

Inquiry to Review Consultation Processes**Terms of Reference****1.0 Introduction**

- 1.1 The Scrutiny Board on 16th October 2007 agreed to consider undertaking an inquiry to review the consultation processes in the City Development Department to ensure that they are fit for purpose.
- 1.2 The Scrutiny Board requested draft terms of reference to be drawn up to assist the Board determine if it wished to proceed with such an inquiry.
- 1.3 The Scrutiny Board on 20th November 2007 considered requests for scrutiny in respect to former school sites Miles Hill and Royal Park. As a consequence the Board amended the proposed terms of reference for this inquiry to include looking at consultation processes applied by Education Leeds, City Development and relevant service departments when school buildings and land are declared surplus to requirements.
- 1.4 The Scrutiny Board established a Working Group comprising of Councillors Pryke, Ewens, Driver, Selby and R Procter. to look at the specific consultation processes involving the former Miles Hill and Royal Park Schools and for it to report back to this Board.
- 1.5 The choice of this topic accords with priorities in the Council's Vision for Leeds namely to have an effective communications system connecting people, goods and ideas under the theme Enterprise and the Economy.

2.0 Scope of the inquiry

- 2.1 The purpose of the Inquiry is to make an assessment of and, where appropriate, make recommendations on the effectiveness of specific consultation processes and determine if they are fit for purpose.
- 2.2 The City Development Department each year undertakes hundreds of statutory and voluntary consultations on a wide range of topics. In order for the Board to undertake useful scrutiny it is proposed that two specific case studies are selected for review, one of which involves Education Leeds and relevant sponsoring departments.
- 2.3 The inquiry on the case studies will focus on the following areas:
 - Has the reason for the consultation been explained adequately to the client and or service user?
 - Has the process of consultation been applied fairly and effectively?
 - Has the consultation followed either national or local processes?

- Has the consultation resulted in the City Development Department, Education Leeds or sponsoring department incorporating a change to a policy, procedure or process?
- Has the timescale allowed for consultation been sufficient?
- Has adequate resources been made available to ensure progress following consultation?
- Has the consultation not only been effective but proportionate?

3.0 Comments of the relevant Director and Executive Board Member

- 3.1 The Director of City Development and the relevant Executive Board Member has been requested to comment on these terms of reference.

4.0 Timetable for the Inquiry

- 4.1 The inquiry will take place between January and March 2008.
- 4.2 It is envisaged that the inquiry will take place over four sessions. The inquiry will conclude with the publication of a formal report setting out the board's conclusions and recommendations in April 2008.

5.0 Submission of evidence

- 5.1 The following evidence will be considered by the Board:

5.2 Session One - 22nd January 2008

Case Study 1 - School buildings & land declared surplus to requirements.

To consider evidence from Education Leeds, City Development Department and Environment and Neighbourhoods Department as the service department consulting with the public and acting as the "sponsoring department" in respect to the former Miles Hill and Royal Park school sites

To receive evidence from the Board's Working Group.

To hear from clients who contributed to the consultation as appropriate.

5.3 Session Two - 19th February 2008

Case Study 2 - Aire Valley Area Action Plan

To consider any further issues raised under Session 1.

To consider evidence from the City Development Department on the consultation with regard to this case.

To hear from clients who contributed to the consultation.

5.4 Session Three - 13th March 2008

To consider any further issues raised under Session 2.

To consider best practice from other Local Authorities.

To consider the board's emerging conclusions and recommendations to inform the production of the final inquiry report.

5.4 Session Four - 22nd April 2008

To consider the Board's final report and recommendations

6.0 Witnesses

6.1 The following witnesses have been identified as possible contributors to the Inquiry:

- Director of City Development
- Chief Executive, Education Leeds
- Relevant officers from City Development, Education Leeds, Environment and Neighbourhoods Department
- Relevant officers from other Service Departments if required
- Representative from the Chief Executive's Department
- Individuals who were consulted by Education Leeds, City Development Department or relevant Service Department

7.0 Monitoring Arrangements

7.1 Following the completion of the scrutiny inquiry and the publication of the final inquiry report and recommendations, the implementation of the agreed recommendations will be monitored.

7.2 The final inquiry report will include information on the detailed arrangements for monitoring the implementation of recommendations.

8.0 Measures of success

8.1 It is important to consider how the Board will deem whether its inquiry has been successful in making a difference to local people. Some measures of success may be obvious at the initial stages of an inquiry and can be included in these terms of reference. Other measures of success may become apparent as the inquiry progresses and discussions take place.

8.2 The Board will look to publish practical recommendations.