



Report of the Head of Scrutiny and Member Development

Scrutiny Board (Children's Services)

Date: 15 October 2009

Subject: Scrutiny Inquiry – The impact of population growth on children's services in Leeds

Electoral Wards Affected:

Specific Implications For:

Ethnic minorities

Women

Disabled people

Narrowing the Gap

1.0 Introduction

1.1 At the board's meeting in June, members agreed to carry out an inquiry into the impact of population growth on children's services in Leeds, as one of their major pieces of work this year. A copy of the agreed terms of reference is attached as Appendix 1.

1.2 The first formal session of the inquiry was scheduled for October. This session will focus on the first two objectives of the inquiry:

how good is our information and how do we make it better?

how well do we use the information, and how can we improve?

The following information was requested:

- An outline of what sources of population information are currently available to children's services management in predicting future demand for services
- Current population growth data, including any analysis of particular trends or patterns within the data
- How services use population information to predict demand and plan the supply of services
- National contributions on best practice in the collection and use of timely and accurate population data

- 1.3 Relevant officers will be at the meeting to respond to members' questions and comments. In addition representatives from a number of external organisations have agreed to attend the Board and share their expertise in this area:
- Guy Goodwin - Director, Population, Health & Regional Analysis, Office for National Statistics
 - Professor Tim Allen - Programme Director: Analysis and Research, Local Government Association
 - Peter Boden - Centre for Spatial Analysis and Policy, School of Geography, University of Leeds
- 1.4 The attached reports set out the evidence requested in the terms of reference:
- Office for National Statistics – Appendix 2
 - Local Government Association – Appendix 3
 - School of Geography, University of Leeds – Appendix 4
 - Education Leeds on behalf of Children's Services – Appendix 5
 - Leeds City Council Business Transformation Team – Appendix 6
- 1.5 In addition, the following documents are provided for reference:
- Audit Commission briefing – Is there something I should know? – Appendix 7
 - City and County of Swansea – 'Everybody Counts!' Scrutiny report – Appendix 8
- 1.6 The next session of the inquiry is scheduled for the Board's next meeting on 12 November 2009, as set out in the terms of reference.

2.0 Recommendation

- 2.1 The board is requested to consider the issues raised by this session of the inquiry.

Background papers

None