopacs. Now, newsletters and other documents generated by Education Leeds were produced electronically and placed on Infobase. Printed material produced by Education Leeds had been pared down and only a small selection of printed information was distributed to schools on behalf of external organisations.
4. Headteachers and teachers could access electronic documents and newsletters on Infobase. One of the aims of the Communications Project would be to develop a system of “tailoring” information to their individual needs through a personal log-in. A programme to provide similar log-ins for Governors was also underway. The large number of governors in Leeds and the training which accompanied providing the log-in meant that the roll-out of the programme would take some time to complete.
5. The Working Group understood the need to meet e-government targets and the reasons behind the move towards electronic communication. It had concerns that the ease of availability of electronic communications might lead to an overload of information where important

Comments and Recommendations



items were 'hidden' in the morass.

6. Members were reassured to hear that

- staff were asked always to think about whether their message was necessary; and, if so, to tailor their approach according to their message and its recipient(s), rather than simply opting for an electronic option every time
- "gatekeeping" was in place to discourage the use of "blanket" emailing except for very important and urgent messages which must reach a large audience quickly

7. Members were also concerned that schools would now be bearing the costs of printing out material from the Infobase or "virtual" envopac rather than receiving actual paper copies. Paper copies pinned to a noticeboard in the staffroom were often more effective for busy teaching staff who might find it difficult to find the equipment and time to sit down and access information electronically. On this point, members were informed that schools could choose to print out as much or as little of the electronic information as they wanted and to continue to display this for staff to access if they felt the need. There was

also a facility for schools to request paper versions of certain documents and, indeed, one school continued to receive paper copies because they had specifically expressed that preference.

8. The Working Group asked if any printing cost savings made centrally by Education Leeds had been identified and the monies passed on to schools. Members were informed that this hadn't happened yet, however schools had monies delegated to their budgets for paper and printing as a matter of course.

9. Members asked if there had been any feedback from schools about the Infobase and were informed that there was some unhappiness with the system at the very early stages. The reasons for this appeared to have been dissatisfaction with the change itself and also practical problems with the system, which have since been addressed. Feedback about the communications project had been good. A user group was in place which reflected a range of users, from those with a keen interest and particular skills in using new technologies, through to those with no particular interest in ICT and a low level of computer literacy.

Comments and Recommendations



10. Members heard that email alerts had been used when the electronic system was first put in place, some years ago. The system was not very reliable at the time so alerts had stopped but were due to start again. Alerts were a method where recipients could self-select information. **Headline information** was given in an email about several topics and the user could select to read more about certain ones by clicking a link.
11. The Communications Manager for Children's Services informed members that Children Leeds did not directly produce a lot of information. **Certain organisations or teams took the lead on different issues, so for example, the PCT led on child obesity; Education Leeds led on bullying; Social Services led on adoption. His role was to influence and share best practice. The Communications Manager did not lead a team but worked closely with other teams. Since his appointment he had been meeting with colleagues in children's services departments to find out more about their current communications practices.**
12. Members noted how vital effective communications would be between different agencies, departments and teams to equip the proposed new Children's Services Directorate to carry out its functions and drive wider partnership working to integrate and transform services. They expressed concerns that the Communications Manager would not have a team of people to resource this, whilst recognising that the new directorate would actually be a drawing together of existing partners rather than the creation of a new entity. As such, the cost implications of a new team might be difficult to justify. In view of this, the Working Group felt that it was important that a communications strategy was put in place between the agencies concerned that left no gaps.
13. Members were also keen to find out how much was currently spent on publications within Children's Services, this included the spend by Leeds City Council but also external partners, if that information could be made available.
14. In summary, Members recognise that considerable efforts have been made to improve departmental communications in Education Leeds. Members think this has been effective so far, and particularly welcome the communications project

Comments and Recommendations



initiative, with its clearly stated objectives, benefits and success criteria. Children Leeds is at an early stage and appears to have some way to go in assessing the situation and taking a lead on identifying and disseminating good practice in communications. The Working Group feel that the new Children's Services Directorate should be seen to take the lead on this issue. Scrutiny Board (Children's Services) therefore makes the following recommendation in the light of the Working Group's deliberations:-

Recommendation 1

That a Children's Services communications project be set up, including all the relevant partners, to enable the new Directorate to

- ***take a lead on communications***
- ***assess current practice***
- ***draw the partners together***
- ***assist the Communications Manager, Children's Services in his role to influence and share best practice***
- ***draft a communications strategy***

Mindful of the Working Group's remit, which relates to the nature, purpose and costs of publications, the Board also makes the following recommendations:-

Recommendation 2

That costs for departmental publications 2006/2007 be supplied to a future meeting of Scrutiny Board (Children's Services), to establish a baseline figure for departmental publications produced by Education Leeds for comparison with future years.

Recommendation 3

That the Director of Children's Services obtain costs for publications relating to Children's Services 2006/2007 from Council Departments and external partners, where available, to supply to a future meeting of Scrutiny Board (Children's Services).

Recommendation 4

That information on any monitoring process(es) used to evaluate the effectiveness of the corporate communications published by Education Leeds and Children Leeds be supplied to a future meeting of Scrutiny Board (Children's Services).



Report of the Head of Scrutiny and Member Development

Scrutiny Board (Children's Services)

Date: 19 April 2007

Subject: Scrutiny Board draft statement - Review of 14-19 Education and Training Provision in Leeds

Electoral Wards Affected:

Specific Implications For:

Equality and Diversity

Community Cohesion

Narrowing the Gap

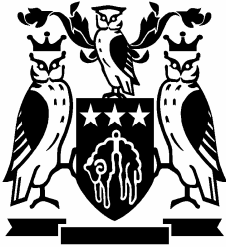
1.0 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 The Board met on 29 March to consider the review of 14-19 education and training provision in Leeds.
- 1.2 A draft 'statement' from the Board reflecting the comments made by the Board in relation to the review will be circulated in advance of the Board's April meeting.

2.0 RECOMMENDATION

- 2.1 The Board is asked to formally agree the draft statement in relation to the review of 14-19 education and training provision in Leeds.

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Originator: K Arscott

Tel: 247 4189

Report of the Head of Scrutiny and Member Development

Scrutiny Board (Children's Services)

Date: 19th April 2007

Subject: Annual Report 2006/2007

Electoral Wards Affected: All

Specific Implications For:

Equality and Diversity

Community Cohesion

Narrowing the Gap

1.0 Purpose of the report

1.1 The purpose of this report is to present the draft of the Board's contribution to the Scrutiny Board Annual Report.

2.0 Introduction

2.1 Members will be aware that the operating protocols for Scrutiny Boards require the publication of an Annual Report to Council. This year the report will combine a commentary on each of the Board's work, progress on the Action Plan 2006/07 and details of the Action Plan being developed for 2007/2008.

3.0 Draft report

3.1 A draft of contribution to the Annual Report from the Scrutiny Board (Children's Services) will be circulated in advance of the Board's April meeting. It will include an introduction from the Chair and details of the some of the work undertaken by the Board in this municipal year. The final text will be subject to agreement of the Board's remaining inquiry reports.

4.0 Recommendation

4.1 Members are asked to agree the Board's contribution to the composite Annual Report.

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EXECUTIVE BOARD

WEDNESDAY, 4TH APRIL, 2007

PRESENT: Councillor A Carter in the Chair

Councillors M Harris, D Blackburn, R Brett,
J L Carter, R Harker, P Harrand, R Lewis,
J Procter, S Smith and J Blake

Councillor Blake – Non-voting Advisory Member

216 Substitute Member

Under the terms of Executive Procedure Rule 2.3 Councillor R Lewis was invited to attend the meeting on behalf of Councillor Wakefield.

217 Director of Adult Services

The Chair welcomed Sandie Keene, Director of Adult Social Services to this, her first meeting of the Executive Board.

218 Beacon Awards

The Chair reported that the Council had received Beacon Awards for Financial Inclusion and for the Healthy Schools Initiative and commended the officers concerned for their work on these significant achievements.

219 Exclusion of Public

RESOLVED – That the public be excluded from the meeting during consideration of the following parts of the agenda designated as exempt on the grounds that it is likely, in view of the nature of the business to be transacted or the nature of the proceedings, that if members of the public were present there would be disclosure to them of the exempt information so designated as follows:

- (a) All Appendices to the report referred to in minute 224 under the terms of Access to Information Procedure Rule 10.4(3) and on the grounds that the public interest in maintaining the exemption outweighs the public interest in disclosing the information because it deals with a range of financial and business information relating to another body and also publication could be prejudicial to the progress of the EASEL Project.
- (b) Appendix 1 and 2 to the report referred to in minute 236 under the terms of Access to Information Procedure Rule 10.4 (3) and on the grounds that the public interest in maintaining the exemption outweighs the interest in disclosing the information as disclosure could severely prejudice the future business and operations of Leeds Bradford International Airport Ltd and also the price that might be obtained by Leeds City Council and the other shareholders in Leeds Bradford

Draft minutes to be approved at the meeting
to be held on Wednesday, 16th May, 2007

International Airport Limited. If the price obtained by shareholders for their shareholding in Leeds Bradford International Airport Limited is depressed by such disclosure, the council tax payers within each local authority will suffer in relation to a reduction in capital receipts from the disposal or in relation in future returns. Appendix 2 to the report was circulated at the meeting.

220 Declaration of Interests

- (a) Councillor Harris declared a personal and prejudicial interest in the item relating to the A65 Quality Bus Initiative (minute 231) in relation to his business interests.
- (b) A further declaration of interest made during the meeting is referred to in minute 236 (Councillor Harker).

221 Minutes

RESOLVED – That the minutes of the meeting held on 14th March 2007 be approved subject to an amendment by the addition of the following to minute 202:

- “d) That the Fir Tree site be declared surplus to educational requirements if the proposal proceeds and that the capital receipt generated from the site be used to fund educational improvements including the improvements proposed on the Archbishop Cramner Primary School site”.

CHILDREN'S SERVICES

222 Deputation to Council - Stanhope Youth Centre

The Director of Learning and Leisure submitted a report providing members with relevant information following the deputation to full Council by Stanhope United Community Group.

RESOLVED – That the report be noted and that closure of the Centre be not progressed until such time as consultations with regard to youth provision in the area have been concluded.

ADULT HEALTH AND SOCIAL CARE

223 Deputation to Council - Leeds Asperger Adults

The Director of Adult Social Services submitted a report responding to the deputation to the Council meeting on 21st February 2007 with regard to the provision of support to adults with Aspergers Syndrome in Leeds. The report outlined the current situation in Leeds with regard to the provisions of services to adults with Aspergers Syndrome and proposed the establishment of a Steering Group for Adults with Autism and Asperger Syndrome

RESOLVED –

- (a) That the report be noted;

- (b) That a letter outlining the concerns of the deputation be sent to Leeds PCT; and
- (c) That the proposal to establish a steering group for Adults with Asperger Syndrome be approved.

NEIGHBOURHOODS AND HOUSING

224 East and South East Leeds(Easel) Regeneration Area - Outcome of Additional Negotiation Period

The Director of Neighbourhoods and Housing submitted a report setting out progress achieved during the additional negotiation period granted to Bellway and proposing the next steps required to bring the procurement of a regeneration development partner for the Council to a successful conclusion.

The Appendices to the report were designated exempt under Access to Information Procedure Rule 10.4(3)), and were considered in private at the conclusion of the meeting and it was

RESOLVED –

- (a) To note that the final terms for the agreement for the disposal of the EASEL phase one sites will be approved by the Director of Development under existing delegations provided that the Director of Development is satisfied that the terms offered for the disposal of the land represent the best consideration that can reasonably be obtained under section 123 of the Local Government Act 1972 (or under the Housing Act 1985);
- (b) That Bellway be appointed as the Council's preferred regeneration development partner, subject to contract, with this appointment conditional on the matters set out within the report;
- (c) That the baseline commercial offer from Bellway as set out in the confidential appendix C to the report be noted;
- (d) That the negotiation with Bellway, required to reach commercial and legal terms to the benefit to the Council, as outlined in the exempt appendix to the report be approved and that a further report detailing the terms of these negotiations be brought back to this Board.
- (e) That authority be delegated to the EASEL project board, through the Deputy Chief Executive in consultation with the Directors of Neighbourhoods and Housing, Development, Legal Services and Corporate Services to manage the negotiation and agreement of the commercial and legal terms to the benefit of the Council;
- (f) That the formal closure of the procurement process for the EASEL regeneration process, as required under regulations, be approved for the reasons set out in section 3 of the report.

- (g) That the proposed governance arrangements as set out in section 5 of the report be approved subject to consideration being given to the broadening of representation on the Members' Steering Group to include the Leeds PCT and the Government Office for Yorkshire and the Humber.

225 The Leeds Affordable Warmth Strategy

The Director of Neighbourhoods and Housing submitted a report recommending the adoption of the Leeds Affordable Warmth Strategy (2007-2016) putting in place a framework to address the issue of affordable warmth and fuel poverty across the City.

RESOLVED –

- (a) That the Leeds Affordable Warmth Strategy 2007-2016, putting in place a framework to address the issue of affordable warmth and fuel poverty across the City, be adopted.
- (b) That the Council adopt the Affordable Warmth Code of Practice and encourages partners to the Strategy to do the same.

CHILDREN'S SERVICES

226 Annual Consultation on Admission Arrangements from September 2008

The Chief Executive of Education Leeds submitted a report on the results of consultation done with regard to admission arrangements, and seeking approval for proposed admission numbers, policy and arrangements.

RESOLVED –

- (a) That approval be given to the implementation of the following proposals in the 2008 admission round:-
- Primary and secondary school co-ordinated admission arrangements.
 - Introducing a final deadline date for admission appeals.
 - Giving 'looked after' children priority for in-year transfers.
 - Delegating admission into the 6th form to school governors.
- (b) (i) That the admission numbers of Bankside Primary be increased from 70 to 90 in the 2008 admission round;
- (ii) That the admission numbers of Harehills Primary be increased from 60 to 90 in the 2008 admission round;
- (iii) That the admission numbers of Brownhill Primary School be decreased from 60 to 45 in the 2008 admission round;
- (iv) That the admission numbers of Stanningley Primary School be increased from 28 to 30 in the 2008 admission round;
- (v) That the admission numbers of Kippax North J & I School be decreased from 40 to 30 in the 2008 admission round;

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to be held on Wednesday, 16th May, 2007

- (vi) That the admission numbers for Bramley St Peters be decreased from 60 to 45 in the 2008 admission round.
- (c) That the proposal to give priority to children in infant schools for entry into junior schools be reissued in next year's consultation round.
- (d) That the proposal to break the sibling link when the older child is in the sixth form be not approved and that Education Leeds be requested to give further consideration as to how difficulties in administering the current arrangements might be more appropriately addressed.

LEISURE

227 City Centre Swimming

The Chief Recreation Officer submitted a report setting out the outcomes of discussions and bringing forward a proposal to enter into a partnership with the University of Leeds in order to secure public access to a new swimming facility on the University campus.

RESOLVED –

- (a) That approval in principle be given to a capital contribution towards the capital costs of a new pool;
- (b) That a Legal Agreement be drawn up between the University of Leeds and the City Council that reflects a financial contribution in the region of £1,250,000 (but not exceeding £1,500,000) and the detailed access arrangements for the general public; and
- (c) That a further report seeking final authority to spend be brought back to this Board in due course.

CENTRAL AND CORPORATE

228 Delivering Successful Change and Business Change Governance

The Director of Corporate Services submitted a report on the Delivering Successful Change project and seeking approval of the Corporate Project Management Framework and the "Policy on the Governance of Council Business Change Programmes and Projects".

RESOLVED –

- (a) That the Delivering Successful Change's Corporate Project Management Framework be approved, and endorsement given to its promotion across the Council;
- (b) That the 'Policy on the Governance of Council Business Change Programmes and Projects' be approved.

229 Revised Business Continuity Management Policy

The Director of Corporate Services submitted a report on the work of the Risk Management Unit and on proposals for the updated 'Policy on Business Continuity Management'.

RESOLVED – That the project's progress to date be noted and that the revised Policy on Business Continuity Management be approved.

230 Release of General Fund Reserves 2007/08

The Director of Corporate Services submitted a report seeking approval to release funds to support a number of one off initiatives which were not accommodated in the 2007/08 budget.

The report proposed spending on the following initiatives:-

- | | | |
|--|---|----------|
| • Area Committees | - | £500,000 |
| • Cultural Activities | - | £60,000 |
| • Co-Location costs with the Chamber of Commerce | - | £50,000 |
| • Town and District Car Parking Study | - | £60,000 |

RESOLVED – That the release of £670,000 from general fund reserves to support the above initiatives be approved.

DEVELOPMENT

231 A65 Quality Bus Initiative Land Acquisition

The Director of Development submitted a report on the proposed acquisition of land not in the City Council's ownership by negotiation and seeking authority to make a Compulsory Purchase Order in the event that negotiations are not successful.

RESOLVED – That approval be given to the acquisition of the land identified in the report by negotiation and in the event that negotiation becomes either protracted or abortive authority be given to the Assistant Chief Executive (Corporate Governance) to make a Compulsory Purchase Order under the relevant powers contained in The Highways Act 1980 and any other enabling powers and to submit the Order to the Secretary of State for confirmation.

(Councillor Harris, having declared a personal and prejudicial interest, left the meeting during consideration of this matter).

232 Deputation to Council - Richmond Hill Bus Action Group

The Director of Development submitted a report giving a response to the deputation to the Council meeting on 21st February 2007 with regard to provision of bus services in the Richmond Hill area.

RESOLVED – That the report be noted.

233 City Centre Area Action Plan Preferred Options

The Director of Development submitted a report seeking approval of the City Centre Area Action Plan Preferred Options.

RESOLVED –

- (a) That the outcome of the informal consultation undertaken as part of the preparation of the preferred options be noted;
- (b) That the City Centre Action Plan Preferred Options as revised by the Development Plan Panel be approved for publication along with its sustainability appraisal and other supporting documents.
- (c) That representations be formally invited between 16th April and 28th May 2007.

ADULT HEALTH AND SOCIAL CARE

234 Deputation to Council - Access Committee for Leeds

The Director of Adult Social Services submitted a report responding to the deputation to the Council meeting on 21st February 2007 with regard to social services provision in Leeds, and updating Members on action being taken to meet with the Access Committee in response to their deputation

RESOLVED – That the report be noted.

235 Capital Investment Plan for Day Centres

The Director of Adult Social Services submitted a report seeking approval for the capital investment plan for adult day centres in Leeds in the sum of £1,000,000

RESOLVED – That proposals for capital investment as outlined in the report be approved.

DEVELOPMENT

236 Leeds City Council's Shareholding in Leeds Bradford International Airport

The Director of Development submitted a report advising Members of the progress made with the sale of 100% of the share capital in the Leeds Bradford International Airport Limited and seeking Members' approval to the selection of a preferred and reserve bidder for the transaction to enable officers to complete the disposal.

Following consideration of Appendices 1 and 2 to the report designated exempt under Access to Information Procedure Rule 10.4(3) which were considered in private at the conclusion of the meeting, following distribution of Appendix 2 at the meeting, it was

RESOLVED –

- (a) That the disposal of all of Leeds City Council's share capital in Leeds Bradford International Airport Ltd as part of a 100% share disposal of the airport company to Bridgepoint be approved;

Draft minutes to be approved at the meeting
to be held on Wednesday, 16th May, 2007

- (b) That authorisation be given to the Chief Executive or the Chief Asset Management Officer as the nominated deputy, to complete the transaction in the form outlined in the exempt appendices to the report;
- (c) That £7,500,000 from the disposal be placed in an escrow account to meet the potential cost of the pension deficit of Leeds Bradford International Airport Ltd once it leaves the West Yorkshire Pension Fund;
- (d) That the same escrow account shall meet the potential cost of the pension deficit for security staff transferred under TUPE to Group 4 on the basis set out in the exempt Appendix 1;
- (e) That Leeds City Council, in conjunction with the other shareholders, acts as one of the 'guarantors' underwriting any further pension deficit shortfall in proportion to its previous shareholding and meets the other pension obligations outlined in paragraph 3.2.5 of the report.
- (f) That the requirement for all non-executive directors of the airport company to step down as part of the transaction process be noted and that full Council be recommended to authorise the Chief Executive to effect the removal of the non-executive directors before the transaction completes.
- (g) That a special share be held by this Council in conjunction with the other four West Yorkshire council's for the purposes outlined in the report.
- (h) To note that, in line with previous delegations, the land held by the five shareholders identified in pink on Plan A is to be sold to the airport company as part of the disposal transaction with overage provision.
- (i) To note that, in line with previous delegations, the end purchaser will be offered a two year option to purchase the land shown pink on Plan B at a value of £2,973,000 plus RPI with overage provision.
- (j) To authorise the Chief Asset Management Officer to approve the terms of a legal agreement to be entered into with the other shareholders to determine how the apportionment of the residual liabilities will be managed after the signing of the share purchase agreement.
- (k) That in the event that the preferred bidder changes their bid in a manner which results in the reserve bidder's bid being more economically advantageous, authority be delegated to the Chief Executive, with the concurrence of the Leader of the Council, to take any action necessary to secure completion of the disposal in the circumstances outlined in paragraph 4.3 of Appendix 1 of the report.
- (l) That the communication proposals outlined in the report be approved.

- (m) That Martin Farrington and Paul Brook of the Development Department and other officers involved in progressing this disposal be thanked for their work in this respect.

(Councillor Harker declared a personal interest in this matter as a member of the West Yorkshire Pension Fund Joint Advisory Group).

DATE OF PUBLICATION 5TH APRIL 2007
LAST DATE FOR CALL IN 17TH APRIL 2007

(Scrutiny Support will notify Directors of any items Called In by 12.00 noon on 18th April 2007).

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