



## SCRUTINY BOARD (CHILDREN'S SERVICES)

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Meeting to be held in Civic Hall, Leeds on  
Thursday, 11th June, 2009 at 9.45 am

*(A pre-meeting will take place for ALL Members of the Board at 9.15 a.m.)*

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### MEMBERSHIP

#### **Councillors**

- B Cleasby - Horsforth;  
J Dowson - Chapel Allerton;  
G Driver - Middleton Park;  
R D Feldman - Alwoodley;  
B Gettings - Morley North;  
W Hyde (Chair) - Temple Newsam;  
G Kirkland - Otley and Yeadon;  
B Lancaster - Moortown;  
K Renshaw - Ardsley and Robin Hood;  
B Selby - Killingbeck and Seacroft;  
E Taylor - Chapel Allerton;

#### Co-opted Members (Voting) \*

- \* Mr E A Britten - Church Representative (Catholic)  
\* Prof P H J H Gosden - Church Representative (Church of England)  
Mr B Wanyonyi - Parent Governor Representative (Secondary)  
Mr I Falkingham - Parent Governor Representative (Special)  
Mrs S Knights - Parent Governor Representative (Primary)

#### Co-opted Members (Non-Voting) \*

- \* Ms C Johnson - Teacher Representative  
\* Ms C Foote - Teacher Representative  
\* Mrs S Hutchinson - Early Years Development and Childcare Partnership  
\* Ms J Morris-Boam - Leeds VOICE Children and Young People Services  
Forum Representative  
\* Ms T Kayani - Leeds Youth Work Partnership Representative

\* Subject to confirmation by the Scrutiny Board – please refer to agenda item 7.

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# A G E N D A

Item No	Ward/Equal Opportunities	Item Not Open		Page No
1			<p><b>APPEALS AGAINST REFUSAL OF INSPECTION OF DOCUMENTS</b></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> <p>(*In accordance with Procedure Rule 25, written notice of an appeal must be received by the Chief Democratic Services Officer at least 24 hours before the meeting.)</p>	
2			<p><b>EXEMPT INFORMATION - POSSIBLE EXCLUSION OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC</b></p> <p>1 To highlight reports or appendices which officers have identified as containing exempt information, and where officers consider that the public interest in maintaining the exemption outweighs the public interest in disclosing the information, for the reasons outlined in the report.</p> <p>2 To consider whether or not to accept the officers recommendation in respect of the above information.</p> <p>3 If so, to formally pass the following resolution:-</p> <p><b>RESOLVED –</b> That the press and public be excluded from the meeting during consideration of the following parts of the agenda designated as containing exempt information 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 press and public were present there would be disclosure to them of exempt information, as follows:-</p> <p><b>No exempt items or information have been identified on this agenda.</b></p>	

Item No	Ward/Equal Opportunities	Item Not Open		Page No
3			<p><b>LATE ITEMS</b></p> <p>To identify items which have been admitted to the agenda by the Chair for consideration.</p> <p>(The special circumstance shall be specified in the minutes.)</p>	
4			<p><b>DECLARATION OF INTERESTS</b></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 12 of the Members' Code of Conduct.</p>	
5			<p><b>APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE</b></p> <p>To receive any apologies for absence.</p>	
6			<p><b>MINUTES - 7TH MAY 2009</b></p> <p>To confirm as a correct record the minutes of the meeting held on 7<sup>th</sup> May 2009.</p>	1 - 6
7			<p><b>APPOINTMENT OF CO-OPTED MEMBERS</b></p> <p>To receive and consider a report from the Head of Scrutiny and Member Development which seeks Members' approval of co-options to the Scrutiny Board.</p>	7 - 10
8			<p><b>CONSTITUTIONAL AMENDMENTS</b></p> <p>To receive and consider a report from the Head of Scrutiny and Member Development on recent amendments to the Council's Constitution, as agreed by Council on 21 May 2009, which directly relate to and/or impact on the work of the Scrutiny Board.</p>	11 - 32

Item No	Ward/Equal Opportunities	Item Not Open		Page No
9			<p><b>INPUT TO THE WORK PROGRAMME 2009/10 - SOURCES OF WORK AND ESTABLISHING THE BOARD'S PRIORITIES</b></p> <p>(a) To hear from the Director of Children's Services and Executive Board Member with portfolio responsibility for Children's Services on current issues, and to ask questions;</p> <p>(b) To consider the attached report of the Head of Scrutiny and Member Development providing information to assist the Board to develop its work programme for 2009/10.</p>	33 - 56
10			<p><b>CORPORATE GOVERNANCE AND AUDIT COMMITTEE REFERRAL</b></p> <p>To receive and consider a report from the Head of Scrutiny and Member Development which invites the Board to consider a referral for Scrutiny received from the Corporate Governance and Audit Committee regarding their concerns following the outcomes of the annual audit and inspection letter 2007/2008 for Leeds City Council relating to Children and Young People.</p>	57 - 86
11			<p><b>KPMG - SCRUTINY REVIEW - MAY 2009</b></p> <p>To receive and consider a report from the Head of Scrutiny and Member Development which presents the findings of the recent KPMG external audit review of the Scrutiny function in Leeds.</p>	87 - 126
12			<p><b>EXECUTIVE BOARD REFERRAL</b></p> <p>To receive and consider a report from the Head of Scrutiny and Member Development which invites the Board to consider a referral for Scrutiny received from the Executive Board on the role of the voluntary, community and faith sector (VCFS) in council led community engagement.</p>	127 - 170

Item No	Ward/Equal Opportunities	Item Not Open		Page No
13			<p><b>DETERMINING THE WORK PROGRAMME FOR 2009/10</b></p> <p>To consider the Board's formal conclusions and recommendations arising from consideration of agenda item 9, Input to the Work Programme 2009/10.</p>	171 - 180
14			<p><b>DRAFT REPORT - EDUCATION STANDARDS - ENTERING THE EDUCATION SYSTEM</b></p> <p>To receive and consider a report from the Head of Scrutiny and Member Development which presents the draft report of the Board's inquiry on young children entering the formal education system for the first time.</p>	181 - 202
15			<p><b>DATES OF FUTURE MEETINGS</b></p> <p>To note the following proposed dates of future meetings:-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Thursday 11<sup>th</sup> June, 2009</li> <li>• Thursday 9<sup>th</sup> July, 2009</li> <li>• Thursday 17<sup>th</sup> September, 2009</li> <li>• Thursday 15<sup>th</sup> October, 2009</li> <li>• Thursday 12<sup>th</sup> November, 2009</li> <li>• Thursday 10<sup>th</sup> December, 2009</li> <li>• Thursday 28<sup>th</sup> January, 2010</li> <li>• Thursday 25<sup>th</sup> February, 2010</li> <li>• Thursday 25<sup>th</sup> March, 2010</li> <li>• Thursday 22<sup>nd</sup> April, 2010.</li> </ul>	

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# Agenda Item 6

## SCRUTINY BOARD (CHILDREN'S SERVICES)

THURSDAY, 7TH MAY, 2009

**PRESENT:** Councillor W Hyde in the Chair

Councillors G Driver, J Elliott, R D Feldman,  
B Lancaster, J McKenna, V Morgan, K Renshaw,  
E Taylor and C Townsley

### CO-OPTED MEMBERS (VOTING):

Mr E A Britten	- Church Representative (Catholic)
Mr I Falkingham	- Parent Governor Representative (Special)
Prof P H J H Gosden	- Church Representative (Church of England)
Mr B Wanyonyi	- Parent Governor Representative (Secondary)

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

Ms C Foote	- Teacher Representative
Mrs S Hutchinson	- Early Years Development & Childcare Partnership Representative
Ms C Johnson	- Teacher Representative
Ms J Morris-Boam	- Leeds Voice Children and Young People Services Forum Representative
Ms T Kayani	- Leeds Youth Work Partnership

### 118 Chair's Opening Remarks

The Chair welcomed all in attendance to the final Scrutiny Board (Children's Services) meeting of the municipal year (2008/2009). He also thanked Members and officers for their contribution to the Board's work over the last year.

### 119 Late Items

The Chair admitted to the agenda the notes of the working group visits on attendance and 14-19 education, which were to be considered under agenda items 10 and 11, as supplementary information. The working group visits had only recently been completed and the notes were not available at the time of agenda despatch (Minute Nos. 126 and 127 refer).

### 120 Declaration of Interests

Councillor W Hyde declared a personal interest in relation to agenda item 7, Formal Response to Scrutiny Recommendations – Multi-Agency Support

Team (MAST), due to one of his relatives being a Governor at a school in East Leeds (Minute No. 123 refers).

Councillor Morgan declared a personal interest in relation to agenda item 7, Formal Response to Scrutiny Recommendations – Multi-Agency Support Team (MAST), in her capacity as LEA Governor at Our Lady Of Good Counsel Primary School and Grange Farm Primary School. (Minute No. 123 refers).

Ms Foote declared a personal interest in relation to agenda item 7, Formal Response to Scrutiny Recommendations – Multi-Agency Support Team (MAST), due to her involvement with the MAST team as an officer of NASUWT. (Minute No. 123 refers).

A further declaration of interest was made at a later point in the meeting (Minute No. 124 refers).

#### **121 Apologies for Absence**

An apology for absence was submitted on behalf of Councillor Cleasby.

#### **122 Minutes - 1st April 2009**

**RESOLVED** – That the minutes of the meeting held on 1<sup>st</sup> April 2009 be confirmed as a correct record.

#### **123 Formal Response to Scrutiny Recommendations - Multi-Agency Support Team (MAST)**

The Head of Scrutiny and Member Development submitted a report, attaching the Board's final scrutiny report on action taken by children's services around the MAST (appendix 1 refers).

The following information was appended to the report:-

- Report of the Director of Children's Services on MAST – Response to the Recommendations and Position Update;
- MAST Scrutiny Inquiry Report;
- Summary table of activity relevant to each of the recommendations; and
- Key Features of the Re'new Project in East Leeds.

The Chair welcomed the following officers to the meeting to present the report and respond to Members' questions and comments:-

- Rosemary Archer, Director of Children's Services; and
- Ken Morton, Locality Enabler, Children's Services.



The Board was informed that all recommendations contained within the Scrutiny Inquiry Report had been accepted by the Board. An update on progress against the recommendations was provided.

In brief summary, the main areas of discussion were:-

- The need for Elected Members to be involved at all stages of the process.
- The need to ensure that HR processes were being dealt with.
- Clarification about funding arrangements. It was reported that an overall resource for East Leeds was now in place.
- The benefits of rolling out the MAST provision. It was advised that integrated services were being developed to support all individual needs.
- The need to develop the Leadership Challenge approach across Leeds.

#### **RESOLVED –**

- (a) That the draft inquiry report and recommendations arising from this inquiry be approved; and
- (b) That progress continues to be monitored in the quarterly recommendation tracking report.

(Councillor J McKenna joined the meeting at 9.58 am, during the consideration of this item).

#### **124 Building Brighter Futures: The Leeds Children and Young People's Plan 2009-14**

Further to Minute No. 110 of the meeting held on 1<sup>st</sup> April 2009, the Director of Children's Services submitted a report which provided the Board with an opportunity to comment on the near final version of the CYPP prior to its submission to the Council's Executive Board and full Council in June 2009.

The following officers attended the meeting and responded to Members' questions and comments:-

- Rosemary Archer, Director of Children's Services; and
- Barbara Newton, Strategic Leader – Partnership and Participation.

The key areas of discussion were:-

- Members welcomed the responses to their comments on the previous draft.
- The need to focus on 14-19 provision. Members referred to learning from the scrutiny working group's recent visit to Sheffield Council.
- Issues around narrowing the gap and the need for greater acknowledgement of the significance of the impact of child poverty.
- Concern about the changing financial environment testing the capacity to deliver targets.

- Concern that reducing exclusions was not a worthwhile target - it was felt that there was a greater need to focus on reducing the causes of exclusion.
- Maintaining an overview of key performance areas through the work of the Integrated Strategic Commissioning Board (ISCB).
- Developing young people's skills, particularly through mentoring programmes.
- Extending the use of the Common Assessment Framework (CAF), and the role and responsibilities of the lead professional.
- Democratic involvement and the need for greater emphasis on Member involvement at an early stage, including policy development. It was advised that work was being undertaken at a local level through Area Committees and establishing Children's Champions.

**RESOLVED** – That subject to comments raised at the meeting, the CYPP 2009-14, be approved by the Scrutiny Board (Children's Services) prior to its final submission to Executive Board and full Council.

(Councillor Lancaster declared a personal interest in this item, in her capacity as LEA Governor (Vice Chair) at Carr Manor High School).

(Ms C Johnson joined the meeting at 10.34 am, during the consideration of this item).

## **125 Youth Service user and non-user surveys 2009**

The Director of Children's Services submitted a report which updated the Board on user consultation with young people.

The Chair welcomed to the meeting, John Paxton, Head of Integrated Youth Support Services to update the Board on consultation with users and non-users of youth service provision. It was reported that the national target for young people using the service for 2008/09 was 25%, which equated to 18,108 young people in Leeds. The actual figure achieved was 22,025, which the Board acknowledged was a positive achievement.

In response to Members' questions and comments, the main areas of discussion were:-

- Recruitment of Youth Workers - it was reported that all entry-level youth worker posts had been filled.
- Concern about the perceived lack of youth service provision in some areas. It was acknowledged that more needed to be done to publicise the work of the youth service to Elected Members.
- Concern that youth service volunteers had to fund the administrative fee for their own CRB checks. It was agreed to discuss the issue at the Leeds Youth Work Partnership.
- Concern about the number of young people not using the service. It was advised that the new performance management system recorded young people's involvement year on year.

**RESOLVED** – That the results of the two surveys be received at a future Board meeting.

## **126 Scrutiny Inquiry - Attendance**

The Head of Scrutiny and Member Development submitted a report which requested the Board to consider the working group's conclusions on school attendance.

The notes of the working group meeting held on 21<sup>st</sup> April 2009 were circulated at the meeting for the Board's consideration.

Kate Arscott, Principal Scrutiny Adviser, presented the report and responded to Members' questions and comments. It was agreed that confirmation of the figures contained within the working group notes would be forwarded to Scrutiny Board Members for their information.

In brief summary, the main areas of discussion were:-

- Concern about the percentage of pupils that had an absence rate of at least 20%.
- The raising of the school leaving age and the subsequent need to monitor the attendance of the post 16 age group.

**RESOLVED** – That the working groups' conclusions, be noted.

## **127 Scrutiny Inquiry - 14-19 Education Review**

Further to Minute No. 49 of the meeting held on 13<sup>th</sup> November 2008, the Head of Scrutiny and Member Development submitted a report which requested the Board to consider the working group's conclusions to date on the 14-19 education review.

The notes of the working group meeting held on 21<sup>st</sup> April 2009 were circulated at the meeting for the Board's consideration.

Kate Arscott, Principal Scrutiny Adviser, presented the report and responded to Members' questions and comments. It was reported that a working group meeting with employers' representatives was being organised and the final session of the Inquiry would take place in the new municipal year.

In brief summary, the main areas of discussion were:-

- Members reported on the recent visit to Sheffield Council to find out about their approach to 14-19 provision. One Member commented that Sheffield had benefited from being able to develop a centralised approach.
- In relation to the working group meeting, one Member expressed concern about the different funding arrangements for schools and colleges.
- One Member highlighted the need to develop closer links with the city's universities in terms of predicting future employment and skills needs.

- Members reported on the need to develop young people's basic employability skills.
- Members discussed inviting a range of employers' representatives to the working group meeting.

**RESOLVED** – That the working groups' conclusions to date be noted.

(Councillor Elliott left the meeting at 12.02 pm, during the consideration of this item).

## **128 Annual Report 2008/2009**

The Head of Scrutiny and Member Development submitted a report presenting the Board's contribution to the Annual Scrutiny Report 2008/09. Members were advised that subject to the draft early years report and recommendations together with some additional photos to be inserted, the Annual Scrutiny Report 2008/09 was complete.

**RESOLVED** – That the Board's contribution to the Annual Scrutiny Report 2008/09 be approved.

## **129 Work Programme**

A report was submitted by the Head of Scrutiny and Member Development, attaching the Board's work programme for Members' consideration. The Principal Scrutiny Adviser reported that the work programme reflected work that it had not been possible to complete yet, some of which would roll forward into the new municipal year 2009/10.

Also appended to the report for Members' information was an extract from the Forward Plan of Key Decisions for the period 1<sup>st</sup> May to 31<sup>st</sup> August 2009, which related to the Board's remit, together with the minutes from the Executive Board meeting held on 1<sup>st</sup> April 2009.

**RESOLVED** – That the current position with regard to the work programme, which will be forwarded to the new Board for the 2009/10 municipal year, be noted.

## **130 Chair's Closing Remarks**

The Chair thanked Members and officers for their attendance throughout the year and the meeting concluded at 12.15 pm.



Originator: Steven Courtney

Tel: 247 4707

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**Report of the Head of Scrutiny and Member Development**

**Scrutiny Board: Children's Services**

**Date: 11 June 2009**

**Subject: Appointment of Co-opted Members**

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**Electoral Wards Affected:**

Ward Members consulted  
(referred to in report)

**Specific Implications For:**

Equality and Diversity

Community Cohesion

Narrowing the Gap

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**1.0 Purpose of the report**

1.1 The purpose of this report is to seek the Scrutiny Board's formal consideration for the appointment of co-opted members to the Board.

**2.0 Background**

2.1 For a number of years the Council's Constitution has made provision for the appointment of co-opted members to individual Scrutiny Boards. For those Scrutiny Boards where co-opted members have previously been appointed, such arrangements have tended to be reviewed on an annual basis, usually at the beginning of a new municipal year. However, the appointment of co-opted members has not been considered consistently across all Scrutiny Boards.

Leeds City Council Scrutiny Review (May 2009)

2.2 As part of their 2008/09 Audit and Inspection Plan, KPMG (the Council's external auditors) carried out a review of the Council's Overview and Scrutiny function. The outcome of that review is presented elsewhere on the agenda, however a specific aspect relates to the appointment of co-opted members to Scrutiny Boards.

2.3 The relevant extract and associated recommendation from the KPMG report is detailed below:

*Having attended Scrutiny meetings at LCC that had both co-opted Members on the Board and no co-opted Members there appeared to be a greater level of participation by all when the Boards contained co-opted Members. In addition the contribution made by the co-opted Members was very valuable as these Members were able to draw upon their experiences and provide a different perspective.*

*Currently the constitution of LCC does allow all Scrutiny Boards to have co-opted members it is just something that is not widely exercised. This is almost the opposite at Bristol City Council where there are a large number of Scrutiny Boards with co-opted Members. The Scrutiny Support Unit has however been proactive in this area and have recently taken a paper to the Scrutiny Advisory Group highlighting the benefits of having co-opted Members on Scrutiny Boards.*

### **Recommendation Six**

Each of the Scrutiny Boards should assess more formally whether co-opted Members should be invited to participate in their Board so to allow them to draw from the benefits of their involvement.

- 2.4 In response to this recommendation, it was agreed that each Scrutiny Board would be formally asked to consider the potential involvement of co-opted members throughout the year.

## **3.0 Arrangements for appointing co-opted members**

### General arrangements

- 3.1 It is widely recognised that in some circumstances, in particular where there is some specialist knowledge or skill, co-opted members can significantly aid the work Scrutiny Boards. This is currently reflected in Article 6 (Scrutiny Boards) of the Council's Constitution, which outlines the options available to Scrutiny Boards in relation to appointing co-opted members. In general terms, Scrutiny Boards can appoint:

- Up to five non-voting co-opted members for a term of office that does not go beyond the next Annual Meeting of Council ; and/or,
- Up to two non-voting co-opted members for a term of office that relates to the duration of a particular and specific scrutiny inquiry.

### Specific arrangements

- 3.2 In the majority of cases the appointment of co-opted members is optional and is determined by the relevant Scrutiny Board, however, there are some particular legislative exceptions. Such cases are also set out in Article 6 (Scrutiny Boards) of the Council's Constitution and summarised below:

#### *Education Representatives*

- 3.3 In addition to elected Members appointed by Council, the Local Government Act 2000 states that the relevant Scrutiny Board dealing with education matters shall include in its membership the following voting representatives in accordance with statutory requirements:
- One Church of England diocese representative<sup>1</sup>
  - One Roman Catholic diocese representative<sup>1</sup>
  - Three parent governor representatives<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Article 6 states this appointment shall be for a term of office that does not go beyond the next Annual Meeting of Council

<sup>2</sup> Article 6 states these appointments shall be for a four-year term of office

Where the Scrutiny Board deals with other non-educational matters the co-opted members may participate in any discussion but shall not be entitled to vote on those matters.

### *Crime and Disorder Representatives*

- 3.4 In accordance with the requirements of the Police and Justice Act 2006, the Council has designated the Scrutiny Board (Environment and Neighbourhoods) to act as the Council's crime and disorder committee.
- 3.5 The overall implications of this designation are detailed elsewhere on the agenda, however there are specific powers relating to the appointment of additional members detailed in Article 6. In this regard the Scrutiny Board (Environment and Neighbourhoods) may co-opt additional members to serve on the Board, providing they are:
- An employee, officer or member of a responsible authority<sup>3</sup> or of a co-operating person or body<sup>4</sup>; and,
  - Not an Executive Member
- 3.6 The Scrutiny Board (Environment and Neighbourhoods) may limit the co-opted member's participation to those matters where the Scrutiny Board is acting as the Council's crime and disorder committee.
- 3.7 As Leeds does not have a formal scheme to allow a co-opted member to have voting rights, any co-opted member will not have voting rights and the Board may withdraw the co-opted membership at any time.

## **4.0 Issue to consider when seeking to appoint co-opted members**

- 4.1 Currently, there is no overarching national guidance or criteria that should be considered when seeking to appoint co-opted members. As a result, there is a plethora of methods employed within Councils for the appointment of co-optees to Overview and Scrutiny Committees (Scrutiny Boards). For example, some Councils use "job descriptions", some carry out formal interviews and some advertise for co-optees in the local press, with individuals completing a simple application form which is then considered by Members.
- 4.2 In considering or seeking the appointment of co-opted members, Scrutiny Boards may find it useful to consider that co-opted members should:
- Add value to the work of the Scrutiny Board and/or specific inquiry, by having some specialist skill or knowledge
  - Be considered as representatives of wider groups of people. For example, service user representatives, voluntary or community groups etc.
  - Not be seen as a replacement to professional advice from officers;
  - Be mindful about the extent of any potential conflicts of interest;

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<sup>3</sup> These are the authorities responsible for crime and disorder strategies, as detailed in the Crime and Disorder Act 1998, Section 5. In Leeds, *Safer Leeds* is the city's Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnership, therefore the 'responsible authorities' are those bodies represented on the Safer Leeds Partnership Executive.

<sup>4</sup> People or bodies with whom the responsible authorities have a duty to co-operate as set out in the Police and Justice Act 2006, Section 19(2)(b).

- 4.3 Despite the lack of any national guidance, what is clear is that any process for appointing co-opted members should be open, effective and carried out in a manner which seeks to strengthen the work of Scrutiny Boards.
- 4.4 In addition, when considering the issue of co-opted members, Scrutiny Boards should also be mindful of the role of expert witnesses and seeking information / evidence from a variety of different sources to help fulfill the objectives of the work programme and/or a specific inquiry.

## **5.0 Scrutiny Board (Children's Services)**

5.1 As indicated at 3.3 above, the Children's Services Board is required to include in its membership the following voting representatives in accordance with statutory requirements:

- One Church of England diocese representative
- One Roman Catholic diocese representative
- Three parent governor representatives

5.2 The Church of England and Roman Catholic dioceses have nominated Professor Gosden and Mr Britten to continue as their respective representatives.

5.3 The current parent governor representatives are

- Mr Ben Wanyonyi (secondary) – term of office expires 23<sup>rd</sup> February 2013
- Mrs Sue Knights (primary) – term of office expires 25<sup>th</sup> June 2010
- Mr Ian Falkingham (special) - term of office expires 31<sup>st</sup> August 2011

5.4 During 2008/2009 Scrutiny Board (Children's Services) made the following non-voting co-opted appointments:

- Two teacher representatives – Ms Celia Foote and Ms Claire Johnson
- Early Years Development and Childcare Partnership – Mrs Sandra Hutchinson
- A representative of the Leeds Youth Work Partnership – Ms Taira Kayani
- A representative of Leeds Voice Children and Young People Services Forum – Ms Jeanette Morris-Boam

5.5 The nominating bodies have indicated that they would wish the same people to continue on the Board, should the Scrutiny Board decide to maintain the same range of co-opted appointments for 2009/10.

## **6.0 Recommendation**

6.1 In line with the options available outlined in this report, Members are asked to consider the appointment of co-opted members to the Scrutiny Board.

## **Background Papers**

- The Council's Constitution
- Police and Justice Act 2006
- KPMG Scrutiny Review May 2009



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## Report of the Head of Scrutiny and Member Development

**Scrutiny Board: Children's Services**

**Date: 11 June 2009**

**Subject: Constitutional Amendments**

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### Electoral Wards Affected:

Ward Members consulted  
(referred to in report)

### Specific Implications For:

Equality and Diversity

Community Cohesion

Narrowing the Gap

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## 1.0 Purpose of Report

1.1 This report provides the Board with information and guidance reflecting recent amendments to the Council's Constitution, as agreed by Council on 21 May 2009, which directly relate to and/or impact on the work of Scrutiny Boards.

## 2.0 Background

2.1 The Local Government Act 2000 introduced new models of governance and decision-making arrangements for local authorities in England and Wales. This included putting in place executive arrangements for decision-making through a smaller, more prominent, number of local Councillors (the Executive Board). Within the new arrangements, the overview and scrutiny function was established to hold the Executive Board to account for its decisions and to contribute to evidence-based policy development across the Council.

2.2 Through a number of legislative changes, for example the Health and Social Care Act 2001 which introduced local health scrutiny, the role and responsibilities of overview and scrutiny have expanded significantly; with the function now responsible for investigating the delivery of services provided by a wide range of public, private and third-sector partners.

2.3 This report seeks to reflect on recent legislative changes, their impact on the scrutiny function and the subsequent amendments to the Council's Constitution, through changes to both the Scrutiny Board Procedure Rules and supportive guidance notes.

### 3.0 Constitutional amendments

- 3.1 Two recent Acts of Parliament, namely the Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act 2007 and the Police and Justice Act 2006, have had a direct impact on the scrutiny function and required amendments to the Council's Constitution. Such amendments were agreed at the Council meeting in May 2009 and are summarised below.

#### Councillor Call for Action (CCfA) Provisions

- 3.2 The Local Government Act 2000 included provisions to allow Elected Members to raise matters for consideration by the Council's Scrutiny Boards. This was reflected in the Council's Constitution, Scrutiny Board Procedure Rule 12 which made provision for dealing with such requests.
- 3.3 To supplement and strengthen the provisions set out in the Local Government Act 2000, the Government recently enacted provisions at Section 119 of the Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act 2007. Referred to as 'Councillor Call for Action', these provisions give Councillors the opportunity to ask for discussions at Scrutiny Boards where *local* problems have arisen and where other methods of resolution have been exhausted.
- 3.4 Specific guidance on the process for administering a CCfA is set out in Annex 1 of the attached Guidance Note: *Requests for Scrutiny, including Councillor Call for Action (CCfA), Local Crime and Disorder Matters, and Health and Social Care Matters*.

#### Arrangements for the Scrutiny of Crime and Disorder Functions and Local Crime and Disorder Matters

- 3.5 The Police and Justice Act 2006 extends the remit of local authorities to scrutinise crime and disorder functions<sup>1</sup>, with Part 3 of the Act stating that every local authority shall ensure it has a 'Crime and Disorder Committee' to fulfill this role. At the Council meeting in May 2009, the Environment and Neighbourhoods Scrutiny Board was assigned to undertake this role.
- 3.6 Overall, in its capacity as a crime and disorder committee, the Scrutiny Board (Environment and Neighbourhoods) has powers to:
- Review or scrutinise decisions made (or action taken), in connection with the discharge of crime and disorder functions by the 'responsible authorities'<sup>2</sup>;
  - Review or scrutinise any Member referred local crime and disorder matter;
  - Make reports and/or recommendations to the Council or the Executive;
  - Call an officer from a responsible authority to attend its meetings in order to answer questions or otherwise to provide information and to respond to reports or recommendations made by the Scrutiny Board;
  - Co-opt additional members to serve on the committee, either with or without voting rights.<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Set out in Sections 19, 20 and 21 of the Police and Justice Act 2006

<sup>2</sup> These are the authorities responsible for crime and disorder strategies, as detailed in the Crime and Disorder Act 1998, Section 5. In Leeds, *Safer Leeds* is the city's Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnership, therefore the 'responsible authorities' are those bodies represented on the Safer Leeds Partnership Executive

<sup>3</sup> Details are set out in Article 6 (Scrutiny Boards: Co-opted Members)

These additional powers are reflected in the revised terms of reference for the Scrutiny Board (Environment and Neighbourhoods).

- 3.7 Alongside the additional scrutiny powers, in its capacity as the Council's crime and disorder committee, the Scrutiny Board (Environment and Neighbourhoods) *must* meet at least once each year to fulfill its role in relation to the responsible authorities.
- 3.8 The Police and Justice Act 2006 also makes provision for elected members to refer local crime and disorder matters to the Council's designated Crime and Disorder Committee.
- 3.9 For this purpose, local crime and disorder matters should be considered to encompass all community safety issues that affect all or part of the ward for which the member is elected or any person who lives or works in that area, including:
- Antisocial behaviour;
  - Other behaviour adversely affecting the local environment;
  - The misuse of drugs, alcohol or other substances
- 3.10 While the Police and Justice Act 2006 clearly provides separate provision for the referral of local crime and disorder matters, in practice the principles and processes involved are essentially the same as for any Councillor Call for Action (CCfA) referral. However any crime and disorder referrals will be considered by the Scrutiny Board (Environment and Neighbourhoods), in its capacity as the Council's crime and disorder committee.
- 3.11 Specific guidance on the process for administering a *Local Crime and Disorder referral* is set out in Annex 2 of the attached Guidance Note: *Requests for Scrutiny, including Councillor Call for Action (CCfA), Local Crime and Disorder Matters, and Health and Social Care Matters*.

#### Local Involvement Networks (LINKS)

- 3.12 The Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act 2007 gave a duty to all 150 local authorities in England with social services responsibilities, to enable the formation of a Local Involvement Network (LINK), to act as the successor to the Patient and Public Involvement Forums (PPIF) but with an extended remit covering social care.
- 3.13 Under provisions in the Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act 2007, the local LINK has the right to refer both health and social care matters to the relevant Scrutiny Board. In turn, this places responsibility on the appropriate Scrutiny Board to acknowledge any such referrals and keep the LINK informed about what actions, if any, will be taken.
- 3.14 Specific guidance on the process for administering a *Health and Social Care referral* is set out in Annex 3 of the attached Guidance Note: *Requests for Scrutiny, including Councillor Call for Action (CCfA), Local Crime and Disorder Matters, and Health and Social Care Matters*.

## Responding to inquiry reports and recommendations

- 3.15 The Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act 2007 also places a duty on the Council or Executive to consider and respond to any Scrutiny Board report and/or recommendations within two months of receipt of the report/recommendations. In referring any report / recommendations, a Scrutiny Board can require the Council or Executive to:
- Consider its report or recommendations;
  - Respond, outlining any proposed action;
  - Publish the response (if the Scrutiny Board has published its report and/or recommendations);
  - Provide a copy of the response to the referring Member, where the matter originated from a “Councillor Call for Action”.
- 3.16 Where a Scrutiny Board sends its report or recommendations to another body, the body in question will also be asked to send its response to the Scrutiny Board within two months<sup>4</sup>, setting out:
- The views of the body
  - Details of any action already taken in response to the recommendations;
  - Proposed action and timescales; or
  - Any reasons for inaction.

## **4.0 Other legislative changes**

### Scrutiny of Partners

- 4.1 Since its inception, it has been widely regarded as good practice for Scrutiny Boards to consider evidence/information from a variety of sources, including partners and/or other outside organisations. The ability for Scrutiny Boards to require information from some outside organisations (relevant partners) is already covered in other legislation (i.e. NHS Act 2006 at Section 44 relating to Local NHS bodies for Health Scrutiny and section 20(5) of the Police and Justice Act 2006 for Crime and Disorder issues). However, with Scrutiny Boards having limited powers to require outside bodies to provide information, any requests for information have tended to be reliant on the cooperation or good will of the organisation involved.
- 4.2 However, Section 121 of the Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act 2007 places a requirement on certain partner organisations<sup>5</sup> to provide information to a relevant scrutiny committee when requested to do so.
- 4.3 While the information will relate to the partner’s responsibility for the delivery of LAA improvement targets, the Secretary of State has still to make regulations covering exactly what information relevant partner authorities must provide, and/or may not disclose to Scrutiny Boards. Clarity is also required on a number of issues including timescales and whether partners will be compelled to attend Scrutiny Board meetings or simply provide the information requested. Once issued, such regulations are likely

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<sup>4</sup> For NHS bodies this time limit is 28 days (the Local Authority (Overview and Scrutiny Committee Health Scrutiny Functions) Regulations 2002. Where a Scrutiny Board has sent a report to a partnership the partnership is not required under these Rules to provide a response. Any partnership not otherwise required to provide a response will be invited to do so.

<sup>5</sup> Set out in Part 5, Chapter 1 (Section 104).

to require further amendment(s) to the Council's Constitution and associated guidance notes.

## **5.0 Recommendations**

- 5.1 In fulfilling the role and function of the Scrutiny Board, Members are requested to note the amendments to the Council's Constitution outlined in the report.
- 5.2 Members are also requested to note the likely changes resulting from the Secretary of State regulations regarding the provision of information from partner authorities.

## **Background Papers**

- The Council's Constitution
- Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act 2007
- Police and Justice Act 2006

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## GUIDANCE NOTE

### REQUESTS FOR SCRUTINY, INCLUDING COUNCILLOR CALL FOR ACTION (CCfA), LOCAL CRIME AND DISORDER MATTERS AND HEALTH AND SOCIAL CARE MATTERS

#### 1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1. The Local Government Act 2000 introduced new models of governance and decision-making arrangements for local authorities in England and Wales. This included putting in place executive arrangements for decision-making through a smaller, more prominent, number of local councillors (the Executive Board). The overview and scrutiny function was established to hold the Executive Board to account for its decisions and to contribute to evidence-based policy development in the council.
- 1.2. In recent years, the role and responsibilities of overview and scrutiny have expanded significantly, with the function now responsible for investigating the delivery of services provided by a wide range of public, private and third-sector partners. Scrutiny's unique remit and enhanced public profile means that it can be the focus of many requests and suggestions for detailed investigations/inquiries.
- 1.3. Currently, there are a number of avenues for making a request for scrutiny, some of which are specifically set out in legislation. The Council's Constitution, through its Scrutiny Board Procedure Rules, makes provision for dealing with requests for scrutiny from a number of different sources and/or relating to different areas, including:
  - The Executive or Council;
  - Members of a Scrutiny Board;
  - Councillor Calls for Action (CCfA);
  - Local Crime and Disorder Matters;
  - Health and Social Care Matters;
  - Other sources, such as individual Members of Council, community groups and individual members of the public.
- 1.4. This guidance note seeks to provide general advice for Scrutiny Boards and Officers dealing with requests for scrutiny, along with more specific advice on:
  - Councillor Calls for Action (CCfA)<sup>1</sup>;
  - Local Crime and Disorder Matters<sup>2</sup>;
  - Health and Social Care Matters;

#### 2. BACKGROUND

- 2.1. Scrutiny's unique remit means that it is often in an excellent position to examine the links between organisations and see where working collaboratively could deliver enhanced services for local people. As such, Scrutiny Boards are often well placed to:
  - Use a variety of tools to identify areas for review;

<sup>1</sup> As set out in Section 119 of the Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act 2007

<sup>2</sup> As set out in Section 19 of the Police and Criminal Justice Act 2006

- Obtain all the information required to identify any shortcomings in specific areas;
  - Discuss matters of concern with those both in receipt of services and those responsible for service delivery;
  - Produce reports and make appropriate recommendations for improvement.
- 2.2. As such, where areas for improvement have been identified and/or where matters remain unresolved, the ability to give an issue wider consideration by referring it to one or more of the Council's Scrutiny Boards should be regarded as a useful additional tool.

### **3. REQUESTS FOR SCRUTINY**

#### General requests for scrutiny

- 3.1. Requests for scrutiny can emerge from a variety of sources and/or relate to a range of different areas (as set out in paragraph 1.3).
- 3.2. In broad terms, the Scrutiny Board Procedure Rules provide details of how requests for scrutiny from different sources should be administered. This can be summarised as follows:
- All requests for scrutiny received will be added to the agenda of the next ordinary meeting of the relevant Scrutiny Board;
  - Interested parties will be notified of the date, time and location of the Scrutiny Board meeting where a request for scrutiny will be considered;
  - At that meeting, the Scrutiny Board will determine whether or not to undertake a specific inquiry.
- 3.3. When deciding whether or not to undertake a scrutiny inquiry, a Scrutiny Board may usefully wish to consider and confirm whether:
- The matter raised relates The Board has considered a similar issue recently, and if so whether the circumstances and/or evidence has changed significantly.
  - The matter raised relates solely to an individual and is being or should be pursued via the Council's and/or other existing complaints procedure.
  - A similar or related issue is already included on the Board's current work programme, as it may be more appropriate to link the request for scrutiny to an existing work item.
  - The matter might more usefully be considered and referred to an alternative Scrutiny Board (i.e. as part of another inquiry and/or Scrutiny Board work programme).
  - The matter raised is of sufficient significance and has the potential for scrutiny to produce realistic recommendations that could be implemented and lead to tangible improvements.
- 3.4. Where a Scrutiny Board is minded to undertake an inquiry as a result of a request for scrutiny, the Scrutiny Board will also consider:
- How the request meets the inquiry selection criteria;



- The impact on the Board's current work programme;
  - The time available to undertake an inquiry; and,
  - The level of resources required to carry out the work.
- 3.5. The decision whether or not to further investigate matters raised by a request for scrutiny is the sole responsibility of the Scrutiny Board. As such, any decision in this regard is final and there is no right of appeal.
- 3.6. Notification of the Scrutiny Board's decision (i.e. whether or not to investigate the matter(s) raised) will be provided based on the source of the original request, as follows:
- The Executive or Council – a detailed minute of the Scrutiny Board decision;
  - Members of a Scrutiny Board – a detailed minute of the Scrutiny Board decision;
  - Individual Members of Council – a detailed minute of the Scrutiny Board decision, followed by a letter on behalf of the Scrutiny Board.
  - Community groups and individual members of the public – a detailed minute of the Scrutiny Board decision, followed by a letter on behalf of the Scrutiny Board.
- 3.7. Where a Scrutiny Board decides not to investigate the matter(s) raised, the notification provided will include the reason(s) for that decision.
- 3.8. Where a Scrutiny Board decides to investigate the matter(s) raised, the notification provided will include an outline of the agreed actions with an indicative timetable. Notification of any significant deviation from this timetable will subsequently be provided.
- 3.9. A copy of any final report agreed by the Scrutiny Board and/or any recommendations made to the Council or the Executive Board will be made publically available and provided to the relevant parties as soon as practicable<sup>3</sup>.

#### Specific requests for scrutiny

- 3.10. Guidance on specific types of requests for scrutiny are attached to this guidance note as follows:
- Annex 1 – Councillor Calls for Action (CCfA);
  - Annex 2 – Local Crime and Disorder Matters;
  - Annex 3 – Health and Social Care Matters;

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<sup>3</sup> Subject to the provisions set out in the Local Government Act 2000 with regard to confidential and/or exempt information.

## REQUESTS FOR SCRUTINY: COUNCILLOR CALL FOR ACTION (CCfA)

### 1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1. Resolving concerns of the local community is an important element of a local councillor's role, and frequently these are resolved via a network of contacts within the organisation. However, where matters remain unresolved, the ability to give an issue wider consideration by referring it to an Overview and Scrutiny Board should be regarded as a useful additional tool.
- 1.2. In this regard, the Government has recently introduced provisions at Section 119 of the Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act 2007 referred to as 'Councillor Call for Action', to allow Councillors the opportunity to ask for discussions at Scrutiny Boards where *local* problems have arisen and other methods of resolution have been exhausted and failed to deliver an appropriate outcome.
- 1.3. This part of the guidance note relates to the process for administering a *Councillor Call for Action* (CCfA)<sup>4</sup> and aims to provide guidance and assistance for Members, Scrutiny Boards and Officers in the management and consideration of such requests.

### 2. BACKGROUND

- 2.1. Under the provisions set out in Section 119 of the Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act 2007, a local member may raise a matter which relates to the discharge of any function of the authority that affects all or part of the ward for which the member is elected or any person who lives or works in that area, subject to the following exclusions,:
  - a matter which is a local crime and disorder matter within the meaning of section 19 of the Police and Criminal Justice Act 2006<sup>5</sup>;
  - individual complaints concerning personal grievances or commercial issues<sup>6</sup>;
  - any matter relating to a planning decision<sup>6</sup>;
  - any matter relating to a licensing decision<sup>6</sup>;
  - any matter relating to an individual or entity where a right of recourse, review or appeal already exists<sup>6</sup>;
  - any matter which is vexatious, discriminatory or not reasonable to be included on the agenda for, or to be discussed at, a Scrutiny Board meeting<sup>6</sup>;
  - any other matters specified in an order made by the Secretary of State from time to time.

<sup>4</sup> As set out in Section 119 of the Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act 2007

<sup>5</sup> Guidance on *Arrangements for the Scrutiny of Crime and Disorder Functions and Local Crime and Disorder Matters* is provided in Annex B of this guidance note.

<sup>6</sup> The Overview and Scrutiny (Reference by Councillors) (Excluded Matters) (England) Order 2008 defines an 'excluded matter' and came into force on 1 April 2009.

- 2.2. There is also provision for any matter to be referred to Overview and Scrutiny that consists of an allegation of systematic failure within the Council, notwithstanding the fact that the allegation specifies matters which would otherwise be excluded.
- 2.3. Best practice guidance on Councillor Call for Action (CCfA) has been published by the Centre for Public Scrutiny and the Improvement and Development Agency<sup>7</sup>. Whilst this guidance is not prescriptive it provides case study examples of good practice and local authorities that piloted CCfA arrangements. The key points emphasised in the guidance include:
- CCfA is a means of last resort and should be aimed at seeking resolution where other techniques have failed;
  - senior level officer and Member commitment to resolving issues is necessary for maximum effort;
  - any local CCfA guidance to be light touch;
  - the CCfA process should be developed through a consultation process involving Members and other local partners;
  - CCfA is designed to assist Members in dealing with local ward issues – problems which affect the whole Council area should be dealt with in another way;
  - Members will need to discuss what exactly will constitute the successful resolution of the issue;
  - the forum for discussion is less important than the fact that the issue should be discussed together in its entirety.

### **3. COUNCILLOR CALL FOR ACTION – THE LOCAL PROCESS**

#### Steps to be taken prior to making a Councillor Call for Action (CCfA) referral

- 3.1. The CCfA should be considered as a mechanism of last resort, where all other methods of resolution have been exhausted and failed to deliver an appropriate outcome.
- 3.2. In using the CCfA provisions, a ward member (the referring Member) must have regard to the guidance issued by the Secretary of State, outlined in 2.1 above, paying particular attention to those matters deemed to be excluded.
- 3.3. Prior to referring a CCfA to a Scrutiny Board, the referring Member must have made reasonable attempts to resolve the matter using all mechanisms and resources available to them as a ward councillor.
- 3.4. As a minimum, it is expected that the referring Member will have satisfied themselves that the issue is not an excluded matter and will have made reasonable attempts to resolve the matter by approaching one or more of the following:
- the relevant Director(s) and/or Chief Officer(s)
  - the relevant Executive Board member(s)
  - any relevant partnership bodies or local groups

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<sup>7</sup> Available from the Publications section of the Centre for Public Scrutiny website: [www.cfps.org.uk](http://www.cfps.org.uk)

### Making a Councillor Call for Action (CCfA) referral

- 3.5. Any CCfA request should be made in writing to the Head of Scrutiny and Member Development and be accompanied with supporting evidence, including details of any meetings and/or discussions that have taken place in an attempt to resolve the matter, along with any associated conclusions.
- 3.6. The purpose of providing such supporting evidence is to demonstrate that other appropriate methods of resolution have been explored and exhausted. As such, in providing any supporting evidence the referring Member should seek to demonstrate that:
  - All relevant internal routes of resolution have been followed, with sufficient time allowed to resolve the matter.
  - The matter should not be pursued via the Council's complaints procedure.
  - All relevant partner organisations have been informed of the matter (for example, through formal letters written on behalf of constituents), with sufficient time allowed to resolve the matter.
- 3.7. Where the Head of Scrutiny and Member Development deems that there is insufficient evidence to demonstrate that other methods of resolution have been exhausted then the request will be deemed invalid. In such circumstances, the Head of Scrutiny and Member Development will notify the referring Member in writing within 5 working days, detailing the reason(s) for the decision made.
- 3.8. Where a CCfA request has been deemed invalid, the referring Member shall have the right to appeal the decision of the Head of Scrutiny and Member Development. Any such appeals shall be made in writing to the Chief Democratic Services Officer within 5 working days of the original notification provided by the Head of Scrutiny and Member Development.
- 3.9. On receipt of such an appeal, the Chief Democratic Services Officer shall provide notification of the judgement made in relation to the CCfA request within 5 working days, detailing the reason(s) for the decision made. Such notification will be made in writing and provided to the referring Member and the Head of Scrutiny and Member Development.
- 3.10. The decision of the Chief Democratic Services Officer shall be final and there will be no further right of appeal.

### Prior to the Scrutiny Board meeting

- 3.11. Any valid CCfA request received will be included on the agenda of the next ordinary meeting of the appropriate Scrutiny Board. This shall include all supporting evidence<sup>8</sup> provided to demonstrate that other appropriate methods of resolution have been explored and exhausted.

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<sup>8</sup> Subject to the provisions set out in the Local Government Act 2000 with regard to confidential and/or exempt information.

- 3.12. The Head of Scrutiny and Member Development shall notify the referring Member of the date, time and location of the Scrutiny Board meeting where the request shall be considered.
- 3.13. At the discretion of the relevant Scrutiny Board Chair, the relevant member of the Executive Board, Area Committee Chair and/or appropriate officer will be invited to attend and contribute to the discussion at the Scrutiny Board meeting where a CCfA request is being considered.
- 3.14. In order to assist the Scrutiny Board in reaching a decision on a CCfA request, the Chair of the Scrutiny Board may also choose to invite other organisation(s) and/or individual(s) to attend and contribute to the discussion at the Scrutiny Board meeting.

During the Scrutiny Board meeting

- 3.15. All CCfA requests will to be looked at on their individual merits and on the basis of the evidence provided. The referring Member will be entitled to address the meeting of the Scrutiny Board when a CCfA request is being considered.
- 3.16. In considering whether or not to investigate the matter raised, the Scrutiny Board will have regard to:
- any powers which the referring Member may exercise in relation to the matter under consideration (i.e. exercise of functions by local councillors under local delegated decision-making arrangements);
  - any representations made by the referring Member as to why the matter should be investigated.
- 3.17. In order to assist the Scrutiny Board in deciding whether or not to investigate the matter(s) raised, the Chair of the Scrutiny Board may also choose to invite comments from any other organisation(s) or individual(s) deemed suitable.
- 3.18. When deciding whether or not to further investigate the CCfA, the Scrutiny Board may usefully wish to consider and confirm whether:
- There is sufficient evidence to demonstrate that:
    - All reasonable attempts have been made to resolve the matter by the referring Member.
    - The matter raised is not being progressed and all relevant service areas or partner organisations have been informed and allowed sufficient time to resolve the matter.
  - The matter is being or should be pursued via the Council's complaints procedure.
  - The Board has considered a similar issue recently, and if so whether the circumstances and/or evidence has changed significantly.
  - A similar or related issue is already included on the Board's current work programme, as it may be more appropriate to link the CCfA request to an existing work item.
  - The matter might more usefully be considered and referred to an alternative Scrutiny Board (i.e. as part of another inquiry and/or Scrutiny Board work programme).

- The matter referred has the potential for scrutiny to produce realistic recommendations that could be implemented and lead to improvements for anyone living or working in the referring Member's ward.
- 3.19. Where a Scrutiny Board is minded to undertake an inquiry as a result of a CCfA, the Scrutiny Board will also consider:
- How the referral meets the inquiry selection criteria;
  - The impact on the Board's current work programme;
  - The time available to undertake an inquiry; and,
  - The level of resources required to carry out the work.
- 3.20. The decision whether or not to further investigate the matter(s) raised is the sole responsibility of the Scrutiny Board. As such, any decision in this regard is final and there is no right of appeal.

After the Scrutiny Board meeting

- 3.21. Where a Scrutiny Board has considered a CCfA request, the Head of Scrutiny and Member Development will provide written notification of the outcome of the Scrutiny Board's deliberations to the referring Member, within 5 working days of the Scrutiny Board meeting.
- 3.22. Where a Scrutiny Board decides not to investigate the matter raised, this notification will include the reason(s) for that decision.
- 3.23. Where a Scrutiny Board decides to further investigate the matter(s) raised, this notification will include an outline of the agreed actions with an indicative timetable. The referring Member will be subsequently notified of any significant deviation from this timetable.
- 3.24. A copy of any final report agreed by the Scrutiny Board and/or any recommendations made to the Council or the Executive Board will be provided to the referring Member as soon as practicable<sup>9</sup>.

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<sup>9</sup> Subject to the provisions set out in the Local Government Act 2000 with regard to confidential and/or exempt information.

## REQUESTS FOR SCRUTINY: LOCAL CRIME AND DISORDER MATTERS

### 1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1. Provisions in the Police and Justice Act 2006, namely Section 19, 20 and 21, extend the remit of local authorities to scrutinise crime and disorder functions. As a result, the Council has been required to designate a Scrutiny Board to act as the Council's 'Crime and Disorder Committee'. The Environment and Neighbourhoods Scrutiny Board has been assigned to fulfil this role.
- 1.2. Overall, in its capacity as a crime and disorder committee, the Scrutiny Board has powers to:
- (a) Review or scrutinise decisions made (or action taken), in connection with the discharge of crime and disorder functions by the 'responsible authorities'<sup>10</sup>;
  - (b) Review or scrutinise any Member referred local crime and disorder matter;
  - (c) Make reports and/or recommendations to the Council or the Executive;
  - (d) Call an officer from a responsible authority to attend its meetings in order to answer questions or otherwise to provide information and to respond to reports or recommendations made by the Scrutiny Board;
  - (e) Co-opt additional members to serve on the committee, either with or without voting rights<sup>11</sup>
- 1.3. In addition, the Scrutiny Board must meet to review or scrutinise decisions made, or other action taken, by the responsible authorities at least once a year.
- 1.4. This part of the guidance note relates to the process for administering a *Local Crime and Disorder referral* and aims to provide guidance and assistance for Members, Scrutiny Boards and Officers in the management and consideration of such requests.

### 2. BACKGROUND

- 2.1. The Police and Justice Act 2006 makes provision for elected members to refer local crime and disorder matters to the Council's designated Crime and Disorder Committee. Local crime and disorder matters should be considered to encompass all community safety issues that affect all or part of the ward for which the member is elected or any person who lives or works in that area including:
- Antisocial behaviour;
  - Other behaviour adversely affecting the local environment;
  - The misuse of drugs, alcohol or other substances

<sup>10</sup> These are the authorities responsible for crime and disorder strategies, as detailed in the Crime and Disorder Act 1998, Section 5. In Leeds, *Safer Leeds* is the city's Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnership, therefore the 'responsible authorities' are those bodies represented on the Safer Leeds Partnership Executive

<sup>11</sup> Details are set out in Article 6 (Scrutiny Boards: Co-opted Members)

- 2.2. While the Police and Justice Act 2006 makes separate provision for the referral of local crime and disorder matter, in practice the principles and processes involved are essentially the same as for any Councillor Call for Action (CCfA) referral.

### **3. LOCAL CRIME AND DISORDER REFERRALS – THE LOCAL PROCESS**

#### Steps to be taken prior to making a local crime and disorder referral

- 3.1. A local crime and disorder referral should be considered as a mechanism of last resort, where all other methods of resolution have been exhausted and failed to deliver an appropriate outcome.
- 3.2. Prior to a referring a local crime and disorder matter to the Crime and Disorder Committee, the referring Member must have made reasonable attempts to resolve the matter using all mechanisms and resources available to them as a ward councillor. As a minimum, it is expected that the referring Member will attempted to resolve the matter by approaching the 'responsible authorities' represented on the Safer Leeds Partnership Executive.

#### Making a local crime and disorder referral

- 3.3. Any local crime and disorder referral should be made in writing to the Head of Scrutiny and Member Development and be accompanied with supporting evidence, including details of any meetings and/or discussions that have taken place in an attempt to resolve the matter, along with any associated conclusions.
- 3.4. The purpose of providing such supporting evidence is to demonstrate that other appropriate methods of resolution have been explored and exhausted. As such, in providing any supporting evidence the referring Member should seek to demonstrate that:
- All relevant internal routes of resolution have been followed, with sufficient time allowed to resolve the matter.
  - The matter should not be pursued via an existing complaints procedure.
  - Relevant responsible authorities have been informed of the matter (for example, through formal letters written on behalf of constituents), with sufficient time allowed to resolve the matter.
- 3.5. Where the Head of Scrutiny and Member Development deems that there is insufficient evidence to demonstrate that other methods of resolution have been exhausted then the referral will be deemed invalid. In such circumstances, the Head of Scrutiny and Member Development will notify the referring Member in writing within 5 working days, detailing the reason(s) for the decision made.
- 3.6. Where a local crime and disorder referral has been deemed invalid, the referring Member shall have the right to appeal the decision of the Head of Scrutiny and Member Development. Any such appeals shall be made in writing to the Chief Democratic Services Officer within 5 working days of the original notification provided by the Head of Scrutiny and Member Development.



- 3.7. On receipt of such an appeal, the Chief Democratic Services Officer shall provide notification of the judgement made in relation to the local crime and disorder referral within 5 working days, detailing the reason(s) for the decision made. Such notification will be made in writing and provided to the referring Member and the Head of Scrutiny and Member Development.
- 3.8. The decision of the Chief Democratic Services Officer shall be final and there will be no further right of appeal.

#### Prior to the Scrutiny Board meeting

- 3.9. Any valid local crime and disorder referral received will be included on the agenda of the next ordinary meeting of the appropriate Scrutiny Board. This shall include all supporting evidence<sup>12</sup> provided to demonstrate that other appropriate methods of resolution have been explored and exhausted.
- 3.10. The Head of Scrutiny and Member Development shall notify the referring Member of the date, time and location of the Scrutiny Board meeting where the request shall be considered.
- 3.11. Where a local crime and disorder referral is being considered, the appropriate representative(s) from the relevant 'responsible authorities' represented on the Safer Leeds Partnership Executive will be invited to attend and contribute to the discussion at the Scrutiny Board meeting.
- 3.12. In order to assist the Scrutiny Board in reaching a decision on a local crime and disorder referral, the Chair of the Scrutiny Board may also choose to invite other organisation(s) and/or individual(s) to attend the Scrutiny Board meeting.

#### During the Scrutiny Board meeting

- 3.13. All local crime and disorder referrals will to be looked at on their individual merits and on the basis of the evidence provided. The referring Member will be entitled to address the meeting of the Scrutiny Board when a local crime and disorder referral, raised by that Councillor, is being considered.
- 3.14. In considering whether or not to investigate the matter(s) raised, the Scrutiny Board will have regard to:
- any powers which the referring Member may exercise in relation to the matter under consideration (i.e. exercise of functions by local councillors under local delegated decision-making arrangements);
  - any representations made by the referring Member as to why the matter should be investigated.
- 3.15. In order to assist the Scrutiny Board in deciding whether or not to further investigate the matter(s) raised, the Chair of the Scrutiny Board may choose to invite comments from any other organisation(s) or individual(s) deemed suitable.

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<sup>12</sup> Subject to the provisions set out in the Local Government Act 2000 with regard to confidential and/or exempt information.

3.16. When deciding whether or not to further investigate the local crime and disorder referral, the Scrutiny Board may usefully wish to consider and confirm whether:

- There is sufficient evidence to demonstrate that:
  - All reasonable attempts have been made to resolve the matter by the referring Member.
  - The matter raised is not being progressed and all relevant service areas or partner organisations have been informed and allowed sufficient time to resolve the matter.
- The matter is being or should be pursued via an existing complaints procedure.
- The Board has considered a similar issue recently, and if so whether the circumstances and/or evidence has changed significantly.
- A similar or related issue is already included on the Board's current work programme, as it may be more appropriate to link the local crime and disorder referral to an existing work item.
- The matter referred has the potential for scrutiny to produce realistic recommendations that could be implemented and lead to improvements for anyone living or working in the referring Member's ward.

3.17. Where the Scrutiny Board is minded to undertake an inquiry as a result of a referral, the Scrutiny Board will also consider:

- How the referral meets the inquiry selection criteria;
- The impact on the Board's current work programme;
- The time available to undertake an inquiry; and,
- The level of resources required to carry out the work.

3.18. The decision whether or not to further investigate the matter(s) raised is the sole responsibility of the Scrutiny Board. As such, any decision in this regard is final and there is no right of appeal.

#### After the Scrutiny Board meeting

3.19. Where the Scrutiny Board has considered a local crime and disorder referral, the Head of Scrutiny and Member Development will provide written notification of the outcome of the Scrutiny Board's deliberations to the referring Member, within 5 working days of the Scrutiny Board meeting.

3.20. Where the Scrutiny Board decides not to investigate the matter(s) raised, this notification will include the reason(s) for that decision.

3.21. Where the Scrutiny Board decides to further investigate the matter(s) raised, this notification will include an outline of the agreed actions with an indicative timetable. The referring Member will subsequently be notified of any significant deviation from this timetable.

3.22. A copy of any final report agreed by the Scrutiny Board and/or any recommendations made to the Council or the Executive Board will be provided to the referring Member as soon as practicable<sup>13</sup>.

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<sup>13</sup> Subject to the provisions set out in the Local Government Act 2000 with regard to confidential and/or exempt information.

## REQUESTS FOR SCRUTINY: HEALTH AND SOCIAL CARE MATTERS

### 1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1. The Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act 2007 gave a duty to all 150 local authorities in England with social services responsibilities, to enable the formation of a Local Involvement Network (LINK). In summary, the LINK will act as the successor to the Patient and Public Involvement Forums (PPIF) but with an extended remit covering social care.
- 1.2. Under provisions in the Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act 2007, the local LINK has the right to refer both health and social care matters to the relevant Scrutiny Board. In turn, this places responsibility on the appropriate Scrutiny Board to acknowledge any such referrals and keep the LINK informed about what actions, if any, will be taken.
- 1.3. This part of the guidance note relates to the process for administering a *Health and Social Care referral* and aims to provide guidance and assistance for Members, Scrutiny Boards and Officers in the management and consideration of such requests.

### 2. BACKGROUND

- 2.1. LINKs have been set up to give communities a stronger voice in how their health and social care services are delivered. Run by local people and groups, the role of a LINK is to promote involvement, to find out what people like and dislike about local services, monitor the care provided by services and use LINK powers to hold services to account.
- 2.2. Given the role and function of LINKs, the relation between the LINK and the Council's Scrutiny Boards will be key and more detailed information on this relationship is provided in a separate guidance note.
- 2.3. An important function of the LINK is the ability to refer both health and social care matters to the relevant Scrutiny Board. In turn, this places responsibility on the appropriate Scrutiny Board to acknowledge any such referrals and keep the LINK informed about the progress of any agreed actions.

### 3. HEALTH AND SOCIAL CARE REFERRALS – THE LOCAL PROCESS

#### Steps to be taken prior to making a health or social care referral

- 3.1. Under the Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act 2007 and the Local Involvement Networks Regulations 2008, the local LINK has the right to refer any matter relating to the planning, provision and operation of health or social care services to the relevant Scrutiny Board.
- 3.2. This should not detract from the aspiration for relevant Scrutiny Boards to work closely with the LINK to ensure that knowledge about work programme items and emerging issues is regularly shared.

- 3.3. Any formal referral of such matters should be considered as a mechanism of last resort and occur in instances where the relevant health or social care service provider / commissioner has failed to provide a satisfactory response to a report/ recommendations produced by the LINK within 20 working days.

#### Making a health or social care referral

- 3.4. Any health or social care referral should be made in writing to the Head of Scrutiny and Member Development and be accompanied with supporting evidence, which outlines the rationale for the referral and demonstrates that the relevant health or social care service provider / commissioner has been given sufficient time to respond to the issue(s) raised.

#### Prior to the Scrutiny Board meeting

- 3.5. On receipt of a health or social care referral, the Head of Scrutiny and Member Development will ensure the matter, together with all the supporting evidence<sup>14</sup> provided by the LINK, is included on the agenda of the next ordinary meeting of the appropriate Scrutiny Board.
- 3.6. On behalf of the relevant Scrutiny Board, the Head of Scrutiny and Member Development shall acknowledge receipt of any health or social care referral within 20 working days of its receipt. Within this acknowledgement, details of the date, time and location of the Scrutiny Board meeting where the referral shall be considered will also be provided.
- 3.7. Where a health or social care referral is being considered, an appropriate representative from the relevant health or social care service provider / commissioner will be invited to attend and contribute to the discussion at the Scrutiny Board meeting.

#### During the Scrutiny Board meeting

- 3.8. All health or social care referrals will to be looked at on their individual merits and on the basis of the evidence provided. Representatives from the LINK will be entitled to address the meeting of the Scrutiny Board where such a referral is being considered.
- 3.9. In order to assist the Scrutiny Board in deciding whether or not to act on the referral, the Chair of the Scrutiny Board may also choose to invite comments from any other organisation(s) or individual(s) deemed suitable.
- 3.10. When deciding whether or not to act on the health or social care referral, the Scrutiny Board will consider the impact of any proposed action. In particular, where a Scrutiny Board is minded to undertake an inquiry as a result of a referral, the Scrutiny Board will consider:
- How the referral meets the inquiry selection criteria;
  - The impact on the Board's current work programme;
  - The time available to undertake an inquiry; and,
  - The level of resources required to carry out the work.

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<sup>14</sup> Subject to the provisions set out in the Local Government Act 2000 with regard to confidential and/or exempt information

3.11. The decision whether or not to act on the referral is the sole responsibility of the Scrutiny Board. As such, any decision in this regard is final and there is no right of appeal.

After the Scrutiny Board meeting

3.12. Where a Scrutiny Board has considered a health or social care referral, the Head of Scrutiny and Member Development will provide written notification of the outcome of the Scrutiny Board's deliberations to the LINK, within 5 working days of the Scrutiny Board meeting.

3.13. Where a Scrutiny Board decides not to act on the referral, this notification will include the reason(s) for that decision.

3.14. Where a Scrutiny Board decides to act on the referral, this notification will include an outline of the proposed actions and an indicative timetable. The LINK will subsequently be notified of any significant deviation from this timetable.

3.15. A copy of any final report agreed by the Scrutiny Board and/or any recommendations made to the relevant health or social care service provider / commissioner will be provided to the LINK as soon as practicable<sup>15</sup>.

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<sup>15</sup> Subject to the provisions set out in the Local Government Act 2000 with regard to confidential and/or exempt information.

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Originator: Peter Marrington

Tel: 39 51151

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**Report of the Head of Scrutiny and Member Development**

**Scrutiny Board: Children's Services**

**Date: 11<sup>th</sup> June 2009**

**Subject: Input to the Work Programme 2009/10 - Sources of Work and  
Establishing the Board's Priorities**

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**Electoral Wards Affected:**

Ward Members consulted  
(referred to in report)

**Specific Implications For:**

Equality and Diversity   
Community Cohesion   
Narrowing the Gap

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**1.0 Purpose of Report**

1.1 This report provides information and guidance to assist the Board to develop its work programme for 2009/10.

**2.0 Background**

2.1 Relevant information from the following key sources has been attached to this paper to assist Members in this process (Appendix 1):

- Leeds Strategic Plan 2008 to 2011 – Executive Summary
- Building Brighter Futures: The Leeds Children and Young People's Plan 2009-14 – immediate priorities and long term ambitions
- List of scrutiny work undertaken in the past five years.

2.2 Other sources of work will continue to be 'requests for scrutiny' and corporate referrals.

2.3 A copy of the Board's terms of reference is attached for reference purposes. (Appendix 2 )

2.4 The relevant extract from the latest forward plan and the most recent Executive Board minutes are also attached for consideration. (Appendix 3)

**3.0 Guidance**

3.1 Over the last few years of Scrutiny Board work, experience has shown that the

process is more effective if the Board seeks to minimise the number of substantial inquiries running at one time. This view is echoed within the findings of the recent KPMG external report on the Scrutiny function in Leeds, which is discussed elsewhere on this agenda.

3.2 The Board is advised to consider the benefits of single item agendas (excluding miscellaneous information and minutes) in order to focus on all the relevant evidence and complete an inquiry in a shorter period of time. There are various mechanisms available to assist the Board in concluding inquiries quickly, such as working groups and site visits.

3.3 The agreed Memorandum of Understanding between Executive Board and Overview and Scrutiny which sits within the Council's Constitution states;

*"The responsibility of those setting scrutiny work programmes is, therefore, to ensure that items of work come from a strategic approach as well as a need to challenge service performance and respond to issues of high public interest.*

*It is recognised that Scrutiny Boards have a 'watching brief' role. In addition information is required for members' own development process, particularly as membership of the Boards is changed annually.*

*However, it is also recognised that agendas are often filled up with reports for this purpose, which takes up time for both officers and Members. Where Scrutiny Boards wish to ask questions at a general or more strategic level and/or be updated on issues already considered in detail, the facility of Members' Questions – where a verbal exchange replaces written reports - should be used.*

*It is expected that wherever possible prior notification is given of the likely questions to be asked".*

3.4 For the past couple of years the Children's Services Board in particular has developed the approach of devoting one meeting per quarter to 'horizon scan' issues and consider performance management. This includes discussing with Executive Members and officers relevant issues. This is acknowledged within the KPMG report as good practice.

#### **4.0 Work programming**

4.1 The Lead Executive Member and the Director of Children's Services have been invited to attend this meeting to contribute to discussions about the Board's work programme.

4.2 Following those discussions, the Board is asked to agree an outline work programme that prioritises the issues to be investigated.

#### **5.0 Recommendations**

5.1 Members are requested to use the attached information and the discussion with those present at the meeting to develop its work programme.

#### **Background Papers**

Council Business Plan 2008 - 2011



# Leeds Strategic Plan 2008 to 2011

## Executive Summary

### About the Leeds Strategic Plan

The Leeds Strategic Plan 2008 to 2011 sets out the strategic outcomes – the real changes we want to see in people's lives and the city by 2011, and improvement priorities – the key areas where we want to focus our efforts over the next three years. Clear targets have been set to measure the progress we will make over the next three years. The contents of the Plan are aligned with the eight themes in the Vision for Leeds 2004 to 2020, the sustainable community strategy for Leeds. The Leeds Strategic plan can be seen as the delivery plan for the Vision for Leeds.

Working in partnership through the Leeds Initiative, Leeds' local strategic partnership, the Council and its key partners have agreed, following extensive consultation with councillors, stakeholder groups and the public across the city, a single shared set of outcomes and priorities for the city.

The targets in the Leeds Strategic Plan have been selected after thorough study of the prospects, opportunities and challenges facing Leeds and agreed with partners in the city and with central government. The Leeds Strategic Plan is also the Local Area Agreement for Leeds, a formal agreement with central government about how to improve outcomes on our shared priorities..

At the heart of the Leeds Strategic Plan is our ambition to transform the quality of life in Leeds to see:

- people happy, healthy, safe, successful and free from the effects of poverty;
- our young people equipped to contribute to their own and the city's future well being and prosperity;
- local people engaged in decisions about their neighbourhood and community and help shape local services;
- neighbourhoods that are inclusive, varied and vibrant offering housing options and quality facilities and free from harassment and crime;
- an environment that is clean, green, attractive and above all, sustainable; and
- a city-region that is prosperous, innovative and distinctive enabling individuals and businesses to achieve their economic potential.

Our long and successful record of partnership working is a sure foundation for the delivery of these ambitious targets for Leeds. Leeds is one of only three authorities nationally to have been awarded Beacon status for the quality of partnership working and, as a Beacon authority, we will help other authorities all over the country develop effective partnerships to represent local wishes and meet local needs.

### How we will deliver this plan

Leeds City Council will play a key role engaging the public and other stakeholders to shape the contents of the Leeds Strategic Plan, managing performance and reporting progress to local people. The Leeds Strategic Plan is a partnership plan and Leeds Initiative and its groups, including the Strategy Group which brings together the major public sector partners in the city as well as key representatives from the business and voluntary, community and faith sectors, will monitor and manage progress and keep the contents of the Plan relevant to the needs of Leeds. Each partner will also integrate the targets and priorities in this Plan into their work plans. Leeds City Council has produced a Business Plan to support its contribution to the Leeds Strategic Plan.



Working in partnership through the Leeds Initiative



Strategic Outcomes The real changes we want to see		Improvement Priorities – our key focus for the next three years	
<b>Culture</b>			
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Increased participation in cultural opportunities through engaging with all our communities.</li> <li>• Enhanced cultural opportunities through encouraging investment and development of high quality facilities of national and international significance.</li> </ul>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Enable more people to become involved in sport and culture by providing better quality and wider ranging activities and facilities.</li> <li>• Facilitate the delivery of major cultural schemes of international significance.</li> </ul>
<b>Enterprise and the Economy</b>			
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Increased entrepreneurship and innovation through effective support to achieve the full potential of people, business and the economy.</li> <li>• Increased international competitiveness through marketing and investment in high quality infrastructure and physical assets, particularly in the city centre.</li> </ul>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Increase innovation and entrepreneurial activity across the city</li> <li>• Facilitate the delivery of major developments in the city centre to enhance the economy and support local employment</li> <li>• Increase international communications, marketing and business support activities to promote the city and attract investment.</li> </ul>
<b>Learning</b>			
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• An enhanced workforce that will meet future challenges through fulfilling individual and economic potential and investing in learning facilities.</li> </ul>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Enhance the skill level of the workforce to fulfil individual and economic potential</li> <li>• Improve learning outcomes for all 16 year olds, with a focus on narrowing the achievement gap.</li> <li>• Improve learning outcomes and skill levels for 19 year olds.</li> <li>• Increase the proportion of vulnerable groups engaged in education, training or employment.</li> <li>• Improve participation and early learning outcomes for all children, with a focus on families in deprived areas.</li> </ul>
<b>Transport</b>			
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Increased accessibility and connectivity through investment in a high quality transport system and through influencing others and changing behaviours</li> </ul>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Deliver and facilitate a range of transport proposals for an enhanced transport system, including cycling and walking.</li> <li>• Improve the quality, use and accessibility of public transport services in Leeds.</li> <li>• Improve the condition of the streets and transport infrastructure by carrying out a major programme of maintenance and improvements.</li> <li>• Improve road safety for all our users, especially motor cyclists, pedal cyclists and pedestrians.</li> </ul>
<b>Environment</b>			
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reduced ecological footprint through responding to environmental and climate change and influencing others.</li> <li>• Cleaner, greener and more attractive city through effective environmental management and changed behaviours.</li> </ul>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Increase the amount of waste reused and recycled and reduce the amount of waste going to landfill.</li> <li>• Reduce emissions from public sector buildings, operations and service delivery, and encourage others to do so.</li> <li>• Undertake actions to improve our resilience to current and future climate change.</li> <li>• Address neighbourhood problem sites; improve cleanliness and access to and quality of green spaces.</li> <li>• Improve the quality and sustainability of the built and natural environment.</li> </ul>

Strategic Outcomes The real changes we want to see	Improvement Priorities – our key focus for the next three years
<b>Health and Wellbeing</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reduced health inequalities through the promotion of healthy life choices and improved access to services.</li> <li>• Improved quality of life through maximising the potential of vulnerable people by promoting independence, dignity and respect.</li> <li>• Enhanced safety and support for vulnerable people through preventative and protective action to minimise risks and maximise wellbeing.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reduce premature mortality in the most deprived areas.</li> <li>• Reduction in the number of people who smoke.</li> <li>• Reduce rate of increase in obesity and raise physical activity for all.</li> <li>• Reduce teenage conception and improve sexual health.</li> <li>• Improve the assessment and care management of children, families and vulnerable adults.</li> <li>• Improved psychological, mental health, and learning disability services for those who need it.</li> <li>• Increase the number of vulnerable people helped to live at home.</li> <li>• Increase the proportion of people in receipt of community services enjoying choice and control over their daily lives.</li> <li>• Improve safeguarding arrangements for vulnerable children and adults through better information, recognition and response to risk.</li> </ul>
<b>Thriving Places</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Improved quality of life through mixed neighbourhoods offering good housing options and better access to services and activities.</li> <li>• Reduced crime and fear of crime through prevention, detection, offender management and changed behaviours.</li> <li>• Increased economic activity through targeted support to reduce worklessness and poverty.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Increase the number of “decent homes”.</li> <li>• Increase the number of affordable homes.</li> <li>• Reduce the number of homeless people.</li> <li>• Reduce the number of people who are not able to adequately heat their homes.</li> <li>• Increase financial inclusion in deprived areas.</li> <li>• Create safer environments by tackling crime</li> <li>• Improve lives by reducing the harm caused by substance misuse</li> <li>• Reduce offending by managing offending behaviour better</li> <li>• Reduce bullying and harassment.</li> <li>• Reduce worklessness across the city with a focus on deprived areas.</li> <li>• Reduce the number of children in poverty.</li> <li>• Develop extended services, using sites across the city, to improve support to children, families and communities</li> </ul>
<b>Harmonious Communities</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• More inclusive, varied and vibrant communities through empowering people to contribute to decision making and delivering local services.</li> <li>• Improved community cohesion and integration through meaningful involvement and valuing equality and diversity.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• An increased number of local people engaged in activities to meet community needs and improve the quality of life for local residents.</li> <li>• An increase in the number of local people that are empowered to have a greater voice and influence over local decision making and a greater role in public service delivery.</li> <li>• Enable a robust and vibrant voluntary, community and faith sector to facilitate community activity and directly deliver services.</li> <li>• An increased sense of belonging and pride in local neighbourhoods that help to build cohesive communities.</li> </ul>

## Partners who have helped to draw up this Plan

Arts Council  
Education Leeds  
English Heritage  
Environment Agency  
Health and Safety Executive  
Highways Agency  
Jobcentre Plus  
Learning and Skills Council  
Leeds chamber of Commerce and Industry  
Leeds Colleges  
Leeds Partnership Foundation Trust  
Leeds Primary Care Trust  
Leeds Teaching Hospitals Trust  
Leeds Voice  
Museums, Libraries, Archives Yorkshire  
Natural England  
Re'new  
Sport England  
West Yorkshire Fire and Rescue Service  
West Yorkshire Metro  
West Yorkshire Police  
West Yorkshire Police Authority  
West Yorkshire Probation Service  
Yorkshire Forward  
Youth Offending Service

For enquiries about the Leeds Strategic Plan or to obtain a copy of the plan please:

Email: [leedsstrategicplan@leeds.gov.uk](mailto:leedsstrategicplan@leeds.gov.uk)

Telephone: **0113 224 346 2**

Visit our website: [www.leedsstrategicplan.org.uk](http://www.leedsstrategicplan.org.uk)

Write to:  
**Leeds Strategic Plan  
Planning, Policy and  
Improvement  
2nd Floor East  
Civic Hall  
Leeds LS1 1UR**

If you do not speak English and need help in understanding this document, please phone: **0113 224 346 2** and state the name of your language. We will then put you on hold while we contact an interpreter. We can assist with any language and there is no charge for interpretation.

An audio cassette of the Leeds Strategic Plan can also be obtained by contacting us via one of the methods above.



Working in partnership through the [Leeds Initiative](#)



## Building Brighter Futures: The Leeds Children and Young People's Plan 2009-14

Our immediate priorities		Priority for children	Priority for parents	Priority for services	Priority for inspectors	National priority	Leeds Strategic Plan priority	Narrowing the gap
<b>Improving outcomes</b>								
<b>1</b>	Improving outcomes for Looked After Children			✓		✓	✓	✓
<b>2</b>	Improving attendance and reducing persistent absence from school				✓	✓	✓	✓
<b>3</b>	Improving early learning and primary outcomes in deprived areas		✓		✓	✓	✓	✓
<b>4</b>	Providing places to go and things to do	✓	✓	✓		✓		
<b>5</b>	Raising the proportion of young people in education or work	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	
<b>6</b>	Reducing child poverty	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓
<b>7</b>	Reducing teenage conception		✓		✓	✓	✓	✓
<b>8</b>	Reducing the need for children to be in care			✓	✓		✓	✓
<b>Working together better</b>								
<b>9</b>	Strengthening safeguarding		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
<b>10</b>	Enabling integrated working		✓	✓	✓	✓		✓

Our long term ambitions		Priority for children	Priority for parents	Priority for services	Priority for inspectors	National priority	Leeds Strategic Plan priority	Narrowing the gap
<b>All Children and Young People:</b>								
<b>1</b>	Are safe and secure	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
<b>2</b>	Are safe and supported in stronger communities	✓	✓				✓	✓
<b>3</b>	Are helped to narrow the gap			✓			✓	✓
<b>4</b>	Are thriving in learning		✓		✓	✓	✓	✓
<b>5</b>	Are safe supported in stronger families	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
<b>6</b>	Enjoy life and have places to go and things to do	✓	✓			✓		✓
<b>7</b>	Make the right choices	✓	✓			✓		✓
<b>8</b>	Make a good start		✓		✓	✓	✓	✓
<b>9</b>	Are supported by excellent, integrated working		✓	✓	✓	✓		✓

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YEAR	SCRUTINY BOARD	TITLE OF REPORT
2004/05	Lifelong Learning	14-19 Education
2004/05	Lifelong Learning	Inclusion of Children & Young People with Special Educational Needs
2004/05	Lifelong Learning	Behaviour Report
2005/06	Children & Young People	Extended Schools
2005/06	Children & Young People	Looked after children
2005/06	Children & Young People	Implementing the Children Act 2004 in Leeds
2005/06	Children & Young People	School places
2005/06	Children & Young People	Impact of housing conditions on welfare of children & young people
2005/06	Children & Young People	Young People's Scrutiny Forum – inquiry into fair-trade in Leeds Schools
2005/06	Children & Young People	SILCS inquiry
2005/06	Children & Young People	Recruitment, retention & workload of children's social workers
2005/06	Children & Young People	Implementing the Children Act 2004 in Leeds
2005/06	Children & Young People	Inquiry into secondary achievement
2005/06	Health & Wellbeing	Inquiry into childhood obesity prevention & management
2006/07	Children's Services	Youth Services
2006/07	Children's Services	Departmental communications
2006/07	Children's Services	14-19 review of education & training provision in Leeds
2006/07	Children's Services	Adoption in Leeds
2006/07	Children's Services	Young People's Scrutiny Forum – Catching the Bus
2006/07	Children's Services	Fountain Primary School
2006/07	Children's Services	Implications of Trust Schools for the Local Authority
2007/08	Health & Adult Social Care	Teenage Pregnancy
2007/08	Children's Services	Services for 8 – 13 year olds
2007/08	Children's Services	Inclusion
2007/08	Children's Services	Fountain Primary School
2008/09	Children's Services	Young People's Scrutiny Forum – Protecting Our Environment
2008/09	Children's Services	Multi agency support team (MAST)
2008/09	Children's Services	Meadowfield Primary School
2008/09	Children's Services	Entering the Education System
2008/09	Children's Services	14-19 Education Review - ongoing
2008/09	Children's Services	Safeguarding - Resources - ongoing
2008/09	Children's Services	Safeguarding - Preventative Duty - ongoing

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## **Scrutiny Board (Children's Services)**

1. In relation to **Children's Services**<sup>1</sup>, to exercise the functions of a Scrutiny Board including the following:
  - (a) to review or scrutinise the exercise of any council or executive function, or any other related matter<sup>2</sup>;
  - (b) to make reports or recommendations to Council or the Executive in connection with the exercise of any functions of the Council or the Executive including proposals for changes to policies and practices;
  - (c) to receive and review external audit and inspection reports;
  - (d) to act as the appropriate Scrutiny Board<sup>3</sup> in relation to the Executive's initial proposals for a plan or strategy within the Budget and Policy Framework;
  - (e) to review corporate performance indicators and to make such reports and recommendations as it considers appropriate;
  - (f) to review outcomes, targets and priorities within the Leeds Strategic Plan and to make such reports and recommendations as it considers appropriate; and
  - (g) to review or scrutinise executive decisions made but not implemented.<sup>4</sup>
  
2. To receive and monitor formal responses to any reports or recommendations made by the Board.

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<sup>1</sup> These are the functions delegated under the officer delegation scheme (council functions) and the officer delegation scheme (executive functions) to:

- the Director of Children's Services;
- the Chief Officer (Early Years and Youth Services); and
- the Chief Officer (Children's Social Services)

but excluding those matters assigned to the Scrutiny Board (Health) under the Local Authority (Overview and Scrutiny Committees Health Scrutiny Functions) Regulations 2002 as amended.

<sup>2</sup> including matters pertaining to outside bodies and partnerships to which appointments have been made by the authority

<sup>3</sup> under the Budget and Policy Framework Procedure Rules

<sup>4</sup> which have been called-in under Rule 22 of the Scrutiny Board Procedure Rules.

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**LEEDS CITY COUNCIL**

**FORWARD PLAN OF KEY DECISIONS**

**Extract relating to Scrutiny Board (Children's Services)**

For the period 1 May 2009 to 31 August 2009

<b>Key Decisions</b>	<b>Decision Maker</b>	<b>Expected Date of Decision</b>	<b>Proposed Consultation</b>	<b>Documents to be Considered by Decision Maker</b>	<b>Lead Officer</b> (To whom representations should be made and email address to send representations to)
PAYP and PAYP Plus Funding Approval of Bids	Chief Officer - Early Years and Youth Service	1/5/09	ASBU, Community Safety, Police, and IYSS and external partners Royal Armouries No to Knives Campaign.	Report to be submitted by the Out of School Activities Co-Ordinator	Chief Officer - Early Years and Youth Service gerry.hudson@leeds.gov.uk
East Moor Secure Children's Centre To decide whether to move to the next stage of constructing a replacement for East Moor following contract negotiations with DCSF and Youth Justice Board	Executive Board (Portfolio: Children's Services)	13/5/09	Extensive consultation with ward members and local community	The report to be issued to the decision maker with the agenda for the meeting	Director of Children's Services david.mcdermott@leeds.gov.uk

<b>Key Decisions</b>	<b>Decision Maker</b>	<b>Expected Date of Decision</b>	<b>Proposed Consultation</b>	<b>Documents to be Considered by Decision Maker</b>	<b>Lead Officer</b> (To whom representations should be made and email address to send representations to)
Leeds BSF Phase 4 Approval of Outline Business Case in respect of Intake High School	Executive Board (Portfolio: Children's Services)	13/5/09	The following groups will be consulted on the OBC: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Project Steering Group</li> <li>• Design User Group</li> <li>• Education Leeds</li> <li>• PPP Unit Management Team</li> <li>• Planning</li> </ul>	The report to be issued to the decision maker with the agenda for the meeting	Chief Officer (PPPU) david.outram@leeds.gov.uk
Outcome of consultation on proposed changes to Education Leeds Policy for the provision of 16+ Transport Approval to withdraw 16+ discretionary provision	Executive Board (Portfolio: Children's Services)	13/5/09	23 Feb to 3 April 2009	The report to be issued to the decision maker with the agenda for the meeting	Chief Executive of Education Leeds viv.buckland@educationleeds.co.uk
School Calendar 2010 - 2011 To agree the school calendar for community and voluntary controlled schools and SILCS for the academic year 2010/2011	Executive Board (Portfolio: Children's Services)	13/5/09	Headteacher Forum, Governor Forum, TJCC, an online consultation with parents, carers, pupils and employees of schools and Education Leeds ( Nov 2008 – February 2009)	The report to be issued to the decision maker with the agenda for the meeting	Chief Executive of Education Leeds vicki.white@educationleeds.co.uk

<b>Key Decisions</b>	<b>Decision Maker</b>	<b>Expected Date of Decision</b>	<b>Proposed Consultation</b>	<b>Documents to be Considered by Decision Maker</b>	<b>Lead Officer</b> (To whom representations should be made and email address to send representations to)
Design Cost Report - Playbuilders Capital Programme To give authority to incur expenditure of £1,000,000 (fully funded by DCSF) to replace and develop 22 play sites across Leeds	Executive Board (Portfolio: Children's Services)	17/6/09	Children's Plan – published December 07 Play Strategy (DCSF) – December 08	The report to be issued to the decision maker with the agenda for the meeting	Chief Officer - Early Years and Youth Service sally.threfall@leeds.gov.uk
Proposal to add Specialist Community Provision at Whitkirk Primary School for pupils with complex physical difficulties and medical needs Permission from Executive Board to consult on the proposal.	Executive Board (Portfolio: Children's Services)	17/6/09	It is proposed that Whitkirk Primary School serve the east of the city as a specialist resource and make up to 14 places available for children who have complex needs (an average of 2 children per year group).	The report to be issued to the decision maker with the agenda for the meeting	Chief Executive of Education Leeds john.chadwick@leeds.gov.uk
Proposals for changes to primary provision in the Richmond Hill area Final decision following statutory notice	Executive Board (Portfolio: Children's Services)	22/7/09	n/a	The report to be issued to the decision maker with the agenda for the meeting	Chief Executive of Education Leeds lesley.savage@leeds.gov.uk

## **NOTES**

Key decisions are those executive decisions:

- which result in the authority incurring expenditure or making savings over £250,000 per annum, or
- are likely to have a significant effect on communities living or working in an area comprising two or more wards

### **Executive Board Portfolios**

### **Executive Member**

Central and Corporate

Councillor Richard Brett

Development and Regeneration

Councillor Andrew Carter

Environmental Services

Councillor Steve Smith

Neighbourhoods and Housing

Councillor John Leslie Carter

Leisure

Councillor John Procter

Children's Services

Councillor Stewart Golton

Learning

Councillor Richard Harker

Adult Health and Social Care

Councillor Peter Harrand

Leader of the Labour Group

Councillor Keith Wakefield

Leader of the Morley Borough  
Independent Group

Councillor Robert Finnigan

Advisory Member

Councillor Judith Blake

In cases where Key Decisions to be taken by the Executive Board are not included in the Plan, 5 days notice of the intention to take such decisions will be given by way of the agenda for the Executive Board meeting.

## EXECUTIVE BOARD

WEDNESDAY, 13TH MAY, 2009

**PRESENT:** Councillor A Carter in the Chair

Councillors R Brett, J L Carter, R Finnigan,  
S Golton, R Harker, P Harrand, J Procter,  
S Smith and K Wakefield

Councillor J Blake – Advisory Member

### 254 Exclusion of the Public

**RESOLVED** – That the public be excluded from the meeting during consideration of the following parts of the agenda designated 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 exempt information so designated as follows:

- (a) Appendix 1 to the report referred to in minute 258 under the terms of Access to Information Procedure Rule 10.4(3) and on the grounds that the appendix provides a brief overview of the anticipated costs and identified funding associated with the proposed acquisition. It is considered not to be in the public interest to disclose this information at this point in time as it could undermine the Council's position in negotiating with the building owner. The release of this information could also prejudice the Council's interests in relation to this or other similar transactions in that the land owner of this or other similar properties would have information about the nature and level of consideration which may prove acceptable to the Council. It is considered that whilst there may be a public interest in disclosure, much of this information will be publicly available from the Land Registry following completion of any transaction and consequently the public interest in maintaining the exemption outweighs the public interest in disclosing the information at this point in time.
- (b) Appendices 1, 2 and 4 of the report referred to in minute 261 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 by reason of the fact that:-
  - (i) Appendices 1 and 2 – The success of the scheme could potentially be prejudiced by speculative investors acquiring properties in advance of the Council's action;
  - (ii) Appendix 4 – The costs attributed to the purchase of private properties are purely estimates at this stage and their disclosure

could prejudice the Council's ability to reach an agreement on the purchase price with owners.

**255 Declaration of Interests**

Councillor Smith declared a personal and prejudicial interest in the item relating to the Health and Wellbeing Partnership Plan 2009-2012 (minute 266 refers) due to his position as a Director of a Health and Wellbeing Centre.

Councillor Blake declared a personal interest in the item relating to the Health and Wellbeing Partnership Plan 2009-2012 (minute 266 refers) due to being a member of Leeds NHS Primary Care Trust.

**256 Minutes**

**RESOLVED** – That the minutes of the meeting held on 1<sup>st</sup> April 2009 be approved.

**DEVELOPMENT AND REGENERATION**

**257 Football World Cup 2018**

The Director of City Development submitted a report advising of the invitation received from the English Football Association for the City of Leeds to bid to become a 'host city' for the football World Cup 2018.

**RESOLVED –**

- (a) That Leeds investigate the submission of a Leeds City Region bid to become a host city for the Football World Cup 2018;
- (b) That the governance structure proposed in the submitted report be approved;
- (c) That the proposed Leeds City Region representatives for the Host City Briefing to be held in London on 18<sup>th</sup> May 2009 be noted;
- (d) That a report be brought back to this Board as soon as the likely human and financial resource implications of the project are known;
- (e) That dialogue with the City Region partners be opened at the earliest opportunity.

**258 West Leeds Gateway Site - 2 Branch Road**

The Director of Environment and Neighbourhoods submitted a report on an in principle proposal that Compulsory Purchase powers be used to achieve the acquisition of 2 Branch Road, Armley subject to a further report being brought to the Board for final approval.

Following consideration of appendix 1 to the report designated as exempt under Access to Information Procedure Rule 10.4(3) which was considered in private at the conclusion of the meeting it was

**RESOLVED** – That the contents of the report be noted and that in principle approval be given to the use of Compulsory Purchase powers to achieve the acquisition of 2 Branch Road, should this be necessary, subject to a further report to this Board seeking full approval.



**259 Response to the City Development Scrutiny Board's Inquiry into the A660 Corridor Transport Issues**

The Director of City Development submitted a report in response to the recommendations from the recent Scrutiny Board (City Development) inquiry concerning A660 Corridor Transport Issues.

**RESOLVED** – That the proposed responses to the Scrutiny Board's recommendations, as contained in the report, be approved.

**NEIGHBOURHOODS AND HOUSING**

**260 Response to the Scrutiny Board (City and Regional Partnerships) Inquiry into the role of the voluntary, community and faith sectors in Council led community engagement**

The Director of Environment and Neighbourhoods submitted a report in response to the recommendations from the Scrutiny Board (City and Regional Partnerships) with regard to the role of the voluntary, community and faith sectors in Council led community engagement.

**RESOLVED** – That the Scrutiny Board (City and Regional Partnerships) inquiry report into the role of the voluntary, community and faith sectors in Council led community engagement be referred to Scrutiny Board (Children's Services) and Scrutiny Board (Adult Social Care) for consideration, with a further report being submitted to Executive Board in due course.

**261 Regeneration of the Garnets, Beeston**

The Director of Environment and Neighbourhoods submitted a report on options for the regeneration of the Garnets area and on the proposed commencement of acquisition and clearance of 112 properties within the Garnets by utilising £3,000,000 of confirmed funding during 2009/11.

The report presented and appraised the options of:

- (a) doing the minimum to meet legal conformity;
- (b) undertaking group repair and internal remodelling;
- (c) property acquisition and redevelopment of the site.

Following consideration of appendices 1, 2 and 4 to the report, designated as exempt under Access to Information Procedure Rule 10.4(3) which were considered in private at the conclusion of the meeting it was

**RESOLVED –**

- (a) That scheme expenditure to the amount of £3,000,000 be authorised.
- (b) That the option of acquisition and site redevelopment be progressed.
- (c) That a further report be brought to this Board when further funding is made available through successful bids for the residual £1,300,000 of funding.
- (d) That the Director of Environment and Neighbourhoods and Director of City Development authorise and promote any Compulsory Purchase Orders which may become necessary.

(Under the provisions of Council Procedure Rule 16.5, Councillor Wakefield required it to be recorded that he abstained from voting on this decision)

**262 Update on Council Rents - 2009/10**

Further to minute 236 of the meeting held on 1<sup>st</sup> April 2009, the Director of Environment and Neighbourhoods submitted a report providing an update on the rent changes for 2009/10, and the cost implications for this change.

**RESOLVED** – That the contents of the report be noted together with the change in the 2009/10 average rent increase for Council dwellings from 6.2% to 3.1%.

**CHILDREN'S SERVICES**

**263 School Calendar 2010 - 2011**

The Chief Executive of Education Leeds submitted a report on the process of setting the school calendar in Leeds, providing an update on the consultation process and proposing one option for the approval of the Board.

The three options which had been the subject of the consultation were:

Option 1: The Easter bank holiday weekend falls at the end of the two-week school break. This option coincided with the recommendations of the Local Government Association.

Option 2: The Easter bank holiday weekend falls in the middle of the two week school break. Schools would not return to school until the day after May Day bank holiday, reducing the number of split weeks in school. However, the term would not be split equally resulting in a very short first half term after Easter.

Option 3: Schools have a separate Easter bank holiday weekend. They would experience three four-day weeks due to the occurrence of the May Day bank holiday the week after Easter Monday.

**RESOLVED –**

- (a) That the extensive consultation undertaken to consider the implications for the 2010/11 school calendar in Leeds be noted.
- (b) That the school calendar dates associated with option 3, and as detailed in annex 3 to the report, be approved.
- (c) That subject to (d) below, the proposal for a fixed break between terms 2 and 3, irrespective of when Easter falls, with a corresponding adjustment to the summer vacation which ensures a two week Christmas break, be approved in principle;
- (d) That following the conclusion of the 2010/11 academic year, a report be submitted to the Board reviewing the success of the implementation of the school calendar schedule as detailed at option 3.

**264 The Achievement of Looked After Children**

The Chief Executive of Education Leeds submitted a report outlining the achievement of Looked After Children in Leeds and on strategies for the improvement of outcomes.

**RESOLVED –**

- (a) That the main findings of the report and its conclusions be noted.
- (b) That a further update report be brought to this Board in Autumn 2009.

**LEISURE**

**265 Leisure Centre Refurbishment and Free Swimming Capital Modernisation**

The Director of City Development submitted a report on proposals for the DCMS Free Swimming Capital Modernisation Programme, refurbishment of changing rooms at Scott Hall Leisure Centre, installation of sound and light systems in the pool halls at Scott Hall, John Smeaton and Pudsey Leisure Centres and the extension of the Bodyline Gym at Scott Hall.

**RESOLVED –**

- (a) That approval be given to the injection of £572,300 into the Capital Programme consisting of DCMS Free Swimming Capital Modernisation Programme pot 4 (£410,000), Prudential Borrowing (£30,000) and Leeds City Council budgets (totalling £132,300).
- (b) That authority be given to spend in the following amounts:
  - £512,300 on the refurbishment of the changing rooms at Scott Hall Leisure Centre
  - £90,000 on the installation of sound and light systems in the pool halls at Scott Hall, John Smeaton and Pudsey Leisure Centres, thus achieving the criteria set by DCMS for the award of this funding
  - £30,000 on the extension of the Bodyline Gym at Scott Hall Leisure Centre through Prudential Borrowing

**ADULT HEALTH AND SOCIAL CARE**

**266 Health and Wellbeing Partnership Plan 2009 to 2012**

The Director of Adult Social Services and Director of Public Health submitted a joint report presenting the final draft of the Leeds Health and Wellbeing Partnership Plan 2009 to 2012 for comment and agreement that it be submitted to Council for approval as part of the Budget and Policy Framework.

**RESOLVED –** That the final draft of the Health and Wellbeing Partnership Plan be agreed for submission to Council for approval.

(Having declared a personal and prejudicial interest in relation to this item due to being a Director of a Health and Wellbeing Centre, Councillor Smith withdrew from the meeting room during the consideration of this item)

- 267 Carers' Strategy for Leeds 2009-2012: 'Every Carer Counts'**  
The Director of Adult Social Services submitted a report on the content of the Leeds Carers Strategy 2009-2012 and presenting the strategy for approval for its publication and dissemination.

**RESOLVED** – That the Carers' Strategy for Leeds 2009-2012 'Every Carer Counts', as appended to the report, be approved for implementation, subject to an addition which reflects the Board's comments concerning the provision of advice and guidance available to carers in Leeds.

#### **CENTRAL AND CORPORATE**

- 268 Response to the Central and Corporate Functions Scrutiny Board Inquiry into Member Development**  
The Chief Democratic Services Officer submitted a report in response to the recent Scrutiny Board (Central and Corporate Functions) Inquiry into Member Development.

**RESOLVED** – That the proposed responses to the Scrutiny Board's recommendations, as contained within the report, be approved.

- 269 Response to the Central and Corporate Functions Scrutiny Board Inquiry into Attendance Management**  
The Director of Resources submitted a report in response to the recent Scrutiny Board (Central and Corporate Functions) Inquiry into attendance management.

**RESOLVED** – That the proposed responses to the Scrutiny Board's recommendations, as contained within the report, be approved.

- 270 Response to the Central and Corporate Functions Scrutiny Board Inquiry into Procurement of Services**  
The Chief Procurement Officer submitted a report in response to the recent Scrutiny Board (Central and Corporate Functions) Inquiry into the Procurement of Services.

**RESOLVED** – That the proposed responses to the Scrutiny Board's recommendations, as contained within the report, be approved.

- 271 Councillor Blake and Councillor Smith**  
Councillors Blake and Smith were both thanked for their services to the Board, as it was noted that this would be the last meeting in which both would be in attendance as Executive Board members.

DATE OF PUBLICATION: 15<sup>TH</sup> MAY 2009  
LAST DATE FOR CALL IN: 22<sup>ND</sup> MAY 2009 (5.00 PM)

(Scrutiny Support will notify Directors of any items called in by 12.00 noon on 26<sup>th</sup> May 2009)

Draft minutes to be approved at the meeting  
to be held on Wednesday, 17th June, 2009

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Originator: Kate Arscott

Tel: 247 4189

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## Report of the Head of Scrutiny and Member Development

Scrutiny Board: Children's Services

Date: 11 June 2009

Subject: Corporate Governance and Audit Committee referral

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Electoral Wards Affected:

Specific Implications For:

Equality and Diversity

Community Cohesion

Narrowing the Gap

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### 1.0 Introduction

1.1 A referral for scrutiny has been received from the Corporate Governance and Audit Committee.

1.2 At the Corporate Governance and Audit Committee meeting on 30 April, Members considered the annual audit and inspection letter 2007/08 for Leeds City Council.

1.3 During the discussion the Committee highlighted the following areas of concern:

- *The outcomes relating to Children and Young People, particularly infant mortality, fostering and the timeliness of reviews of looked after children, and whether they were caused by problems with leadership and management or resources;*
- *The high proportion of young people not in employment, education or training;*

1.4 As a result of the discussion, the Committee resolved

*"That the Children's Services and Adult Social Care Scrutiny Boards be asked, as a matter of urgency, to follow up the Committee's concerns."*

1.5 A copy of the annual audit and inspection letter is attached as Appendix 1. Paragraphs 14-16 deal particularly with issues relevant to the Scrutiny Board (Children's Services).

- 1.6 Members should note that the 2007/08 audit letter draws its evidence on children's services from the Annual Performance Assessment (APA) which was published in December 2008 and was discussed by the Scrutiny Board in February 2009.
- 1.7 In considering how to respond to the referral from Corporate Governance and Audit Committee, the Board may also find it useful to refer to the attached JAR (Joint Area Review) and APA progress monitoring report which was presented to the Children's Services Scrutiny Board in April 2009, as part of the Scrutiny Board's ongoing monitoring activity. This provides a more up to date assessment of the progress being made in tackling these areas of concern, and should be helpful to the Board in identifying potential areas of work.
- 1.8 The progress monitoring report self-assesses progress on infant mortality rates as 'good', including the recent launch of an action plan. This issue would fall within the remit of the Health Scrutiny Board.
- 1.9 The self-assessment of progress regarding the fostering inspection is 'satisfactory', and regarding the timeliness of reviews for looked after children is 'good'. The fostering service is due to be re-inspected during July. Members may also be aware that a new Chief Officer for Children and Young People's Social Care started in post on 1 June following a review of the management of the service.
- 1.10 The Scrutiny Board is already engaged in inquiries on safeguarding and the 14-19 education review, which link to issues raised in the audit letter.

## **2.0 Recommendation**

- 2.1 The Board is asked to consider the referral from Corporate Governance and Audit Committee, and agree any work to be undertaken.

## **Background papers**

Corporate Governance and Audit Committee minutes – 30 April 2009



# Annual Audit and Inspection Letter

Leeds City Council

Audit 2007/08

March 2009



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## Status of our reports

The Statement of Responsibilities of Auditors and Audited Bodies issued by the Audit Commission explains the respective responsibilities of auditors and of the audited body. Reports prepared by appointed auditors are addressed to non-executive directors/members or officers. They are prepared for the sole use of the audited body. Auditors accept no responsibility to:

- any director/member or officer in their individual capacity; or
  - any third party.
-

# Key messages

- 1 Leeds City Council has made good progress in some of the priority areas that are most important to local people. But improvement has not been consistent across all areas.
- 2 The Council worked well with partners. Improvement in GCSE attainment continued. Preventative and support services for older people got better. Streets were cleaner, the amount of waste produced fell and more of it was recycled. Crime levels fell significantly, although burglary did increase. The Council engaged well with its diverse communities. It improved customer relations and made services more accessible. Investment in cultural facilities saw venues opened and refurbished and visitor numbers increase. The Council made progress in improving the lives of people in its most deprived communities and continued to provide good value for money. The Council achieved the maximum level of 4 in the Use of Resources assessment, with improvements in financial reporting and financial standing. The accounts production process is robust. Officers are working to ensure that this level of performance is maintained and that changes to the financial statements required by the Statement of Recommended Practice are implemented.
- 3 Performance in other important areas was weaker. Arrangements for safeguarding adults did not satisfactorily protect vulnerable people. Burglary increased and some aspects of road safety remain a concern. Although reducing, a comparatively high proportion of young people are not in education, employment or training. The fostering service was judged inadequate. The performance of 2 of the 3 housing Arms Length Management Organisations (ALMOs) is currently 1 star, although prospects for improvement are promising.
- 4 The Council has made good progress in developing plans to deliver further improvements. The Council is investing in priority services and additional capacity to address weaknesses and areas identified as needing improvement.

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### Action needed by the Council

- 5 The Council should, working with partners where appropriate:
  - improve performance in priority areas such as safeguarding vulnerable adults and children, reducing the number of young people not in education, employment and training, reducing health inequalities, reducing levels of burglary and tackling worklessness in the most disadvantaged areas; and
  - ensure that work to reduce high levels of staff sickness absence within the Council has the desired impact.

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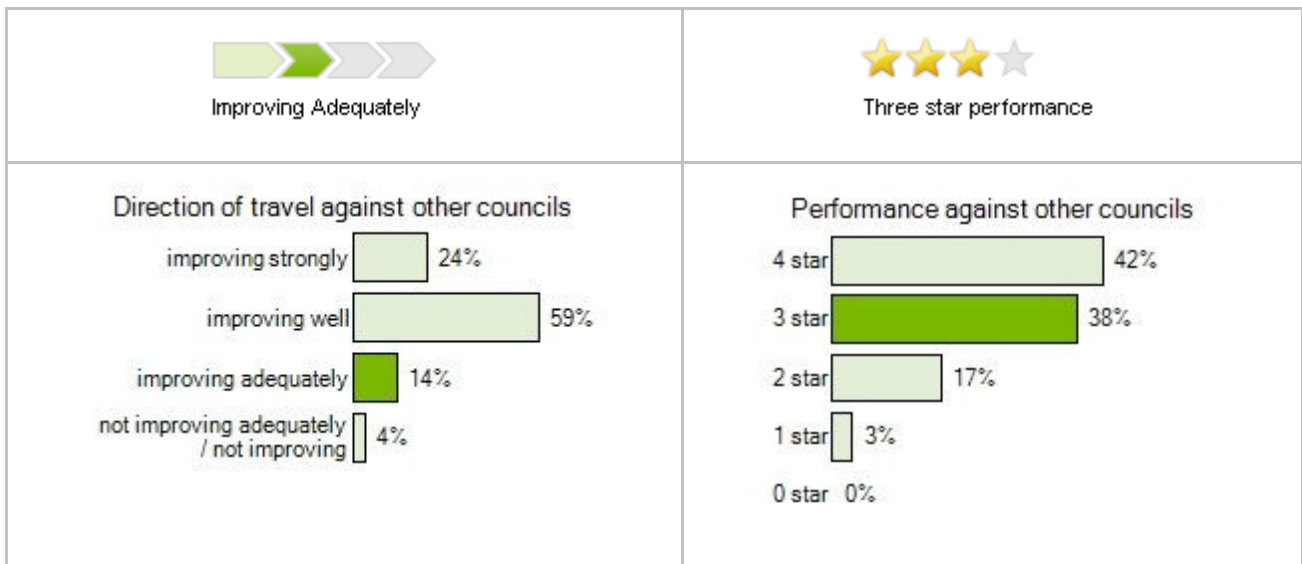
# Purpose, responsibilities and scope

- 6 This report provides an overall summary of the Audit Commission's assessment of the Council. It draws on the most recent Comprehensive Performance Assessment (CPA), the findings and conclusions from the audit of the Council for 2007/08 and from any inspections undertaken since the last Annual Audit and Inspection Letter. [It also includes the results of the most recent corporate assessment.]
- 7 We have addressed this letter to members as it is the responsibility of the Council to ensure that proper arrangements are in place for the conduct of its business and that it safeguards and properly accounts for public money. We have made recommendations to assist the Council in meeting its responsibilities.
- 8 This letter also communicates the significant issues to key external stakeholders, including members of the public. We will publish this letter on the Audit Commission website at [www.audit-commission.gov.uk](http://www.audit-commission.gov.uk). (In addition the Council is planning to publish it on its website).
- 9 Your appointed auditor is responsible for planning and carrying out an audit that meets the requirements of the Audit Commission's Code of Audit Practice (the Code). Under the Code, your appointed auditor reviews and reports on:
  - the Council's accounts;
  - whether the Council has made proper arrangements for securing economy, efficiency and effectiveness in its use of resources (value for money conclusion); and
  - whether the Council's best value performance plan has been prepared and published in line with legislation and statutory guidance.
- 10 This letter includes the latest assessment on the Council's performance under the CPA framework, including our Direction of Travel report and the results of any inspections carried out by the Audit Commission under section 10 of the Local Government Act 1999. It summarises the key issues arising from the CPA and any such inspections. Inspection reports are issued in accordance with the Audit Commission's duty under section 13 of the 1999 Act.
- 11 We have listed the reports issued to the Council relating to 2007/08 audit and inspection work at the end of this letter.

# How is Leeds Council performing?

12 The Audit Commission’s overall judgement is that Leeds Council is improving adequately and we have classified the Council as three star in its current level of performance under the Comprehensive Performance Assessment. These assessments have been completed in all single tier and county councils with the following results.

**Figure 1 Overall performance of councils in CPA**



Percentage figures may not add up to 100% due to rounding

Source: Audit Commission

**Our overall assessment - the CPA scorecard**

**Table 1 CPA scorecard**

<b>Element</b>	<b>Assessment</b>
Direction of Travel judgement	Improving adequately
<b>Overall</b>	<b>3</b>
Corporate assessment	3 out of 4
Current performance	
Children and young people*	2 out of 4
Social care (adults)*	2 out of 4
Use of resources*	4 out of 4
Housing	3 out of 4
Environment	3 out of 4
Culture	3 out of 4
Benefits	4 out of 4

(Note: \* these aspects have a greater influence on the overall CPA score)  
(1 = lowest, 4 = highest)

**The improvement since last year - our Direction of Travel report**

- 13** Using the Audit Commission's performance information profile, 71 per cent of performance indicators improved, above average when compared with other single tier authorities and a significant improvement on the rate of improvement in 2007. This improvement was from a comparatively low base. Only 13 per cent of indicators were in the top performance band.

## How is Leeds Council performing?

- 14 Outcomes for children and young people were mixed, with some good outcomes and successes balanced by some continuing challenges. This means that the Council is judged as adequate for Children's Services and is meeting minimum requirements for users overall. Outcomes in health are adequate. The number of looked after children receiving annual health checks fell. Infant mortality is in line with similar areas but significantly higher than the national average. An effective multi-agency approach to mental health services has ensured good access to services for vulnerable groups like looked after children and young offenders. The 'Healthy schools' programme in Leeds has Beacon Status and is leading to improved outcomes, for example improved uptake of sport in schools. Arrangements for safeguarding vulnerable children were adequate. Whilst the Council's adoption service is effective, its fostering service, and private fostering service were assessed as inadequate. Actions taken to improve the quality of children's homes were judged to have not yet had a significant impact across provision as a whole. The majority of homes were judged to be good, but some need further improvement. The timeliness of reviews of looked after children is significantly below that in similar Councils.
- 15 Outcomes for learning in schools are good. The quality of education in schools and early years settings is mostly good. GCSE attainment continues to improve, faster than both the regional and national average. Many previously underperforming schools have seen significant improvement as a result of targeted citywide effort. Outcomes relating to 'making a positive contribution' are good. Targets for reducing youth crime have been met and a high number of people are engaged in positive activities.
- 16 Outcomes relating to achieving economic well being are adequate. A high proportion of young people are not in employment, education or training, especially from ethnic minority groups. Progress to improve this has been slow. Progress has been made on improving outcomes for school leavers. The proportion of young people obtaining a Level 3 qualification by the age of 19 is lower than in similar councils, and is not improving.
- 17 The Council is achieving mixed outcomes in supporting people to live healthy, fulfilling lives. Inspectors found that adult safeguarding arrangements did not satisfactorily protect vulnerable people. Procedures were weak and agencies were not working together effectively. Elected members did not have access to adequate information about the service and there was not a culture of self scrutiny amongst health and social care staff. The Council has put in place arrangements to improve leadership and governance arrangements to ensure that vulnerable people are kept safe and some improvements have been made.
- 18 The Council performed well in involving recipients of adult social care in decisions about their care. Almost all service users receive a statement of their needs and how they will be met. The number of people with learning disabilities helped into paid employment continued to increase and more older people benefited from intermediate care services. Good progress has been made on increasing the number of people in receipt of direct payments.

- 19** Health outcomes in some priority areas are improving, but not consistently in all areas. Partners are taking a wide range of actions to improve health, including a healthy City physical activity social marketing programme, active travel plans jointly with Sustrans and weight management services to the 10 per cent most deprived areas. Smoking cessation services have attracted service users from the most deprived areas of the city and have achieved slightly higher success rates with this client group. Recent figures show that teenage pregnancy has been reduced. Partners have recognised the need to join up more effectively to tackle obesity.
- 20** The Council worked well with partners to make communities safer. It developed effective multi-agency approaches to address crime. Investment in Police Community Support Officers, taxi queue marshals and targeted action on anti social behaviour contributed to levels of crime falling at one of the fastest rates in the country, with the biggest reductions being in violent crime, vehicle crime and theft from the person. These improvements were offset by increases in burglaries and a slight increase in the number of people killed or seriously injured increased in road traffic incidents. The Council, with partners, has put in place plans to address both these areas.
- 21** The Council made advances in making the environment clean, green and well maintained. There was significant improvement in street cleanliness. Public access to footpaths and rights of way improved. The amount of waste collected per head of population reduced and is now in the best 25 per cent in the county. Although still in the worst 25 per cent nationally, recycling rates improved significantly and additional investment has been made to sustain further improvement in the future. Most local transport targets have been met, but bus patronage has fallen and congestion remains an important issue. The number of cycling trips into the city centre increased significantly, but non-car journeys reduced slightly and did not meet the Council's target.
- 22** The Council is making good progress in supporting thriving and harmonious communities. Good progress is being made towards the Decent Homes standard and access to housing services is generally good. The Council increased the number of non-local authority homes returned to occupation or demolished, where its performance was amongst the best 25 per cent in the country. The availability of affordable housing improved, with 440 affordable homes in 2007/08, compared to 232 in the previous year. But although the number of private sector homes vacant for six months or more continued to fall, performance remained in the worst 25 per cent. Survey results suggest that satisfaction levels of black and minority ethnic tenants with housing services remain relatively low. Initiatives to help vulnerable people find employment and prevent homelessness have had a positive impact.
- 23** The take up of benefits improved. The service provided good value for money and customer satisfaction was good. There is an emphasis on supporting vulnerable customers who struggle to cope with the complex claims process. This can have a negative impact on processing times. The speed of processing new claims has improved over the last three years, and is now in line with the average for metropolitan councils. It compares less well on the time taken to deal with changes in circumstances, where it is in the worst 25 per cent of metropolitan councils. The Council has put in place arrangements to address this.



## How is Leeds Council performing?

- 24** The Council improved its approach to engaging with its diverse communities. The 'Vision for Leeds' was developed using a comprehensive approach to community consultation and engagement, reaching out to a range of disadvantaged groups. Engagement techniques included workshops, conferences, text-messaging, community activity, such as stalls at galas and events, a questionnaire using leaflets, the local media, and the internet. The Council plans to further improve community engagement by establishing an Equalities assembly.
- 25** The Council is making some progress on 'narrowing the gap' and focussing on those made vulnerable by their circumstances. Specific projects, for example on financial exclusion, have contributed to this improvement. The Council has concentrated on the most deprived areas and has reduced the number of areas in the most 3 per cent most deprived in the country by 31 per cent since 2004. The overall Index of Multiple Deprivation rankings has improved, with 74 areas, covering a population of 115,000, improving. 18 areas, covering a population of 27,455 have seen a relative worsening in IMD rank and remain within the 10 per cent most deprived nationally. Education skills and training, crime and the living environment all remain areas of significant concern. The Council recognises that there is much more to do to narrow the gap, and in particular to tackle worklessness in the most disadvantaged areas.
- 26** The Council has made good progress in making Leeds a highly competitive, international city. Substantial investment in cultural facilities has seen the refurbishment of the Art Gallery, Central Library and Grand Theatre and opening of some new attractions such as the City Museum and Kirkstall Abbey Visitor Centre. These improvements led to significant increases in visitor numbers. Plans are well advanced for a major venue in the city – the Leeds Arena. Improvements to the city's infrastructure included the East Leeds Link Road and Inner Ring Road 7.
- 27** The Local Enterprise Growth Initiative is encouraging enterprise in deprived areas and supporting the growth in new businesses. More efficient planning processes meant that the time taken to determine planning applications improved. In year, the percentage of planning appeals allowed increased significantly and the Council fell into the worst 25 per cent of Councils nationally. The Council took swift action in response to this and has seen a significant improvement in performance. The Council has acted to tackle issues related to the economic downturn. To assist small businesses, the Council has approved a Small Supplier Scheme, which will guarantee that invoices will be paid within 20 days.
- 28** The Council has improved customer relations and access to services. It has implemented a customer strategy featuring a corporate contact centre, one stop centres and e-enabled services via the website. However, our ALMO inspections highlighted areas for improvement in customer contact activities. The Council has increased the volume of self service transactions through its website by over 250 per cent in the last three years, including exceeding its 2007/08 target by over 115,000 transactions. The total number of complaints which the Council received from the Local Government Ombudsman fell from 343 in 2006/07 to 275 in 2007/08, and was in the best 25 per cent in the country.

- 29 The Council continues to provide good VFM and improved its 'Use of resources' score from 3 to 4. Spend per head of population is low and costs are in line with comparator authorities. Efficiency savings have been made in a number of areas. The Council has made effective use of IT, partnerships and innovation to drive efficiency improvement. Increases in spending on priority services are beginning to result in improved outcomes, for example in cultural services.
- 30 The Council has made good progress in developing plans to deliver further improvements. Working through well established partnership arrangements, it has developed a Vision for Leeds to be an internationally competitive European city, with three aims: Going up a league as a city, Narrowing the gap and Developing Leeds' role as the regional capital.
- 31 The Vision is reflected in the Leeds Strategic Plan, which incorporates the Local Area Agreement. The Leeds Strategic Plan is integrated with the Council's business plan and is supported by a robust planning and performance management framework. Strategic plans are supported by more detailed finance, service and area plans. Internal risk and project management processes have been strengthened and the Corporate and Central Scrutiny Board is now receiving combined performance and financial information. At partnership level, the Council has worked to establish common principles on governance in relation to finance, risk, audit and performance monitoring.
- 32 The Council is investing in priority services and those identified as needing improvement. Areas of significant additional investment include recycling, children and young people and adult social care. Capacity to improve is hampered by high levels of staff sickness absence which are in the worst 25 per cent and not improving. The Council has developed an action plan to address this and is predicting improvement in 2008/09, based on current performance.

### Corporate assessment

- 33 In May 2008, our Corporate Assessment found that the Council was performing well. Subsequent progress against priorities is covered in detail in our Direction of Travel report. The Corporate Assessment found that the Council, with its partners, has a clear and challenging long term vision to improve economic prosperity and quality of life for all in Leeds. The Council and partners are utilising the considerable inward investment and regeneration of the city to narrow the gap in inequalities and meet demands caused by demographic changes. This vision is based on a good understanding of the national and regional context.
- 34 There has been investment in organisational development to improve the Council's capacity to deliver its ambitions. It has improved its performance management arrangements and political governance. It has streamlined and focused managerial capacity and works effectively and invests strongly in partnerships to support shared delivery of its ambitions for the city.

## How is Leeds Council performing?

- 35 The Council provides strong leadership particularly at a regional level. It has shown strong leadership in both shaping the vision for the City and delivery through the Local Area Agreement (LAA). The Council is focusing service delivery more closely to community needs. However, it has yet to embed some strategic agendas including those for climate change and the over 50s and it has had only limited progress in its strategic approach in partnership to health. Overall, this sets an ambitious framework for action to balance the social, economic and environmental needs of the city.
- 36 The Council regularly consults and seeks people's views through effective working with local communities which contributes to a good shared understanding of what the Council is trying to achieve. There is a strong strategic approach to diversity and this is being built upon to further embed the Council's strong approach to customer focused services.
- 37 Council services provide value for money. A corporate approach to achieving value for money is supported by good medium term financial planning and notable practice in its approach to procurement. Close monitoring allows early intervention and action to be taken on predicted budgetary pressures. Financial standing and management are good.
- 38 There is good capacity to deliver priorities through effective strategic staff management, supported by employee development and training to ensure that staff are focused and committed to providing customer focused services. However, while there is good departmental workforce planning this has yet to be developed corporately. Corporate governance is sound and there is good political leadership and good investment in councillor development. Political decision making is transparent and effective, but challenge through scrutiny and scrutiny boards remains inconsistent.

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## Service inspections

- 39 We inspected the three Leeds Arms Length Management Organisations (ALMOs)
- 40 **Aire Valley Homes (AVH)** is a good two-star organisation, with promising prospects for improvement. It is generally customer focused, has a robust approach to equality and diversity and has made some significant efficiencies. It has effective partnerships on financial inclusion and anti-social behaviour. It is on schedule to meet the decent homes standard by 2010 and manages empty properties and gas servicing well. Customers have the opportunity to be involved and estates are well maintained. There are some weaknesses. Data on the accessibility of sheltered schemes is not robust. There are inefficiencies in dealing with complaints, answering telephone calls and collecting satisfaction data, an underdeveloped customer profile, limited impact from work to manage contractor performance on equality and diversity, below average performance on repairs and larger scale adaptations and in recovering debt, limited involvement of harder to reach customers and only limited action taken to ensure VFM from Council contracts.

- 41 Improvement prospects are promising. AVH has established itself successfully as a company under difficult circumstances and has a track record of making efficiencies. Short-term plans are robust and it is beginning to explore the longer-term future. It has an appropriately arm's length relationship with the Council, strong leadership and an open culture of self awareness and learning. Its corporate performance management system, approach to human resources and information technology issues are robust. Financial management systems are sound and partnerships boost capacity. But performance has not improved in all areas since the last inspection and progress has been slow on some significant problems. Performance management in some frontline areas is patchy. There is no procurement strategy and the board and staff are not representative of the local community.
- 42 **Leeds East North East (ENEHL)** is a fair, one-star organisation with promising prospects for improvement. It has reduced the number of non-decent homes; completes repairs on time; engages well with customers; manages housing income effectively, provides debt and money advice and supports financial inclusion; improving the approach to tenancy and estate management and prioritising customers' safety through effective gas servicing.
- 43 There are some key weaknesses. These include ensuring that all equality and diversity legislation is complied with and that BME customers' satisfaction is at least equal to that of non-BME customers; responding promptly to customer complaints and telephone contact; monitoring agreed standards consistently; and ensuring that more repairs are completed on a planned rather than responsive basis. Services are high cost, rent arrears are high, telephone calls are not answered promptly and the approach to improving value for money is under-developed.
- 44 Improvement prospects are promising. The Board of Management is effective, and leadership ensures that performance post merger has been maintained. Customer satisfaction is improving in key areas and opportunities for customers to be involved have been improved. Efficiency commitments have been exceeded and there is a clear plan to address forecast deficits. However, service improvement is not sufficiently focused on customers, actions to reduce high costs have not been urgently prioritised and procurement capacity is limited.
- 45 **Leeds West North West (WNWhL)** is a fair, 1 star service with promising prospects for improvement. It is customer focused in a range of services, and takes action to help improve access to services for a diverse group of customers. There is a strong strategic approach to asset management with the decent homes standard on target to be achieved by March 2011. Tenants have access to debt advice and there is a range of opportunities for residents to participate which have resulted in service improvements. There is a strategic approach to dealing with anti social behaviour though effective partnership working. There are clear efficiency targets, and savings made include the use of construction partnerships.

## How is Leeds Council performing?

- 46 There are a number of weaknesses. There are delays in accessing services via the telephone. Complaints handling is weak. Customer profiling is under developed and services are not strategically developed in line with the customer profile. There are inefficiencies in repairs delivery including a high level of emergency repairs. The ALMO is not fully aware of its gas servicing performance and information on the gas servicing status of individual properties is not easily accessible. Service charges do not reflect the level of services received. There are low levels of tenants actively involved and those involved are not fully representative of the local community. Case management for anti-social behaviour cases is weak within WNWhL and for those cases passed to the council and outcomes cannot be demonstrated. There is no robust strategic approach to value for money, and the services provided by Leeds Council have not been fully reviewed or market tested.
- 47 Improvement prospects are promising. The change to the new organisation has been managed effectively. There are a number of improvements to services which are important to customers. There is a clear focus on continuous improvement and performance management. Action is under way to address a number of weaknesses identified within the report. There are some areas of weakness. Performance has not improved in all areas since the last inspection and WNWhL and its predecessors have been slow to tackle significant problems. Slow progress has been made in improving gas servicing and services to leaseholders; and in completing the review of SLAs with the council. There are some weaknesses in performance reporting and performance frameworks are not developed in all service areas.
- 48 An important aspect of the role of the Comprehensive Area Assessment Lead is to work with other inspectorates and regulators who also review and report on the Council's performance. CAALs share information and seek to provide 'joined up' regulation to the Council. During the last year the Council has received assessments from other inspectorates:

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**Table 2**      **Scores from other inspectorates**

<b>Service area</b>	<b>Score</b>	<b>Source</b>
Services for children and young people	2	<b>Ofsted</b>
Services for adults	2	<b>CSCI</b>

- 49 The results of these assessments have been reflected in our Direction of Travel report.

# The audit of the accounts and value for money

- 50 Your appointed auditor, KPMG, has reported separately to the Corporate Governance and Audit Committee on the issues arising from our 2007/08 audit and have issued:
- an unqualified opinion on your accounts;
  - a conclusion on your value for money (VFM) arrangements to say that these arrangements are adequate; and
  - a report on the Best Value Performance Plan confirming that the Plan has been audited.

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## Use of Resources

- 51 The findings of the auditor are an important component of the CPA framework described above. In particular the Use of Resources score is derived from the assessments made by the auditor in the following areas.
- Financial reporting (including the preparation of the accounts of the Council and the way these are presented to the public).
  - Financial management (including how the financial management is integrated with strategy to support council priorities).
  - Financial standing (including the strength of the Council's financial position).
  - Internal control (including how effectively the Council maintains proper stewardship and control of its finances).
  - Value for money (including an assessment of how well the Council balances the costs and quality of its services).

## The audit of the accounts and value for money

52 For the purposes of the CPA we have assessed the Council's arrangements for use of resources in these five areas as follows.

**Table 3**

<b>Element</b>	<b>Assessment</b>
Financial reporting	4 out of 4
Financial management	3 out of 4
Financial standing	4 out of 4
Internal control	3 out of 4
Value for money	3 out of 4
<b>Overall assessment of the Audit Commission</b>	<b>4 out of 4</b>

Note: 1 – lowest, 4 = highest

### The key issues arising from the audit

- 53 An unqualified audit opinion was issued to the Authority on 29 September 2008 with no material issues being identified. Officers continued to discuss key accounting issues with KPMG at the earliest opportunity and this contributed to the smooth process of the audit. Officers dealt with audit queries promptly and efficiently.
- 54 To help KPMG form a view on the Authority's arrangements for delivering economy, efficiency and effectiveness of some key projects they have undertaken reviews in the following areas: Business continuity; Youth Services; Project Management and; Corporate Social Responsibility.
- 55 We would particularly like to highlight the work undertaken by KPMG on the Council's Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) scheme, Leeds by Example (LbE). During this review KPMG concluded that the Council have come a long way since the start of the initiative in early 2007. The Council have:
- established a vision for LbE;
  - established external partnerships with Leeds Ahead and Leeds Community Foundation;
  - given individual projects visibility;
  - communicated these projects internally and strengthened external communication; and
  - signed up 29 suppliers to the Council's Community Benefits Charter.
- 56 KPMG concluded in year that the Council has made proper arrangements to secure economy, efficiency and effectiveness in its use of resources.

- 57 The Council improved its overall level of performance within the Use of Resources framework and achieved a level 4 which means that it is performing strongly. The main areas of improvement were financial reporting and financial standing.
- 58 A level 4 was achieved on financial reporting as the working papers provided to support the financial statements were exemplary and required limited further enquiry. Appropriate resourcing arrangements had been made to ensure that audit queries, particularly on more technical issues, could be dealt with promptly.
- 59 A level 4 was achieved on financial standing as the Council has worked hard to embed targets into the performance management framework. Challenging targets have been set for a comprehensive range of financial health indicators and these targets are rigorously monitored. The Council also has a strong risk based reserves strategy in place.



## Looking ahead

- 60 The public service inspectorates have developed a new performance assessment framework, the Comprehensive Area Assessment (CAA). CAA will provide the first holistic independent assessment of the prospects for local areas and the quality of life for people living there. It will put the experience of citizens, people who use services and local tax payers at the centre of the new local assessment framework, with a particular focus on the needs of those whose circumstances make them vulnerable. It will recognise the importance of effective local partnership working, the enhanced role of Sustainable Communities Strategies and Local Area Agreements and the importance of councils in leading and shaping the communities they serve.
- 61 CAA will result in reduced levels of inspection and better coordination of inspection activity. The key components of CAA will be a joint inspectorate area assessment and reporting performance on the new national indicator set, together with an organisational assessment which will combine the external auditor's assessment of value for money in the use of resources with a joint inspectorate assessment of service performance.
- 62 The first results of our work on CAA will be published in the autumn of 2009. This will include the performance data from 2008/09, the first year of the new National Indicator Set and key aspects of each area's Local Area Agreement.

# Closing remarks

- 63 This letter has been discussed and agreed with Council officers. A copy of the letter will be presented at the Corporate Governance and Audit Committee. Copies need to be provided to all Council members.
- 64 Further detailed findings, conclusions and recommendations on the areas covered by audit and inspection work are included in the reports issued to the Council during the year.

**Table 4 Reports issued**

Report	Date of issue
Audit and inspection plan	March 2007
Opinion on financial statements	September 2008
Value for money conclusion	September 2008
ISA 260 Report	September 2008
Corporate Assessment	May 2008
Aire Valley Homes Arms Length Management Organisation (ALMO)	September 2008
Leeds East North East ALMO	January 2009
Leeds West North West ALMO	January 2009
Annual audit and inspection letter	March 2009

- 65 The Council has taken a positive and constructive approach to audit and inspection work, and I wish to thank the Council's staff for their support and cooperation during the audit.

## Availability of this letter

- 66 This letter will be published on the Audit Commission's website at [www.audit-commission.gov.uk](http://www.audit-commission.gov.uk), and also on the Council's website.

Stephen Gregg  
**Comprehensive Area Assessment Lead**  
**31 March 2009**

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# The Audit Commission

The Audit Commission is an independent watchdog, driving economy, efficiency and effectiveness in local public services to deliver better outcomes for everyone.

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## Appendix 2: Children’s Services JAR and APA Progress Monitoring:

The following table lists the recommendations/areas for improvement from the Joint Area Review and Annual Performance Assessment of Children’s Services in Leeds. For ease of reference only, the table uses the recognised Ofsted grading format of ‘poor’, ‘satisfactory’, ‘good’ and ‘excellent’ to judge recent progress against this area of work in Leeds. Following the table there is more detailed explanation behind the assessments made, with brief detail about work done in each of the areas.

Joint Area Review Recommendation*:	Assessment of progress	Annual Performance Assessment area for Improvement	Assessment of progress
<p><u>14-19 Education:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reduce the proportion of young people who leave school with no qualifications</li> <li>• Increase the rate of progress made by pupils in low-performing secondary schools.</li> <li>• Complete the review of 14–19 provision and address the issues involving small school sixth forms, excessive competition and duplication of provision and the low outcomes for some vulnerable groups</li> </ul>	<p>Good</p> <p>Good</p> <p>Good</p>	<p><u>14-19 Education:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• There remain a high proportion of young people who are not in employment, education or training, especially from minority ethnic groups. Progress to improve this has been slow.</li> <li>• The proportion of young people obtaining a Level 3 qualification by the age of 19 is lower than in similar councils and is not improving.</li> <li>• Attendance rates are below those of similar councils despite a significant reduction in the number of persistent absentees.</li> </ul>	<p>Satisfactory</p> <p>Full data unavailable at the time of report publication</p> <p>Satisfactory</p>
<p><u>Outcomes for vulnerable groups:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reduce the number of fixed-term exclusions for looked after children</li> <li>• Improve the proportion of looked after children in education, employment and training at age 16 and 17</li> </ul>	<p>Good</p> <p>Satisfactory</p> <p>Good</p>	<p><u>Outcomes for vulnerable groups:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The number of looked after children receiving final warnings or convictions over the past year is much higher than similar councils or the national average.</li> <li>• Whilst there has been some improvement in the rate of dental checks over the past year, there has</li> </ul>	<p>Good</p> <p>Satisfactory</p>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ensure there is sufficient good quality education and training for young people who offend.</li> </ul>		<p>been a reduction in the number of looked after children receiving annual health checks. Performance remains much lower than in similar councils.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Despite marked improvements in the achievement of children of Black Caribbean and Black African heritage, the achievement of children from some other minority ethnic backgrounds remains low, particularly children of Kashmiri Pakistani origin.</li> <li>High levels of investment in family support and preventative services are not yet leading to improved outcomes for many young people.</li> </ul>	<p>Satisfactory</p> <p>Satisfactory</p>
<p><u>Health:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Establish the mental health needs of the increasing number of 0-19 Black and minority ethnic population.</li> </ul>	<p>Satisfactory</p>	<p><u>Health:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The number of teenage conceptions remains high and the rate has not decreased since the baseline of 1998.</li> <li>Although the council and its partners have taken action and have agreed a new strategy, in 2004-06 the infant mortality rate is significantly higher than the national average.</li> </ul>	<p>Good</p> <p>Good</p>
<p><u>Safeguarding:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ensure all initial child protection conferences happen on time and all core assessments are of good quality</li> <li>Ensure the electronic case record system (ESCR) provides a fixed and permanent audit trail of entries made</li> </ul>	<p>Satisfactory</p> <p>Good</p>	<p><u>Safeguarding:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Action taken to improve the quality of children's homes has yet to have a significant impact across the provision as a whole.</li> <li>The council's fostering service has recently been judged inadequate.</li> </ul>	<p>Satisfactory</p> <p>Satisfactory</p>

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The timeliness of reviews for looked after children has improved but remains significantly below the national average and that found in similar councils.</li> <li>• Despite continued improvement, the participation by looked after children in their reviews remains much lower than similar councils and nationally.</li> <li>• The percentage of unfilled posts for social care staff directly employed for children and families is high and there is too much reliance on temporary staff, with social care vacancy rates nearly twice those found in similar councils.</li> </ul>	<p>Good</p> <p>Satisfactory</p> <p>Good</p>
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\* One JAR recommendation is not included in this list – this was to disseminate the findings of the report to children and young people. This recommendation was fully met through the development of a young people’s version of the final report, shared with young people through schools with the support of ‘the Project’.

## 1.0 14-19 Education

- 1.1 **Progress against three of the key areas** identified under this theme has been **good**. In terms of reducing the number of young people who leave school without a qualification, 97.7% of learners achieved a qualification in 2008. The rate of increase in 2008 was in the top 5% of authorities nationally and consequently the gap with the national average has now closed to 0.9% points. Progress in low-performing secondary schools has also been good. The number of schools below the 2011 Floor Target has reduced from 14 to 6, one ahead of target. Leeds' improvement is in the top 20% nationally. There have also been improvements in value-added scores. The review of 14 – 19 provision is progressing well. Arrangements for Confederations and new college structures have been agreed. The required progress is being made around 'Machinery of Governance' reform (i.e. the process for transferring LSC powers to local authorities). Most 14-19 Progress Check targets are recording good progress.
- 1.2 Progress to improve **attendance** has been **satisfactory** with evidence that Leeds is moving in a positive direction. Over the past year Leeds has seen its best ever levels of secondary school attendance and a significant fall in persistent absence. There has been a 22% reduction in the number of persistent absentees between 2005/06 and 2007/08. There has been particular progress in those schools targeted for specific focus. Attention in this area will continue as, whilst significant progress has been made, secondary attendance figures remain 2.5% below the national average. Leeds is classified by the DCSF as an intensive support authority and a reduction of 1.2 percentage points is required in the 2008/09 academic year for the authority to achieve its target of 7.7%. Ongoing intensive support to target schools will enable continued improvement; a new attendance strategy will be completed during the spring with ownership across key partners. Discussions with schools to enable the sharing of best practice and support are ongoing. Improving attendance will be a key priority in the new Children and Young People's Plan.
- 1.3 Progress on reducing **the number of young people not in education, employment or training (NEET)** has been **satisfactory**. There has been an improvement in the NEET rate, with the most recent annual figures showing a decline from 10% to 9.5%. The rate of improvement has not been as fast as hoped however. This was reflected in the Annual Performance Assessment. In view of this, the Integrated Strategic Commissioning Board, Children Leeds Learning Partnership, and the 14 to 19 Strategy Group have all made NEET a priority area for attention and effort over the coming year. Recent measures taken include the commissioning from April 2009 of a new main provider of Connexions services which has an excellent track record elsewhere in the country. Additional significant external funding has been secured for targeted NEET activity and new mobile provision has been introduced. Like attendance, reducing NEET numbers is also a priority in the new Children and Young People's Plan.



- 1.4 It is too early to make an assessment in relation to the proportion of young people obtaining a Level 3 qualification by the age of 19. Data relating to this from 2008 should be available during the week commencing 23<sup>rd</sup> March 2009 and an update should therefore be possible at the Executive Board meeting. Progress in this area is closely linked to the work being done to review 14-19 provision (see above). Detailed analysis of the causes behind the limited improvement in level 3 performance in recent years is helping partners identify issues that particularly need to be addressed and this has been supported through an action plan agreed with the Learning and Skills Council.
- 2.0 Outcomes for Vulnerable Groups
- 2.1 In terms of outcomes for looked after children, there has been **good progress** in relation to **reducing offending**, with a decrease in the number of offences committed by looked after children and stronger arrangements now in place for better joint working between key partners (e.g. children's homes and the police), faster, targeted referrals towards positive activities and more constructive arrangements to address 'low level' offences. There has also been **good progress** in relation to **LAC exclusions**, with a reduction from 353 in autumn 2007 to 282 in autumn 2008. More targeted support and capacity for this group is now in place.
- 2.2 Progress for **looked after children in terms of improved health outcomes**, specifically around dental health, is **satisfactory**. However, a number of measures have been established in recent months to target this area including a dedicated LAC Dental Health Team to provide dental services to all young people in care and the funding of a specialist sexual health nurse for Looked After Children. Further investment in the LAC Health Team and improvements in performance management over the coming year are expected to bring improvements in this area, when 2009 data becomes available. Progress in terms of **looked after children who are NEET** is **satisfactory**. This reflects the wider ongoing challenges around reducing NEETs. Within the context of the work being done to target NEETs, there is further capacity and targeted support to looked after children, but more development of this work is needed to increase its impact.
- 2.3 Progress has been **good** in **reducing the number of young offenders who are NEET** with increased numbers of these young people staying on in education. Leeds now has one of highest proportion of school age young offenders in full time provision.
- 2.4 Progress on **improving the achievement of black and minority ethnic groups** has been **satisfactory**. The APA area for improvement focuses on children of Kashmiri Pakistani origin and the 5+ A\*-C measure for this group on pupil performance has increased by nearly 9% points. However, the 5+ A-C GCSEs including English and maths measure for Bangladeshi and Kashmiri Pakistani pupils has fallen back in the past two years. Overall the majority of black and minority ethnic groups recorded increases in the

numbers of pupils leaving school with a qualification in the past two years. Kashmiri Pakistani and Other Pakistani heritage pupils' rates are better than the Leeds average.

- 2.5 In primary schools a new project for fourteen schools with high numbers of Pakistani heritage children will consider the causes of underachievement in each school. Good practice is being identified in order for schools to learn from one another. There is evidence that targeted programmes can have a positive impact. However, embedding this success into mainstream provision and for all priority groups is an ongoing challenge. To support this, various programmes have been brought together into a raising attainment strategy, enabling a better targeting of resources.
- 2.6 In terms of improving outcomes as a result of **increased investment in family support and preventative services**, progress has been **satisfactory**. An analysis project in this area by partners at Leeds Metropolitan University has been completed and shared with leaders across children's services organisations through the Integrated Strategic Commissioning Board (ISCB). It has identified particular issues and groups of children (primarily 0-2 year olds and 10-14 year olds) where preventative services can be better targeted and care pathways for children and families most at risk need to be re-modelled, for example with better use of the common assessment framework (CAF) to assist earlier intervention. This intelligence will support more targeted work in the coming months and will also inform the transformation work in Children and Young People's Social Care that is discussed in more detail below.
- 3.0 Health:
- 3.1 Overall progress against health recommendations and areas for improvement has been **good**. The latest figures for **teenage conceptions** show rates are declining after several years of increase. In 2006 the rate was 50.9/1000 teenage conceptions in our 15-17 year old population. The rate for 2007 is showing a decrease, down to a rate of 48.1/1000. This is a 4.6% reduction from the baseline figure of 50.4/1000 in 1998. Reducing teenage conceptions remains a priority for children's services partners. New leadership and commissioning arrangements are now in place and starting to make an impact through more targeted service delivery. This has been underpinned with the agreement of a new strategy, additional investment to improve access to support for young people, a social marketing campaign and an initiative to target resources to the six wards with the highest levels of need.
- 3.2 Progress in **reducing levels of Infant mortality** has been **good**. The data for 2007 indicates a decline in the infant mortality rate. A support visit from the Department of Health national Support Team produced good outcomes, with the Team positive about the plans in place. The new Infant Mortality Strategy is being implemented with the development of targeted action plans for the areas with highest need.

- 3.3 Progress in **establishing the mental health needs of the BME population** has been **satisfactory**. The Joint Strategic Needs Assessment has identified the baseline mental health needs of this group. A more detailed assessment is taking place as part of the ongoing work programme relating to the commissioning of CAMHS provisions.
- 4.0 Safeguarding:
- 4.1 The specific work recommended in the JAR around the **electronic case record system (ESCR)** progress is **good**. At the time of the inspection the functionality for recording audit trails did exist, but was not readily accessible or user friendly. As part of the development to meet the national Integrated Children's System requirements this functionality was improved and is now easily accessible for users and more robust. All staff will be using the new version of ESCR over the coming months. As discussed below, improving the ESCR system is an important strand of the improvement programme taking place in children and young people's social care.
- 4.2 The **timeliness of child protection conferences and quality of core assessments**, show **satisfactory** progress. Child protection conferences processes have been improved, as have monitoring and management of the system. The latest data show 48.3% of conferences are completed on time, compared with 31% in the quarter prior to the publication of the JAR Action Plan. In terms of core assessments progress has been more limited. Implementation of the new national approach to assessment and IT systems (Integrated Children's System or ICS) is delayed, but assessment training is now ongoing and feedback to date on these sessions has been positive. Again this work forms part of the improvement programme outlined below.
- 4.3 Progress on **improving the quality of children's homes** has been **satisfactory**. All but one of these homes have now been judged by OfSTED to be adequate or better. One home was judged to be 'outstanding' with all but one of the remainder judged adequate or good.
- 4.4 Work to **improve the fostering service** following the inadequate grading at inspection has been **satisfactory**. There has been focused effort to address the areas for improvement identified by the inspection. An OfSTED monitoring visit took place in mid-February 2009 and at the time of writing no formal feedback has been received.
- 4.5 Progress on improving the **timeliness of looked after children's reviews** has been **good**. This reflects investment in additional capacity. During the second quarter, 98% of reviews were on time (although, the year end performance measure will be slower to change due to the cumulative way it is measured), improved performance is expected to continue into 2009/10. Progress on **looked after children and young people participating in their reviews** is **satisfactory**. As outlined in the January 2009 APA report, actions are in place to improve performance more significantly, including training, the development of a specialist participation sub-group within the

reviewing team and the introduction of a set of standards for participation. These should make a greater impact as the year progresses.

- 4.6 There has been **good** progress on **reducing the number of unfilled Children and Young People's Social Care vacancies**. Current field social worker vacancies are at approximately 1% and targeted initiatives for specific services areas have made a positive impact. This targeted approach will continue to maintain the trend of reducing the overall number of unfilled posts across Children and Young People's Social Care.



Originator: Peter Marrington

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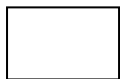
**Report of the Head of Scrutiny and Member Development**

**Scrutiny Board: Children's Services**

**Date: 11<sup>th</sup> June 2009**

**Subject: KPMG – Scrutiny Review – May 2009**

**Electoral Wards Affected:**



Ward Members consulted  
(referred to in report)

**Specific Implications For:**

Equality and Diversity

Community Cohesion

Narrowing the Gap

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**1.0 Purpose of Report**

1.1 This report presents the findings of the recent KPMG external audit review of the Scrutiny function in Leeds. (Appendix 1). The report also details management's response to the review's recommendations.

**2.0 Introduction**

2.1 The objective of the KPMG review was to provide the Council with assurance around the progress made in addressing the improvements areas identified by the Corporate Assessment in early 2008.

**3.0 Background Information**

3.1 As part of their 2008/09 Audit and Inspection Plan, it was agreed that KPMG would carry out a review of the Council's Overview and Scrutiny function. The audit objective was to provide the Council with assurance around the progress made in the improvement areas identified by the Corporate Assessment, specifically:

- The extent to which the Council has a clear vision for the contribution of scrutiny and the resources to deliver that vision;
- The extent to which the skills of the Members on the Scrutiny Boards are matched to and are appropriate for the fulfillment of their role;
- How scrutiny enquiries and public challenge feed into the work programme of Scrutiny Boards;
- The extent to which the information available to Members enables them to reach appropriate conclusions;

- The design of the Call-In arrangements in response to the Council's recent Corporate Assessment report;
- The extent to which the recommendations of the Scrutiny Boards have resulted in changes in service delivery and service improvements;
- The extent to which the seven Scrutiny Boards challenge policy development and the consistency of actions taken by these Boards;
- The extent to which the Scrutiny function fits within the wider performance management arrangements of the Council; and
- The extent to which Scrutiny provides effective challenge and adds value to the Council.

## **4.0 Main Issues**

### **4.1 The key findings of the review are set out below:**

The recognition that in light of the recent Corporate Assessment the Council has been in the process of continuing to strengthen its Scrutiny function and that a number of aspects of good practice were identified, such as:

- Professional relationships have been developed between the Scrutiny Board Chairs and the Principal Scrutiny Advisors;
- A wide range of training tools are used in providing training resources for Scrutiny Board Members;
- Personal development plans are available for all Members which assist in the identification of individual training needs; and
- Inquiry selection criteria forms are used to determine whether full scrutiny Inquiries will be added to the work programme of the Scrutiny Boards.

### **4.2 The key learning points were as follows:**

That whilst the Council continues to develop its Scrutiny function it should ensure that the following areas are strengthened:

- An overall vision for the Scrutiny function should be developed, documented and published;
- The trust between Scrutiny Members, Executive Members and Officers needs to be maintained and developed in order to reinforce the importance of joint working;
- The relationship between Scrutiny Members, Executive Members and Officers needs to continue to develop and political views need to be kept separate from the Scrutiny function;
- There is a continuing need for Executive Members, Scrutiny Board Chairs and Officers to work together to identify areas where the Scrutiny Boards can add value to policy development work streams. Where Scrutiny Boards decide to not undertake work areas suggested by Executive Members a brief rationale should be provided so as to prevent any misunderstandings arising;
- The Scrutiny Boards Procedure Rules Guidance Notes should be strengthened to incorporate that the Scrutiny Boards strive for enhanced lines of internal communication; add value to the Council through the Scrutiny reviews undertaken and incorporate innovation into the approach for challenging the way the Council operates;

- The process of selecting Scrutiny Chairs should be reviewed and a 'job specification' introduced;
- Scrutiny Boards should review whether co-opted Members should be invited to join in their Board;
- All Scrutiny Boards should have 'real time monitoring' as a standing agenda item so that Scrutiny Boards can scan the horizon to identify any emerging issues;
- The efficiency of Scrutiny Board meetings needs to be improved. To achieve this timed or single item agendas should be encouraged where appropriate and pre-meetings used more effectively;
- Scrutiny Members should continue to be encouraged to access web based Scrutiny forums so that they have an additional network of resource to draw upon;
- Reports of Members attendance at Scrutiny meetings should be made to each of the political groups. Where attendance rates fall below an acceptable level then it should be the responsibility of each political party to take appropriate action to address this;
- Scrutiny Board Members should be reminded of the need to assess the performance of key indicators throughout the year and highlight if they feel this should direct any area of their annual work programme;
- Where there are key performance indicators with historical poor performance the Council should report to Scrutiny Boards the actual impact of this poor performance on service delivery; and
- The Scrutiny annual report should be strengthened to clearly outline the service benefits of the recommendations made. In addition its format should be standardised to clearly categorise the work using a consistent series of headings and to clearly display the outcomes of the previous years recommendations recording them as implemented; partially implemented; work in progress; not accepted; and no longer applicable.

4.3 These recommendations will be reported to all Scrutiny Boards for consideration. The Scrutiny Advisory Group will play a role in monitoring the implementation of the recommendations

4.4 In line with the Council's protocol for receiving external audit reports, the Corporate Governance and Audit Committee will also receive the audit report and may chose to refer particular issues to other committees, including Scrutiny Boards, for further detailed consideration.

4.5 Unfortunately, the author of the report is unable to attend today's meeting, therefore the Board may wish to consider the recommendations again at a future meeting when any points requiring clarification can be discussed. However, it was considered appropriate to bring the report to the first meeting of the Board as some of the recommendations refer to the running of Scrutiny Board meetings.

## **5.0 Recommendations**

5.1 Members are asked to consider the review's recommendations and accompanying management response and refer any comments to the Scrutiny Advisory Group.

## **Background Papers**

KPMG Scrutiny Review May 2009





INFRASTRUCTURE, GOVERNMENT AND HEALTHCARE

**Leeds City Council**  
**Scrutiny Review**  
**May 2009**

AUDIT

AUDIT ■ TAX ■ ADVISORY

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This report is addressed to the Authority and has been prepared for the sole use of the Authority. We take no responsibility to any officer or Member acting in their individual capacities, or to third parties. The Audit Commission has issued a document entitled *Statement of Responsibilities of Auditors and Audited Bodies*. This summarises where the responsibilities of auditors begin and end and what is expected from the audited body. We draw your attention to this document.

External auditors do not act as a substitute for the audited body's own responsibility for putting in place proper arrangements to ensure that public business is conducted in accordance with the law and proper standards, and that public money is safeguarded and properly accounted for, and used economically, efficiently and effectively.

If you have any concerns or are dissatisfied with any part of KPMG's work, in the first instance you should contact Adrian Lythgo, who is the engagement director to the Authority, telephone 0113 231 3054, email [adrian.lythgo@kpmg.co.uk](mailto:adrian.lythgo@kpmg.co.uk) who will try to resolve your complaint. If you are dissatisfied with your response please contact Trevor Rees on 0161 246 4000, email [trevor.rees@kpmg.co.uk](mailto:trevor.rees@kpmg.co.uk), who is the national contact partner for all of KPMG's work with the Audit Commission. After this, if you still dissatisfied with how your complaint has been handled you can access the Audit Commission's complaints procedure. Put your complaint in writing to the Complaints Team, Westward House, Lime Kiln Close, Stoke Gifford, Bristol, BS34 8SU or by e mail to: [complaints@audit-commission.gov.uk](mailto:complaints@audit-commission.gov.uk). Their telephone number is 0844 798 3131, textphone (minicom) 020 7630 0421.

# 1 Executive summary

## 1.1 Introduction

Scrutiny Boards are often referred to as the Council “watchdogs” by the press aiming to ensure that Council Tax payers get the best out of their public services. For Scrutiny Boards to provide this service they should have at least two components:

- Ongoing and retrospective consideration of decisions previously taken by the Executive; and
- Forward looking contributions to policy and improvement across the Council.

This review has focused on the ability for the Scrutiny function at Leeds City Council (LCC) to challenge the Council both in terms of ongoing and retrospective consideration of decisions and forward looking contributions to policy and improvement. We have also reviewed the scope and role of the Scrutiny Boards and the information available to Members of the Boards in carrying out their work and drawing their conclusions.

## 1.2 Key findings

We recognise that in light of the recent Corporate Assessment the Council has been in the process of continuing to strengthen its Scrutiny function and during our review we identified a number of aspects of good practice across the Council, such as:

- Professional relationships have been developed between the Scrutiny Board Chairs and the Principal Scrutiny Advisors;
- A wide range of training tools are used in providing training resources for Scrutiny Board Members;
- Personal development plans are available for all Members which assist in the identification of individual training needs; and
- Inquiry selection criteria forms are used to determine whether full scrutiny inquiries items will be added to the work programme of the Scrutiny Boards.

Whilst the Council continues to develop its Scrutiny function further and reflect best practice it should ensure that the following areas are strengthened:

- An overall vision for the Scrutiny function should be developed, documented and published;
- The trust between Scrutiny Members, Executive Members and Officers needs to be maintained and developed in order to reinforce the importance of joint working;
- The relationship between Scrutiny Members, Executive Members and Officers needs to continue to develop and political views need to be kept separate from the Scrutiny function;
- There is a continuing need for Executive Members, Scrutiny Board Chairs and Officers to work together to identify areas where the Scrutiny Boards can add value to policy development work streams. Where Scrutiny Boards decide to not undertake work areas suggested by Executive Members a brief rationale should be provided so as to prevent any misunderstandings arising;

## 1 Executive summary continued

- The Scrutiny Boards Procedure Rules Guidance Notes should be strengthened to incorporate that the Scrutiny Boards strive for enhanced lines of internal communication; add value to the Council through the Scrutiny reviews undertaken and incorporate innovation into the approach for challenging the way the Council operates;
- The process of selecting Scrutiny Chairs should be reviewed and a 'job specification' introduced;
- Scrutiny Boards should review whether co-opted Members should be invited to join in their Board;
- All Scrutiny Boards should have 'real time monitoring' as a standing agenda item so that Scrutiny Boards can scan the horizon to identify any emerging issues;
- The efficiency of Scrutiny Board meetings needs to be improved. To achieve this timed or single item agendas should be encouraged where appropriate and pre-meetings used more effectively;
- Scrutiny Members should continue to be encouraged to access web based Scrutiny forums so that they have an additional network of resource to draw upon;
- Reports of Members attendance at Scrutiny meetings should be made to each of the political groups. Where attendance rates fall below an acceptable level then it should be the responsibility of each political party to take appropriate action to address this;
- Scrutiny Board Members should be reminded of the need to assess the performance of key indicators throughout the year and highlight if they feel this should direct any area of their annual work programme;
- Where there are key performance indicators with historical poor performance the Council should report to Scrutiny Boards the actual impact of this poor performance on service delivery; and
- The Scrutiny annual report should be strengthened to clearly outline the service benefits of the recommendations made. In addition its format should be standardised to clearly categorise the work using a consistent series of headings and to clearly display the outcomes of the previous years recommendations recording them as implemented; partially implemented; work in progress; not accepted; and no longer applicable.

# 1 Executive summary continued

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## 1.3 Way forward

We will discuss the findings of the review with Officers and Members to agree an action plan to address the key issues going forward.

## 2 Introduction

### 2.1 Background

The current constitutions of Local Authorities give selected Councillors an important role in scrutinising the decisions of the Executive. The role of Scrutiny at LCC has evolved over the years and the Council now have established seven Scrutiny Boards whose responsibilities are to examine the decisions, policies and overall performance of the Council, making recommendations for improvement where necessary. The seven Scrutiny Boards cover:

- Adult Social Care;
- Central and Corporate Functions;
- Children’s Services;
- City and Regional Partnerships;
- City Development;
- Environment and Neighbourhoods; and
- Health.

The Scrutiny Boards are often referred to as the Council “watchdogs”, and are made up of Councillors from all political parties and some include Co-opted Members from outside the Council. Legislation requires that to ensure independence there are no Executive Members on any of the Scrutiny Boards.

### 2.2 Objectives and scope of our review

Our objective is to provide the Council with assurance around the progress made in the improvement areas identified by the Corporate Assessment. We specifically focused upon:

- The scope and role of the Scrutiny Boards, their independence and the relationship with the Council’s leadership and the Executive Board;
- The extent to which the Council has a clear vision for the contribution of scrutiny and the resources to deliver that vision;

## 2. Introduction continued

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- The extent to which the skills of the Members on the Scrutiny Boards are matched to and are appropriate for the fulfilment of their role;
- How scrutiny enquiries and public challenge feed into the work programme of Scrutiny Boards;
- The extent to which the information available to Members enables them to reach appropriate conclusions;
- The design of the Call-In arrangements in response to the Council's recent 'Corporate Assessment' report;
- The extent to which the recommendations of the Scrutiny Boards have resulted in changes in service delivery and service improvements;
- The extent to which the seven Scrutiny Boards challenge policy development and the consistency of actions taken by these Boards;
- The extent to which the Scrutiny function fits within the wider performance management arrangements of the Council; and
- The extent to which Scrutiny provides effective challenge and adds value to the Council.

### 2.3 Audit approach

Our approach has been to:

- Review key documents;
- Interview key contacts;
- Observe scrutiny meetings;
- Share best practice; and
- Provide constructive challenge and support.

### 2.4 Acknowledgements

We would like to take this opportunity to thank all those staff at the Council who have supported this review.

## 3 Scrutiny Boards scope and role, independence and wider relationships

### 3.1 Introduction

This section of the report discusses the scope and role of the Scrutiny Boards, their independence and the relationship with the Council's leadership and the Executive Board.

### 3.2 Scope and role of Scrutiny Boards

Each of the seven Scrutiny Boards have their own terms of reference which all outline the functions of the Boards. Within their terms of reference, all Scrutiny Boards state they will:

- Review or scrutinise the exercise of any function of the Council, Executive or any other matter;
- Make reports or recommendations to Council or the Executive either in connection with the exercise of any function of the Council, Executive or on any matter affecting the area or its inhabitants;
- Receive and review external audit and inspection reports;
- Act as the appropriate Scrutiny Board in relation to the Executive's initial proposals for a plan or strategy within the Budget and Policy Framework;
- Review corporate performance indicators; and
- Exercise the right to Call-In decisions made but not yet implemented by the Executive.

In addition all Scrutiny Boards may assist the Council and the Executive in the development and review of policies.

Having compared the terms of reference of the Scrutiny Boards at LCC with those of other Local Authorities it is evident that at LCC these are set within the legal framework whereas at other Authorities they also detail roles outside of this framework.

The softer roles referred to within other Local Authorities terms of reference include being innovative in the approach to Scrutiny; adding value through the reviews completed; striving for greater public involvement in Scrutiny; and improving communication within the Council and wider community. Whilst the role around engaging with the public is expressed within other documentation at LCC there is potential to enhance the procedural notes further by explicitly outlining additional functions / activities that Scrutiny could undertake.



## 3 Scrutiny Boards scope and role, independence and wider relationships continued

### Recommendation One

The Council should review the Scrutiny Board Procedure Rules Guidance Notes and add that the Scrutiny Boards will:

- Be innovative in their approach to challenging the way the Council operates;
- Add value to the Council through the reviews they do; and
- Strive to improve communication channels within the Council and the wider community.

### 3.3 Independence of the Scrutiny Boards and wider relationships

By law no Members of scrutiny boards may be from the Council's Executive Board. However to ensure that an effective Scrutiny function is in place it is essential that a two way relationship is developed between the Executive Board and the Scrutiny Boards. In essence the relationship between the Executive Board Member and the Chair of the Scrutiny Board will impact on how issues are raised and dealt with.

A number of the Scrutiny Chairs feel that relationships with other Members and Officers is a continually evolving process and needs to continue to develop. Executive Board Members also acknowledge that whilst relationships have improved with Scrutiny Chairs there is still further work to be done.

As a result of the need to continue to develop the relationships between Scrutiny Chairs, Executive Board Members and Officers there is an acknowledgment that Scrutiny is not as effective as it could be at LCC and all political groups appear accepting of this.

Some Scrutiny Chairs feel that the role of Scrutiny is under valued by some of the Executive Board and as a result Scrutiny has not been as successful as it could be. Whilst some Executive Board Members felt that Scrutiny has added value to the Council, a couple were unable to give any specific examples of this. Scrutiny Chairs feel that they have tried various techniques to engage with Executive Members including inviting them to meetings; asking for assistance to develop work programmes; having regular update meetings; and sharing Scrutiny recommendations although still there is a recognised need to continue to engage further.

## 3 Scrutiny Boards scope and role, independence and wider relationships continued

### Recommendation Two

The Council should publish and distribute local and national examples of where Scrutiny has added value and impact within the Annual Report. This should be seen by full Council and Officers. This will continue to convey the message that by engaging fully with Scrutiny the Council as a whole will benefit through improved public services.

The need to further develop the relationships between some Scrutiny Chairs, Executive Members and Officers is clearly highlighted by a quote from one Scrutiny Chair "Executive Members will punish Officers for co-operating too fully with Scrutiny requests."

The 'Memorandum of Understanding between Executive Board and Overview and Scrutiny' was devised to address the subtleties and nuances required to establish successful and robust Scrutiny. This should be re-distributed to facilitate professional working relationships and should be introduced on an Annual basis within the Members induction programme.

### Recommendation Three

The Council should raise the profile of the 'Memorandum of Understanding between Executive Board and Overview and Scrutiny' and should encourage further engagement between the Scrutiny Chairs, Executive Members and Officers. On an annual basis this document should also be included within the Members induction programme.

### 3.4 Public engagement

From the Scrutiny Board meetings attended it was noted that attendance by members of the public is poor. Advertising of Scrutiny Board meetings is principally done on the Council's internet site and if a Scrutiny meeting is to be held outside of the Civic centre then fliers will be produced to leave at the place of the new venue. In addition the Scrutiny Support Unit has a mailing list to communicate with people who have previously attended meetings. The Council should consider whether it may be appropriate to try and encourage greater public engagement and as part of this they could look at different methods of advertising their Scrutiny Board meetings.

In order to encourage greater engagement with members of the public and other partners the Council should consider having single item agendas. There have been a number of occurrences within some of the Scrutiny Boards where agenda items have been given disproportionate amounts of time and as a result attendees have been left waiting sometimes not being able to present their given agenda item.

## 3 Scrutiny Boards scope and role, independence and wider relationships continued

### Recommendation Four

Single item agendas should be introduced for Scrutiny Board meetings to improve their efficiency.

In addition to encourage greater engagement with the public, witnesses and co-optees the Council should remind Members that Scrutiny Board meetings are not the appropriate forum to raise political views as there is a risk that by doing so these individuals may feel alienated.

### Recommendation Five

Scrutiny Members should be reminded that Scrutiny Board meetings are not a forum to voice personal political views.

### 3.5 Co-opted Members

Having attended Scrutiny meetings at LCC that had both co-opted Members on the Board and no co-opted Members there appeared to be a greater level of participation by all when the Boards contained co-opted Members. In addition the contribution made by the co-opted Members was very valuable as these Members were able to draw upon their experiences and provide a different perspective.

Currently the constitution of LCC does allow all Scrutiny Boards to have co-opted members it is just something that is not widely exercised. This is almost the opposite at Bristol City Council where there are a large number of Scrutiny Boards with co-opted Members. The Scrutiny Support Unit has however been proactive in this area and have recently taken a paper to the Scrutiny Advisory Group highlighting the benefits of having co-opted Members on Scrutiny Boards.

### Recommendation Six

Each of the Scrutiny Boards should assess more formally whether co-opted Members should be invited to participate in their Board so to allow them to draw from the benefits of their involvement.

## 4 The vision and resources for scrutiny

### 4.1 Introduction

This section of the report discusses the extent to which the Council has a clear vision for the contribution of scrutiny and the resources to deliver that vision.

### 4.2 Vision for effective Scrutiny

By having an overall vision, aim or objective for a particular function it can serve to provide a clearer understanding of that function and demonstrate the added value that that function can bring.

From the documentation reviewed relating to Scrutiny at LCC there was no reference to what the Council see as their vision for Scrutiny. Following discussions with the Scrutiny Board Chairs, it was also clear that they each had their own personal visions for Scrutiny with there being no overarching Council wide vision. The visions from speaking to various Scrutiny Board Chairs included “holding the executive to account”; “getting involved in pre-policy decisions”; and “improving services for members of the public”.

### Recommendation Seven

The Council should ascertain what their overall vision is for the Scrutiny function, formally document this and then publicise it, potentially within the Scrutiny Board Procedure Rule Guidance Notes.

### 4.3 Resources for effective Scrutiny

Whilst there is no overall vision as to the role of Scrutiny at LCC all Officers and Members interviewed felt that the financial resources available to the Scrutiny function were adequate to enable it to fulfil its role. The actual expenditure relating to the Scrutiny support function totalled £574,312 in 2007-08; £585,247 in 2006-07; and £503,875 in 2005-06.

One area of concern that was raised by a Scrutiny Board Chair related to whether members of the Scrutiny Boards fully understand the totality of issues being discussed. Whilst the Scrutiny Boards have access to independent research facilities this

## 4 The vision and resources for scrutiny continued

Member felt that these were predominately internet based and did not allow for specialist expertise to always be obtained on a particular topic area. The Scrutiny Support Unit does however provide a newspaper clipping service for Scrutiny Board Chairs which enables Members to gain further information relating to topic areas and facilitates some horizon scanning to be undertaken and potential emerging issues identified. In addition the Scrutiny Support Unit keep track of up and coming legislation, current consultations, departmental forward plans, publications by pressures, quangos and national bodies and attend numerous seminars and conferences and report back on all of these.

In addition there are a number of web based forums which Scrutiny Members are encouraged to access to gain further information or identify emerging issues. There has also been a Regional Chairs Forum although Members from LCC have not accessed this facility.

### Recommendation Eight

Scrutiny Members should continue to be encouraged to access web based Scrutiny forums so that they have an additional network of resource to draw upon and it will enable further horizon scanning of emerging issues to be undertaken.

## 5 Matching of skills to Scrutiny Board roles

### 5.1 Introduction

This section of the report discusses the extent to which the skills of the members on the Scrutiny Boards are matched to and are appropriate for the fulfilment of their role.

### 5.2 Matching of members skills against the requirements of their role

The Scrutiny Boards are composed of elected Members who are selected to represent the political balance of the Council. As a result each political group has its own method of selection for appointing Chairs and Members to the Scrutiny Boards. However there is no formal matching undertaken by any of the political groups of the skills of Chairs and Members and the skill requirements of a particular Board. Given that there is no formal matching there is a risk that the most suitable candidate in terms of skills, experiences or even interest in the subject matter is not appointed as a Chair or Member of a Scrutiny Board.

### 5.3 Attendance

The table below highlights the percentage of members for each of the Scrutiny Boards that have attended 50% or less of the Scrutiny Board meetings in the time period 1 June 2008 – 19 March 2009:

Scrutiny Board	Percentage of members who have attended 50% or less of the meetings held between 1 June 2008 – 19 March 2009
Adult Social Care	23%
Central and Corporate	14%
Children's Services	27%
City Development	8%
City and Regional Partnerships	17%
Environment and Neighbourhoods	40%
Health	36%

## 5 Matching of skills to Scrutiny Board roles continued

This table clearly highlights that there are a large number of Scrutiny Board Members who are not attending meetings on a regular basis. In addition not only is there a poor attendance rate by some but there are other Members who are either late or who leave meetings early. Poor attendance rates, arriving late or leaving meetings early does not enable all Members to fully engage in the Scrutiny process.

Currently the Head of Scrutiny and Member Development sends reports to the Scrutiny Board Chairs and group Whips highlighting attendance rates for their Members. There is now a need for this to also be sent to each of the political groups for them to take action. For Scrutiny to be seen as effective across the Council it is paramount that Members who sit on each of the Boards attend and contribute to as many meetings as possible.

### Recommendation Nine

Regular reports should be made to the political parties highlighting the attendance rates for their Members. Where attendance rates fall below an acceptable level then it should be the responsibility of each political group to take appropriate action to address this. Alternatively the number of members on Scrutiny Boards could be reduced if there are too many competing demands on Members' time.

It is recognised by some Executive and Scrutiny Members that the Scrutiny function at LCC could be strengthened. Having attended a number of Scrutiny meetings it has been evident that the chairing styles of the Boards does differ and this can lead to there being a lack of clarity over what information the Board actually requires; to agenda items being given disproportionate amounts of time; and the engagement with other partners and members of the public being weak. The Council should therefore look closely at the methods used in appointing Scrutiny Chairs. Due to the differences previously highlighted in the selection methods employed by each of the political groups there is a risk that the Members appointed as Chairs of the Scrutiny Boards are not the most suitable. The Council should consider introducing a 'job specification' outlining the required competencies of a Scrutiny Chair. Each political group should then select the individuals who best meet this specification and this should be approved by the Leader of each group.

### Recommendation Ten

The Council should consider introducing a 'job specification' outlining the required competencies of a Scrutiny Chair. Each political group should then select the individuals who best meet this specification and this should be approved by the Leader of each group.

## 5 Matching of skills to Scrutiny Board roles continued

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There appears to be a range of methods used within the Local Government sector in terms of appointing individuals as Chairs of Scrutiny. These methods include:

- An informal process of nomination, dealt with by each political group and endorsed by full Council;
- Having job specifications, against which each political party appoints the most suitable candidate; and
- Using job specifications for the leader of each political party to formally interview candidates against.



## 6 Development of Scrutiny work programmes

### 6.1 Introduction

This section of the report discusses how scrutiny enquiries and public challenge feed into the work programme of Scrutiny Boards.

### 6.2 Development of Scrutiny work programmes

The first meeting of the year for Scrutiny Boards is held in June where the work programmes for the year are developed. Work programmes are developed having had access to a wide range of information including key performance indicators, external audit and inspections reports and financial data etc. Work programmes are not finalised documents as they are seen to evolve throughout the year.

As work programmes are evolving documents and to ensure that all Members continually identify new areas for inclusion in the work programme each Scrutiny Board should have a standing agenda item which allows for real time monitoring of issues, so that any emerging issues can be identified. This will enable any current issues to be added where appropriate to the work programme and will facilitate the Scrutiny Board being perceived to be having greater impact by continually scanning the horizon for potential issues.

#### Recommendation Eleven

All Scrutiny Boards should have 'real time monitoring' as a standing agenda item.

For a detailed inquiry area to be added to the work programme it will be considered against the Council's 'inquiry selection criteria' and the Scrutiny Board will consult with the relevant Director and Executive Member. The ultimate decision of whether to add an inquiry area to the work programme lies with the Scrutiny Board.

The Council also have a 'request for scrutiny' form that anyone can complete and submit to the relevant Scrutiny Board, this is subject to the same selection criteria above.

## 6 Development of Scrutiny work programmes continued

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At one of the Scrutiny Board meetings attended there was debate about whether or not to add a particular inquiry area to the work programme. Whilst Members of the board spent a considerable amount of time debating whether or not to add this to their work programme it was incorrectly pointed out that this had not been discussed with either the relevant Director or Executive Member. It was therefore decided to move this agenda item to the next meeting. This action was not actually required and could potentially lead to alienation of Members, partners and members of the public if meetings are not conducted in an efficient manner. By ensuring that all Scrutiny boards hold effective pre-meetings this will help to ensure that similar situations are limited.

## 7 Information for Members of Scrutiny Boards

### 7.1 Introduction

This section of the report discusses the extent to which the information available to Members enables them to reach appropriate conclusions.

### 7.2 Quality / Quantity of information

There is a general feeling amongst the Scrutiny Board Members that the quality of information they receive to enable them to reach appropriate decisions is to a high standard. This is felt to be facilitated by the strong relationships that the Scrutiny Board Members have developed with their Principal Scrutiny Advisors.

Across all Council meetings, not just Scrutiny, there is a trend for very large agenda packs. The risk of having such large agenda packs is that people do not get sufficient time to read the contents fully. Having reviewed all Scrutiny agenda packs for March 2009 there are only two with less than one hundred pages and there are four Scrutiny Boards with agenda packs greater than one hundred and fifty pages. The quantity of information that is presented and the number of agenda items may be a contributing factor as to why the contribution within some Scrutiny Board meetings of some Members is limited. The Council should consider whether the agenda packs could be limited in size as this could potentially lead to greater engagement by both Members and other attendees.

At one of the Children's Services Scrutiny Board meetings however, some Members felt that insufficient information was presented to decide if to go ahead and hold an inquiry hence adding an item to their work programme. As a consequence the agenda item had to be carried forward to the next meeting.

All Scrutiny Boards should ensure that they use their pre-meetings more effectively as this should be the forum for Members to voice concerns over the sufficiency of information presented. Chairs should ensure that at pre-meetings all Members are focused upon the forth coming meeting and they should ensure all Members identify which agenda item they will lead on. By having more focused pre-meetings this should lead to more efficient Scrutiny Board meetings.

## 7 Information for Members of Scrutiny Boards continued

### Recommendation Twelve

Scrutiny pre-meetings should be more effectively used. They should be a forum to provide real focus in advance of the Scrutiny meeting.

## 8 Call-In arrangements

### 8.1 Introduction

This section of the report discusses the design of the Call-In arrangements specifically in response to the Council's recent 'Corporate Assessment'.

### 8.2 Call In arrangements

Within the Local Government Act 2000 there is a requirement that Overview and Scrutiny Committees are given the power to recommend that a decision made but not implemented be reconsidered, 'Called In'. As 'Calling In' of a decision can lead to a period of delay before a decision is implemented it was envisaged that this mechanism is used sparingly.

The recent Corporate Assessment made the following observations in relation to Call in arrangements:

*".... Call-In arrangements need to be reviewed to support a fair and effective approach.... Call In arrangements are considered ineffective by many Councillors as two political parties have to agree which has resulted in few Call Ins in recent years."*

Following this observation the Council approved changes to its constitution in May 2008. Call In arrangements must now be signed by:

- Two Non Executive elected Members (who are not from the same political party); or
- Any five Non Executive elected Members.

Following the changes implemented above another review of the Call In arrangements was undertaken in October 2008 and the following arrangements implemented:

- Scrutiny Board Members should no longer be signatories to Call Ins which they will hear;
- A substitute Member is entitled to attend the Scrutiny Board meeting where the Call In is received in place of a regular Member; and
- Call in meetings can be adjourned up to a maximum of five working days to allow information not available at the time but considered crucial by the Scrutiny Board in order to reach a decision.

## 8 Call-In arrangements continued

As a consequence of these changes there has been an increase in the number of Call Ins received, which now appear in line with the level of Call Ins at other Local Authorities. These changes have also led to the view that Call Ins are becoming increasingly more effective.

One of the decisions recently Called In was at the City Development Scrutiny Board and related to a decision made around cemeteries and crematoria fees. Whilst this decision was released for implementation, it was noted that under the Officer Delegation, the decision had been implemented before the Call In period had expired. Internal Audit at the Council have recently highlighted this issue and included a recommendation within one of their reports.

### Recommendation Thirteen

The Scrutiny Support Unit should remind Officers of the processes that need to be adhered to relating to Call Ins.

## 9 Service delivery, service improvements and added value of Scrutiny

### 9.1 Introduction

This section of the report discusses the extent to which the recommendations of the Scrutiny Boards have resulted in changes in service delivery and service improvements and the extent to which Scrutiny adds value to the Council.

### 9.2 Service delivery and service improvements

Historically Scrutiny Boards have had no comprehensive system for tracking the implementation of recommendations. Hence it has not always been clear to demonstrate service delivery or improvements following recommendations made. To address this the Council have recently implemented a formal tracking system so that Scrutiny Boards can monitor the implementation of their recommendations in a more systematic way.

In addition on an annual basis a report is produced of the work undertaken by the Council's Scrutiny Boards. This highlights in detail the areas of focus of each Board and highlights some of the recommendations made. This could be further strengthened by outlining the service benefits of these recommendations as a demonstration of the impact Scrutiny can have.

#### Recommendation Fourteen

Within the Scrutiny annual report each Scrutiny Board should clearly outline the service benefits of the recommendations made. In addition each Scrutiny Board should consider using a consistent table or graph to clearly display the impact of their recommendations and the outcomes recording them as implemented; partially implemented; work in progress; not accepted; and no longer applicable.

Whilst not having had a formalised monitoring system in place for a long period of time, the Council is still able to highlight a wide range of examples of where the recommendations of the Scrutiny Boards have resulted in service delivery or improvements. A selection of examples are highlighted below:

- In November 2005 the Children's Services Scrutiny Board established a Young People's Scrutiny Forum to carry out scrutiny on topics chosen by the young people themselves. In their second year the Young People's Scrutiny Forum reviewed transport arrangements in Leeds for Young People and a local campaign has been launched for free bus travel for young people.

## 9 Service delivery, service improvements and added value of Scrutiny continued

- The Children's Services Scrutiny Board have been involved in steering the Council's approach to the development of Trust Schools to enable a proactive strategic approach to maximise the potential that Trust Schools might have in improving outcomes for children in deprived communities.
- The Scrutiny Boards also provide an important function to ensure that all parties have their views heard and comprehensively reflected. This has recently been evidenced where staff at a local school agreed to call off strike action after it was decided that Scrutiny would undertake an inquiry into a school based issue.
- The Health and Adult Social Care Scrutiny Boards have previously been acknowledged as being instrumental in improving the negotiations and working relationships between the Leeds Teaching Hospitals NHS Trust and the LGI Kidney Patients Association.
- Some of the funding awarded by the Centre for Public Scrutiny has been used to achieve one of the objectives of the Healthy Leeds Partnership's 'Health and Wellbeing Plan' which was to establish a Community Development Network for Leeds.
- Following a recommendation made by the Health and Adult Social Care Scrutiny Boards being implemented, for a representative from the Council's Development Department to become a member of the Leeds Childhood Obesity Strategy Group, it is recognised that they have played an active part in developing the action plan for tackling childhood obesity.
- The Environment and Neighbourhoods Scrutiny Board have been involved in an inquiry into the Council's own CO2 emissions. From reviewing this it is highly commendable to see the Board had factored into their inquiry future legislative changes relating to the Carbon Reduction Commitment.

All of the examples highlighted above have been identified by Scrutiny Members. None of the Executive Members interviewed were able to say when questioned any areas where Scrutiny has added value or where Scrutiny recommendations had led to service improvements. When asked as to why the Executive Members felt this was the case, some stated that they felt Scrutiny had become "cosy" and the enquiries held were "not very challenging". Some Executive Members felt that Scrutiny recommendations were ones that predominately had been generated by Officers themselves. Having reviewed a large number of Scrutiny recommendations this does not always appear to be the case although it does highlight the need for all Scrutiny Members to ensure they act with professional scepticism in all they do.



# 10 Policy development

## 10.1 Introduction

This section of the report discusses the extent to which the seven Scrutiny Boards challenge policy development and the consistency of actions taken by these Boards.

## 10.2 Policy development

Policy development can take the form of being involved in the development of a new policy area or can involve suggesting modifications to previous policies. Across the Council there are examples that a number of Scrutiny Boards are involved in some form of policy development, even if at the out set the area of review was not badged as policy development. Whilst there is still room for improvement in ensuring all Scrutiny Boards are more involved in policy development there is a consensus that there is a shift in the right direction and increasingly more work is being done in this area. From a review of the 2007/08 annual report which categorises the different types of work that the seven Scrutiny Boards have been involved in, it is clear to see that 33% of their total work in 2007/08 involved some form of policy review or development compared to 24% in 2006/07.

There are however, a number of Scrutiny Board Members who feel that they would like to be more involved in policy development. Following discussions with both Scrutiny Chairs and Executive Members there are a small number of inconsistencies in how the role of Scrutiny in policy development is viewed. From the feedback we received some Scrutiny Chairs do feel bypassed in policy development. Some Executive Members however felt that despite providing direction to Scrutiny Boards in terms of useful areas of work and policy development that they would like Scrutiny to get involved in, this is often ignored. During our review, however, we found limited evidence of this. In addition Executive Members stated that no rationale was provided as to why these areas were not felt to be priorities for the Scrutiny Boards.

### Recommendation Fifteen

There is a continuing need for Executive Members, Scrutiny Board Chairs and Officers to work together to identify areas where the Scrutiny Boards can add value to policy development work streams. Where Scrutiny Boards decide not to undertake work areas suggested by Executive Members a brief rationale should be provided so to prevent any misunderstandings arising.

## 10 Policy development continued

From a review of this years and prior years' work programmes it is evident that one example of where the Culture and Leisure Scrutiny Board (as it was previously called) could have been more involved in policy development was in regards to the proposals to establish a Sports Trust. The Board did however identify this as a potential area of work although following discussions decided against taking this forward.

There are a number of examples however of where the Scrutiny Boards have been able to demonstrate involvement in policy development. Examples include:

- The Children's Services Scrutiny Board where they have been actively involved in policy development relating to the services for 8 – 13 year olds; the development of an inclusion Strategy; and the education and training provision in Leeds for 14 – 19 year olds;
- The City Development Scrutiny Board have commented on a number of ongoing plans and strategies which has included the Local Development Framework;
- The Environment and Neighbourhoods Scrutiny Board have been involved in an inquiry into housing lettings which examined the Council's current housing lettings policy; and
- The Health Scrutiny Board have recently commenced an inquiry looking at teenage pregnancy and sexual health.

The Council's Scrutiny Boards' Annual Report is an excellent forum to highlight the examples of where the Scrutiny Boards have been involved in policy development or service enhancements. However other than in the introductory section - 'Work of the Boards' which shows the different types of work Scrutiny has been involved in, and the Children's Services section which shows the areas where they have been involved in the review of existing policy and the development of new policy, the remaining report sections make it difficult to identify which areas of work relate to policy development or review. The Head of Scrutiny and Member Development is looking to make changes to the 2008/09 Annual Report to make the identification of policy development work streams easier.

### Recommendation Sixteen

Templates for the layout of the Annual Report should be provided to Scrutiny Chairs so to increase the consistency and to enable greater comparability between the work of each of the Boards. Within the Annual Report each Scrutiny Board should clearly categorise the work using a consistent series of headings.

# 11 Performance Management

## 11.1 Introduction

This section of the report discusses the extent to which the Scrutiny function fits within the wider performance management arrangements of the Council.

## 11.2 The role of performance management within Scrutiny

At the start of the year when the work programmes for the Scrutiny Boards are developed (June) performance management information is shared with each Board to enable this to shape the direction of their work.

Performance management information is then presented on a quarterly basis to enable the Board to challenge the information and ask questions where appropriate to either the Executive Member, a corporate performance management Officer or the relevant Services Director. This should then provide some assurance that adequate progress is being made and where this is not the case provides a mechanism to challenge performance further.

Concern was raised by one Scrutiny Board Member that consistent poor performance against a particular key performance indicator (KPI) is not identified by Officers as being a potential area where the Scrutiny Board can provide insight and add value to the Council. Some Members, however have to take greater ownership and accountability here and not rely upon others to direct their work programmes but should feel empowered to proactively identify this themselves.

### Recommendation Seventeen

Scrutiny Board Members should be reminded of the need to assess the performance of key indicators throughout the year and use this to direct any area of their annual work programme.

Some Scrutiny Board Members also raised concern that whilst they are presented with data relating to KPIs on an exception basis they often do not fully understand the impact of this. Some organisations actually present information relating to what the impact is on the organisation of not achieving a particular KPI, this may be something the Council should consider for particular KPIs that have had historical poor performance.

# 11 Performance Management continued

## Recommendation Eighteen

Where there are key performance indicators with historical poor performance the Council should report to Scrutiny Boards the actual impact of this poor performance on service delivery. This may help identify areas where the Council could involve Scrutiny Boards further.

There are good examples however of where some Scrutiny Boards are clearly using performance information to shape their work programmes. The Environment and Neighbourhoods Scrutiny Board are one such board which have identified areas where performance was not meeting the required targets and used this to request more detailed information which lead to an inquiry being undertaken.

### 11.3 Performance Management of Scrutiny

Within the Scrutiny Annual Report there is detail provided of the work that is undertaken by each of the seven Scrutiny Boards. Each Scrutiny Board provides a brief summary of the work they have undertaken and the recommendations raised however it is difficult given the current format of the report to monitor the actual outcomes. Each Scrutiny Board should consider using a consistent table or graph to clearly display the outcomes of the recommendations recording them as implemented; partially implemented; work in progress; not accepted; and no longer applicable. This will ensure that the impact of Scrutiny is clearly identifiable. This is to be incorporated into the 2009/10 Annual Report.

# Recommendations and action plan

***	<b>Significant residual risk</b> **	<b>Some residual risk</b> *	<b>Little residual risk</b> *	<b>Little residual risk</b>
	<b>Recommendation</b>	<b>Priority</b>	<b>Management response</b>	<b>Responsibility and timescale</b>
1	<p>The Council should review the Scrutiny Board Procedure Rules Guidance Notes and add that the Scrutiny Boards will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Be innovative in their approach to challenging the way the Council operates;</li> <li>• Add value to the Council through the reviews they do; and</li> <li>• Strive to improve communication channels within the Council and the wider community.</li> </ul>	*	Agree.	Head of Scrutiny and Member Development September 2009
2	<p>The Council should publish and distribute local and national examples of where Scrutiny has added value and impact within the Annual Report. This should be seen by full Council and Officers. This will continue to convey the message that by engaging fully with Scrutiny the Council as a whole will benefit through improved public services.</p>	***	<p>Agree.</p> <p>The Annual report is already presented to full council.</p> <p>A number of scrutiny case studies have featured in national toolkits and studies. In addition some scrutiny reviews were featured in the 'Picture of Leeds' series produced for the CPA in 2007.</p> <p>We will look at strengthening this aspect by incorporating such messages into our overall 'communications strategy'.</p>	Head of Scrutiny and Member Development September 2009

# Recommendations and action plan

***	Significant residual risk	**	Some residual risk	*	Little residual risk
	Recommendation	Priority	Management response		Responsibility and timescale
3	The Council should raise the profile of the 'Memorandum of Understanding between Executive Board and Overview and Scrutiny' and should encourage further engagement between the Scrutiny Chairs, Executive Members and Officers. On an annual basis this document should also be included within the Members induction programme.	***	Agree. The development of a Council vision for scrutiny (recommendation 7) will be a good tool to develop this engagement further. The 'Memorandum of Understanding' will be refreshed and re-circulated annually.	*	Head of Scrutiny and Member Development June 2009 onwards
4	Single item agendas should be introduced for Scrutiny Board meetings to improve their efficiency.	**	Agree. Scrutiny Boards will be encouraged to focus on single item agendas wherever possible and appropriate when developing their work programmes.		Scrutiny Chairs/Head of Scrutiny and Member Development June 2009 onwards
5	Scrutiny Members should be reminded that Scrutiny Board meetings are not a forum to voice personal political views	**	Agree. This will first take place at the June meeting, but Group whips will be reminded via the publication of this report. We accept that whilst party politics should be left at the door, Members will rightly be influenced by their political views but will make recommendations based on evidence.		Scrutiny Chairs/Group Whips/Head of Scrutiny and Member Development June 2009 onwards

## Recommendations and action plan (Cont.)

***	Significant residual risk **	Some residual risk **	Priority	Management response	Little residual risk *
	Recommendation				Responsibility and timescale
6	Each of the Scrutiny Boards should assess more formally whether co-opted Members should be invited to participate in their Board so to allow them to draw from the benefits of their involvement.	**	**	Agree. This will be a formal item on the June Scrutiny Board meeting agendas.	Head of Scrutiny and Member Development June 2009
7	The Council should ascertain what their overall vision is for the Scrutiny function, formally document this and then publicise it, potentially within the Scrutiny Board Procedure Rule Guidance Notes.		*	Agree. We would suggest that the CfPS five principles of scrutiny are used as a starting point. This will require sign up by the Leaders and should involve a wide range of stakeholders.	Head of Scrutiny and Member Development/ Administration Leaders/Scrutiny Chairs October 2009
8	Scrutiny Members should continue to be encouraged to access web based Scrutiny forums so that they have an additional network of resource to draw upon and it will enable further horizon scanning of emerging issues to be undertaken.		*	Agree. Members will be reminded of these resources on an annual basis at the start of the municipal year, as well as on an ongoing basis.	Head of Scrutiny and Member Development June 2009 onwards

## Recommendations and action plan (Cont.)

***	Significant residual risk **	Some residual risk	* Management response	Little residual risk Responsibility and timescale
	Recommendation	Priority	Management response	Responsibility and timescale
9	Regular reports should be made to the political parties highlighting the attendance rates for their Members. Where attendance rates fall below an acceptable level then it should be the responsibility of each political group to take appropriate action to address this. Alternatively the number of members on Scrutiny Boards could be reduced if there are too many competing demands on Members' time.	**	Agree. We currently do this to political groups.	Head of Scrutiny and Member Development/ Group Whips Ongoing
10	The Council should consider introducing a 'job specification' outlining the required competencies of a Scrutiny Chair. Each political group should then select the individuals who best meet this specification and this should be approved by the Leader of each group.	**	We shall be introducing 'job specifications' as part of our bid to achieve 'CharterPlus' for Member Development. Whilst the competencies required for the role will be made available to the political groups, the groups need to consider the requirements for the role within the context of national party rules.	Head of Scrutiny and Member Development October 2009 Political Groups



## Recommendations and action plan (Cont.)

***	Significant residual risk **	Some residual risk *	Little residual risk
	Recommendation	Priority	Management response
11	All Scrutiny Boards should have 'real time monitoring' as a standing agenda item.	*	Agree. All Scrutiny Boards have a standing item where they review their work programme, and receive the Forward Plan and Executive Board minutes to assist them in any reprioritisation of work. This is required by the Council's constitution. All Scrutiny Boards also have the facility to engage in general discussions with the appropriate Executive Member and Director about service issues. We would not envisage this being a standing item but a facility available to Scrutiny Boards when appropriate.
12	Scrutiny pre-meetings should be more effectively used. They should be a forum to provide real focus in advance of the Scrutiny meeting.	**	Agree. We believe that there is scope to improve on the current use of pre-meetings.
13	The Scrutiny Support Unit should remind Officers of the processes that need to be adhered to relating to Call Ins.	*	Agree. We will work with colleagues in Governance Services to ensure officers across the council are aware of the stages and timescales involved in the decision-making process, particularly in relation to the call-in requirements.
			Responsibility and timescale Head of Scrutiny and Member Development Ongoing
			Head of Scrutiny and Member Development/Scrutiny Chairs June 2009 onwards
			Head of Scrutiny and Member Development/Head of Governance Services September 2009

## Recommendations and action plan (Cont.)

***	Significant residual risk **	Some residual risk	* *	Little residual risk
	Recommendation	Priority	Management response	Responsibility and timescale
14	<p>Within the Scrutiny annual report each Scrutiny Board should clearly outline the service benefits of the recommendations made. In addition each Scrutiny Board should consider using a consistent table or graph to clearly display the impact of their recommendations and the outcomes recording them as implemented; partially implemented; work in progress; not accepted; and no longer applicable.</p>	**	<p>Agree. This will be introduced for the 2009/10 Annual Report. The progress of recommendations will relate mainly to those recommendations made the previous year. We will use our existing recommendation tracking system to provide this information.</p>	<p>Head of Scrutiny and Member Development May 2010</p>
15	<p>There is a continuing need for Executive Members, Scrutiny Board Chairs and Officers to work together to identify areas where the Scrutiny Boards can add value to policy development work streams. Where Scrutiny Boards decide not to undertake work areas suggested by Executive Members a brief rationale should be provided so to prevent any misunderstandings arising.</p>	**	<p>Agree. The success of this will depend on the relationship between Scrutiny and Executive Board Members. The work programme setting meeting in June will be crucial for this to be a success. The Scrutiny Board Procedure Rules already require the Board to provide an explanation where it turns down a suggestion from the Executive Board.</p>	<p>Head of Scrutiny and Member Development June 2009 onwards</p>

## Recommendations and action plan (Cont.)

***	Significant residual risk	**	Some residual risk	* Little residual risk
	Recommendation	Priority	Management response	Responsibility and timescale
16	Templates for the layout of the Annual Report should be provided to Scrutiny Chairs so to increase the consistency and to enable greater comparability between the work of each of the Boards. Within the Annual Report each Scrutiny Board should clearly categorise the work using a consistent series of headings.	**	Agree. This will be introduced for the 2009/10 Annual Report. The use of categories of work has been introduced for the 2008/09 annual report	Head of Scrutiny and Member Development May 2010
17	Scrutiny Board Members should be reminded of the need to assess the performance of key indicators throughout the year and use this to direct any area of their annual work programme.	**	Agree. A training session, facilitated by the Centre for Public Scrutiny will take place in June and the messages reinforced throughout the year.	Head of Scrutiny and Member Development May 2009 onwards
18	Where there are key performance indicators with historical poor performance the Council should report to Scrutiny Boards the actual impact of this poor performance on service delivery. This may help identify areas where the Council could involve Scrutiny Boards further.	**	Agree. This will be fed into the quarterly performance monitoring reports received by all Scrutiny Boards	Head of Scrutiny and Member Development and Head of Policy, Planning and Improvement October 2009

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## Report of the Head of Scrutiny and Member Development

### Scrutiny Board: Children's Services

Date: 11 June 2009

### Subject: Executive Board referral

**Electoral Wards Affected:**

**Specific Implications For:**

Equality and Diversity

Community Cohesion

Narrowing the Gap

## 1.0 Introduction

- 1.1 A referral for scrutiny has been received from the Executive Board.
- 1.2 At the Executive Board meeting on 13 May, Members considered the Scrutiny Inquiry report published by the City and Regional Partnerships Scrutiny Board on the role of the voluntary, community and faith sector (VCFS) in council led community engagement. As a result of the discussion, the Executive Board resolved

*"That the Scrutiny Board (City and Regional Partnerships) inquiry report into the role of the voluntary, community and faith sectors in Council led community engagement be referred to Scrutiny Board (Children's Services) and Scrutiny Board (Adult Social Care) for consideration, with a further report being submitted to Executive Board in due course."*

A copy of the Inquiry report is attached as Appendix 1, along with the proposed officer response to the recommendations, which was reported to the Executive Board.

## 2.0 Background

- 2.1 Over the past few years, the role of the VCFS in the provision of children's services has been a feature of many of the Board's inquiries. The Board has specifically included a representative of the VCFS as a co-opted member of the Board to ensure that the sector's voice is integral to the Board's work.

- 2.2 A number of the Children's Services Scrutiny Board inquiries have included specific recommendations in relation to the role of the VCFS, and the support required from the council to enable all parts of this very diverse sector to continue to provide an effective input within the commissioning environment.
- 2.3 In particular the Board has made the following specific recommendations:

Youth Services Inquiry – published May 2007

Recommendation 3

We recommend that the Director of Children's Services ensures that arrangements for funding and commissioning youth services through the voluntary, community and faith sector includes provision for the strategic capacity of the sector to be an effective partner in service delivery and development.

Recommendation 4

We also recommend that the Director of Children's Services promotes the development of local networks to help smaller organisations to play an effective part in the youth offer and qualify for funding.

Inquiry into Services for 8-13 year olds – published April 2008

Recommendation 1

That the Director of Children's Services reports to us within 3 months on how the new commissioning strategies being adopted by the Children Leeds Partnership will provide a more stable funding framework for services to 8-13 year olds.

Recommendation 8

We recommend that the Director of Children's Services promotes the development of local networks to help smaller organisations to continue to play an effective part in the provision of services for 8 to 13 year olds and qualify for funding.

- 2.4 Paragraph 72 of the City and Regional Partnerships Scrutiny Board's inquiry report makes particular mention of services for 8-13 year olds, and refers to the above inquiry report by the Children's Services Scrutiny Board. In addition, paragraph 49 of the report refers to the work of the Integrated Strategic Commissioning Board of Children Leeds as a positive example of engagement with the VCFS.

### **3.0 Recommendation**

- 3.1 The Board is asked to consider the City and Regional Partnerships Scrutiny Board inquiry report, and agree any comments to be fed back.

### **Background papers**

Executive Board minutes – 13 May 2009



Originator: S Wynne  
Tel: 39 50440

**Report of the Director of Environment and Neighbourhoods**

**Executive Board 13 May 2009**

**Response to the City and Regional Partnerships Inquiry into the Inquiry into the role of the voluntary, community and faith sectors (VCFS) in council led community engagement**

**Electoral Wards Affected:**

Ward Members consulted (referred to in report)

**Specific Implications For:**

Equality and Diversity

Community Cohesion

Narrowing the Gap

Eligible for Call In

Not Eligible for Call In (Details contained in the report)

**EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

1. This report provides the Executive Board with details of the recommendations from the recent City and Regional Partnerships Scrutiny Board into the role of the voluntary, community and faith sectors (VCFS) in council led community engagement and details how the Director proposes to respond to these recommendations. The report asks the Board to approve the proposed response.

**RECOMMENDATIONS**

2. Executive Board are recommended to:  
  
Approve the proposed responses to the Scrutiny Board's recommendations.

## **1.0 Purpose Of This Report**

- 1.1 This report provides the Executive Board with details of the recommendations from the recent City and Regional Partnerships Scrutiny Board inquiry into the role of the voluntary, community and faith sectors (VCFS) in council led community engagement and details how the Director proposes to respond to these recommendations. The report asks the Board to approve the proposed response.

## **2.0 Background Information**

- 2.1 From September 2008 to February 2009, the City and Regional Partnerships Scrutiny Board conducted an inquiry into the role of the VCFS in council led community engagement activity.
- 2.1 The inquiry had a broad remit and looked at barriers to the involvement of VCFS organisations in community engagement activity including resources available to the sector and how these might be addressed. The final scrutiny report, containing full details is attached at appendix 1.
- 2.2 The report makes 8 recommendations for action. The Director of Environment and Neighbourhoods has accepted these recommendations and actions are underway or planned to address with involvement from the sector through the VCFS Partnership Group established under the Narrowing the Gap Board of the Leeds Initiative.

## **3.0 Main Issues**

- 3.1 The Scrutiny Board's 8 recommendations are listed below along with a response from the Director of Environment and Neighbourhoods.

### **3.2 Recommendation 1:**

*That the Director of Environment and Neighbourhoods co-ordinates work across the Council to undertake a Compact for Leeds awareness and compliance self assessment. This will enable the Board to assess the extent to which Council services engage with and recognise the value of VCFS in developing and improving their plans and policies in order to deliver a customer based service.*

The Director of Environment and Neighbourhoods has identified an officer in the Regeneration Service to undertake an awareness raising exercise and compliance audit of Council Services. The outcomes of the audit and recommendations for action will be reported to Scrutiny Board. The timetable for this work is linked to recommendations 4 a and 4b.

### **3.3 Recommendation 2:**

*That through the VCFS Partnership Group the Director of Resources and the Director of Environment and Neighbourhoods:-*

- (a) reviews the period of funding attached to grant awards to VCFS organisations with a view to phasing in 3 – 5 year awards from April 2010 for appropriate schemes.*
- (b) identifies and provides appropriate support to enable VCFS organisations to develop planned exit strategies to better manage expiry of funding awards*



- (c) *strengthens leadership and collaborative arrangements within the Council and in the VCFS to minimise the potential for the duplication of commissioned activity in order to maximise the effectiveness and efficiency of the services being provided by April 2010*
- a) The Resources Sub-group of the Partnership will work with representatives of Council Services to review grant funding periods to VCFS organisations. This work will focus initially on mainstream grant funded activity that is wholly within the Council's control and will note which external grant funding bodies do and do not provide funding beyond 1 financial year. The findings of the review and recommendations for change will be reported to Scrutiny Board by end of June 2009.
- b) A guidance and advice booklet will be published on developing forward strategies and the closure of schemes will be produced by end of May 2009. This will identify named contact officers within services that can offer further information and advice where funding is due to come to an end.
- c) The VCFS Partnership Group received a report at its last meeting on the VCFS proposals for Third Sector Together. This is a proposal to strengthen leadership and the coherence of the sector and support greater collaboration and co-operation across and within the sector. Commissioning opportunities and improved access to these feature strongly in this proposal. Officers have broadly welcomed this proposal and the Regeneration Service is supporting work on commissioning through funding the Supporting Commissioning Links project led by Leeds Voice and re'new. The project aims to develop more coherent relationships and information flows between the Council and the VCFS about commissioning opportunities and guidance and training to access these. This requires Council services to work collaboratively with the aim of minimising the opportunity for duplication and improving efficiency and supporting the sector to improve the effectiveness of commissioned activity. The Resources Sub-group, which includes representation from Council Services, will oversee the delivery of the Supporting Commissioning Links project and will agree a timetable for reporting on the project outputs at its meeting on 2 April 2009.

#### 3.4 Recommendation 3:

*That through the VCFS Partnership Group the Director of Environment and Neighbourhoods identifies*

- (a) *what further improvements could be made to simplify the current procedures and processes (including funding) and how the Council in conjunction with the VCF sector could better provide quality support including training and advice to local voluntary organisations.*
- (b) *the impacts of current commissioning strategies on smaller organisations and identifies what safeguards could be developed to prevent losing the valuable services of these smaller organisations that provide a valuable service to the local community.*
- (c) *the opportunities to develop federated or collaborative working across VCFS infrastructure organisations to extend support to a wider range of organisations within the sector and benefit both their organisation and their service user and maximise the impact of public and other resources.*
- (d) *the opportunities to develop targeted information and support to community organisations to support their development and enable them to address local issues.*

- a) The Resources Sub-group of the VCFS Partnership Group will offer guidance and advice to services and partners on ensuring that processes and procedures are proportionate to the level of funding and risk in line with the Council's VCFS Grant Funding Framework. The Resources Sub-group oversees the delivery of the Supporting Commissioning Links project. This is a partnership with the voluntary sector, led by the Regeneration Service working with Leeds Voice and re'new to facilitate and support the sector to access commissioning opportunities. It will include the provision of guidance, advice and training to VFSC organisations. A timetable for the completion of this work will be agreed at the Resources Sub-group meeting on 2 April 2009
- b) Information on commissioning strategies of key services and the current and previous providers will collated by the Resources Sub-group of the VCFS Partnership to assess the impact on smaller organisations and their ability to access resources through these commissioning strategies. This will identify the current weaknesses in the approach. A timetable for the completion of this work will be agreed at the Resources Sub-group meeting on 2 April 2009.
- c) Collaborative activity to support a wide range of VCFS organisations takes place through the Leeds Infrastructure Consortium, a group made up of the key VCFS infrastructure organisations in the City. Through the Partnership, Leeds Infrastructure Consortium will be asked to consider its current work programme and potential future opportunities to extend support to a wider range of organisations. A timetable for completing this work will need to be agreed with Leeds Infrastructure Consortium.
- d) The VCFS Partnership Group will establish a Community Engagement Sub-group in April. It is proposed that the group will include in its work programme action to collate information on the current levels of information and support offered to community organisations, identify gaps in provision and recommend actions to address these within available resources. A timetable for completing this work will need to be agreed with partners once the group is established.

### 3.5 Recommendation 4:

*That through the VCFS Partnership Group the Director of Environment and Neighbourhoods:-*

- (a) *encourages all signatory partner organisations to undertake a self assessment to monitor awareness and compliance with the "Compact" Codes of Conduct and that this be monitored by the Council from January 2010.*
  - (b) *reviews the effectiveness of the "Compact" Codes of Practice in 2009/2010 in the light of changes in the environment and infrastructure, and that the outcome be reported to this Scrutiny Board.*
- a) The Compact for Leeds will be a key element of the work programme of the VCFS Partnership and its sub-groups. This will enable partner organisations to better understand the benefits of the Compact and contribute to its review and development. Partner organisations will be provided with advice, guidance and support to undertake a compliance self assessment and identify areas for further action. A timetable for undertaking this work will need to be agreed with partners at the next meeting of the VCFS Partnership on 16 April 2009.

- b) The VCFS Partnership, its sub-groups and a designated officer in the Regeneration Service will support the work of the Compact Implementation Group led by Leeds Voice to review the Compact Codes of Practice to ensure that they remain fit for purpose. Discussion will take place with the Director of Leeds Voice to agree a detailed work programme and timetable for completing this.

3.6 Recommendation 5:

*That the Director of Environment and Neighbourhoods identifies opportunities and initiatives that will further improve and enhance links with local VCFS organisations to support the delivery of the Area Committee's work in localities and that they be reported to this Scrutiny Board.*

An officer within the Regeneration Service will be identified to work with the Area Managers to identify existing links and the potential to enhance these to support the delivery of the Area Committee's Area Delivery Plans. These include the VCFS brokering community engagement and influencing service delivery at the local level; undertaking commissioned community engagement activity; and contributing to Area Delivery Plan priorities and outcomes. This work will be completed by the end of June 2009.

3.7 Recommendation 6:

*That the Director of Environment and Neighbourhoods supports the VCFS Partnership Group to map the available resource and expertise within the sector to improve the targeting and engagement of "hard to reach" groups.*

The VCFS Partnership Group will establish a Community Engagement Sub-group in April. It is proposed that the group will include in its work programme action to map the available resource and expertise within the sector to improve the targeting and engagement of "hard to reach" groups. The sector offers a means for improving the targeting of engagement and extending its reach and the outcomes of this work will be reported to the Corporate Consultation Manager and disseminated to the relevant services. A timetable for completing this work will need to be agreed with partners once the group is established.

3.8 Recommendation 7

- (a) *That the Head of Scrutiny and Member Development arranges a seminar in 2009/2010 for members on the aims, benefits and use of Talking Point.*
- (b) *That the Assistant Chief Executive (Planning, Policy and Improvement) considers how best to promote this service amongst officers and the wider community.*
- a) A number of presentations have been made to elected members since the Corporate Consultation Manager submitted evidence to Scrutiny Board. The Corporate Consultation Manager is working with Member Development officers to arrange briefings to all political groups by early summer 2009.
- b) Further work is now taking place with partner organisations through the LAA Strategy Group and further developments of Talking Point will be communicated to elected members. The Corporate Consultation Manager and communications colleagues are delivering communications to all internal and external Talking Point

stakeholders, including via the new A to Z of Services delivered with Council Tax booklets. Discussion is continuing with partners (PCT, ALMOs) about future sharing of Talking Point.

### 3.9 Recommendation 8

*That the Director of Environment and Neighbourhoods develops a time-tabled action plan to implement any changes identified in 2009/10 and submit these to Scrutiny Board for consideration*

A number of the recommendations require the active involvement of a wide range of Council Services, partner organisations and the VCFS. The work programme flowing from the recommendations will be subject to discussion and agreement with partners through the next cycle of meetings. A work programme will then be drawn up detailing actions to be taken by a designated lead against a timetable and submitted to Scrutiny Board.

## **4.0 Implications For Council Policy And Governance**

4.1 There are no immediate implications for Council Policy and Governance arising from these recommendations.

## **5.0 Legal And Resource Implications**

5.1 There are no immediate resource implications arising from the planned action to respond to the recommendations.

## **6.0 Conclusions**

6.1 The City and Regional Partnerships Scrutiny Board's Inquiry into issues around the VCFS involvement in Council led community engagement activity has highlighted the need for a consistent and coherent approach to VCFS issues from services across the Council and from partner organisations. The recommendations made by the Scrutiny Board will help to strengthen practice in this regard and enable the Scrutiny Board to monitor progress in this area. The actions proposed in response to these recommendations will be taken forward with involvement from VCFS organisations to ensure that both the needs of the Council and the sector are being met.

## **7.0 Recommendations**

7.1 Executive Board are recommended to:

Approve the proposed responses to the Scrutiny Board's recommendation.

## **8.0 Background Papers**

There are no specific background papers relating to this report.



**Inquiry into the Role of the  
Voluntary, Community and  
Faith Sector (VCFS)  
in Council Led Community  
Engagement**

**Scrutiny Inquiry Report**

# Introduction and Scope



## Introduction

1. In developing our work programme for 2008/2009 we recognised the important role that the Voluntary, Community and Faith Sector (VCFS) has to play in Council led community engagement and agreed to undertake an inquiry on this issue.
2. We wanted to explore the context of, and the drivers for, an inquiry on this issue which we recognised as being complex.
3. We knew that the recently published Empowerment White Paper, 'Communities in Control: Real People, Real Power' sets out new expectations and opportunities for Local Government. These include:
  - extending the duty to involve partner organisations
  - streamlining consultation and engagement with partners
  - supporting and promoting volunteering opportunities
  - improving access to information to support involvement
  - creating opportunities to influence – e.g. participatory budgeting, establishing neighbourhood, community or village councils
  - incentives to encourage voting
  - accountability through scrutiny and public hearings
4. In addition in 2009 the Comprehensive Area Assessment (CAA) will replace the current Corporate Performance Assessment for measuring local authority performance and standards. The new CAA includes clear and significant focus on community engagement and specifically the equality aspects of engagement. Current guidance for the new CAA indicates inspectors will explore and expect to see 'how well councils engage with, involve and empower local people including through the use of the third sector'.
5. Moreover, the Leeds Strategic Plan 2008 - 2011 which incorporates the Local Area Agreement includes improvement priorities and targets linked to engagement and empowerment. (see Appendix 1 attached). These measures recognise the important role and contribution that the VCFS plays in the life of the city and its residents. The indicators drawn from the national indicator set are to be measured by the Place Survey. The first survey to provide a baseline from which progress would be measured was carried out in the Autumn of 2008.
6. As Members of Council we all have our own experiences of voluntary, community and faith sector participation and views about its strengths and weaknesses and the potential for improvement. Pressure to engage with the VCFS is

# Introduction and Scope



coming from a variety of sources including the fact that:

◇ There is a Central Government agenda promoting greater levels of engagement including the White Paper referred to in paragraph 3.

◇ The Leeds Strategic Plan 2008-2011 includes an improvement priority and a national indicator on increasing the number of people who feel they can influence decisions in their locality (see Appendix 1).

◇ The Council has legal obligations that it must meet in respect of equality legislation.

◇ The Council is required to evidence appropriate arrangements for engaging with all communities.

◇ The Council is a signatory to the Compact for Leeds, where community participation and equal partnerships are key areas of focus.

7. In addition we are aware that Area Committees are about to significantly strengthen their community engagement responsibilities, including a brief to agree Area Community Engagement Plans with the goal of delivering better outcomes from local services.
8. Other partners and partnerships across Leeds have their own drivers and arrangements for engagement and many of these are also in transition.

9. We know that within the VCFS there are some well established and some newly emerging networks and structures facilitating effective engagement, but as the Council and other partners undergo transition to new structures and systems, so the VCF Sector is required to adapt to meet changing needs as well as respond to changing resourcing opportunities.
10. Finally, the recent wave of migrant workers from other European Countries which Leeds has experienced has highlighted the need to engage with new communities as they move to the City, to enable them to establish themselves and to ensure that services are aware of and can respond to changing demands. In reality we need to identify routes to engage with all of the communities in Leeds for the same reasons. The VCF Sector may have a key role to play in delivering this goal.
11. The drivers and context exemplify the challenges and opportunities of the engagement agenda for Leeds at this time. We consider that the scrutiny focus is timely and provides an opportunity to draw together a number of issues whilst spotlighting some specific areas of focus.

# Introduction and Scope



12. We acknowledge the lead role that the Environment and Neighbourhoods Directorate has for Council lead community engagement with the VCFS and the excellent work that is being carried out and developed in this regard.

13. We recognised whilst developing the terms of reference for this inquiry the importance of looking at specific case studies to help us identify the issues and understand the role of the VCFS. Their experiences would help us to identify what was working and where possible improvements could be made.

14. We are very grateful to everyone who gave their time to participate in this inquiry and for their commitment in helping us to understand and review this matter.

15. We would particularly like to thank the Director of Leeds Voice for her help, support and guidance during our deliberations.

## The Scope of this Inquiry

16. In the light of our discussions we agreed terms of reference for this inquiry on 21<sup>st</sup> July 2008.

17. We agreed that the purpose of the inquiry was to make an assessment of and where appropriate, make recommendations on the following areas:

◇ the opportunities and barriers for engagement that exist for the VCFS and wider community as the Council

and others work towards achieving the LAA targets set for Leeds.

◇ what good practice exists in Leeds and beyond that can be used and developed.

◇ what resources and other support is required by the VCFS in order to play a full role in delivering on the engagement and other targets for Leeds.

◇ the changes that may be necessary in the Council's policy, practice and culture to deliver improved engagement outcomes for Leeds.

Leeds Voice



Voluntary Action – Leeds

the Leeds Initiative

Local partnerships making things happen





## Conclusions and Recommendations



18. We wanted to identify what is meant by community engagement and the duties of the Council in this regard. We also wanted to understand the way in which the Voluntary, Community and Faith Sector is now a fundamental part of Council-led community engagement. We have summarised the background and our subsequent findings under the following headings:

- A. Community Engagement and Duties of the Council
- B. Engagement with the VCFS to support strategic developments
- C. Engagement with the VCFS to support service development and implementation
- D. Engagement with the VCFS to support Area based Initiatives
- E. Funding to VCFS
- F. Key Issues Identified with Representatives from VCFS

### **A. Community Engagement and Duties of the Council**

19. Community engagement was described to us as an umbrella term that includes consultation, involvement, community capacity building and similar activities designed to enhance citizens' roles in local decision making. Community engagement must include people with disabilities, with different ethnic, cultural, faith or religious heritages, all genders, ages and sexualities.

20. Community engagement is essential to improving services, shaping the future of the city and the quality of life of its residents. It helps to unite local people and communities,

builds citizenship and community pride. It helps the council and its partners understand what communities want from our services.

21. We were informed that the Council's Community Engagement Policy and Toolkit was approved by Executive Board in December 2006. The policy sets out the Council's strategic approach to engagement and consultation which consists of four key components:

- a corporate Community Engagement Policy
- a corporate Community Engagement Toolkit
- a council-wide community engagement networking group
- an on-line consultation portal and information database

22. These components are all linked and complement one another and form an overall approach towards joined up community engagement. The full document was made available to us.

23. We learned that the Council aims to achieve Level 4 of the Equality Standard for Local Government by March 2009.

24. We understand that the Equality Standard is an evidence based assessment framework setting out expectations and benchmarks under a number of key headings: Leadership, Impact Assessments,

## Conclusions and Recommendations



Monitoring, Consultation,  
Employment and Procurement.

25. The Standard overlaps with and sets challenges for the engagement agenda. The Council will need to demonstrate that it is monitoring and can evidence who it engages with, to ensure that all appropriate stakeholder communities are involved. Equality is a key element of the new CAA framework. The inspection will consider how well public services know, and are meeting, the needs of the diverse groups within communities; and focus on whether groups and individuals that are vulnerable to discrimination and prejudice receive equitable outcomes. The standard will change to the Equality Framework from April 2009.

26. We were advised that the Council's Equality Team is developing an Equality Assembly with Equality Hubs. This work is still in development but it will provide opportunities to engage with representatives from all equality strands at all levels across the city. This will not always be the most appropriate engagement route in all cases and other ways of engaging with diverse and minority communities may need to be explored in specific geographical and thematic areas. We acknowledge that using voluntary, community and faith organisations as facilitators and routes to some communities may be appropriate but will need encouraging and supporting where services have no experience or links.

27. Relationships between the Council and VCFS are embodied in the Compact for Leeds. Launched in 2003, this document is a voluntary agreement to improve relations between public and voluntary, community and faith sector partners in Leeds. It sets out a framework to facilitate better working and is built around the four key principles of:

- Promoting equal partnerships
- Encouraging effective use of resources
- Recognising and valuing volunteering and community activity
- Improving the quality of communication, consultation and information exchange

28. The Council actively supports work with the sector to review and update the codes of conduct contained within the agreement.

29. Within the VCF Sector in Leeds we were surprised to learn that there are over 3,000 organisations and a large number of these support and facilitate community engagement both formally and informally. A number of organisations provide a representative role at a city-wide level engaging in work to support the development of city-wide plans and policies, whilst others have a specific service, community of interest or neighbourhood focus.

# Conclusions and Recommendations



## **B. Engagement with the VCFS to Support Strategic Developments**

30. We were advised that the Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act sets out a stronger role for local government in leading its communities and bringing services together to address challenges working closely with their partners.
31. We acknowledged that the VCFS is a key partner in this 'place shaping' role helping the Council to answer the question 'what are the biggest challenges facing the city and what are we going to do about them?'
32. The VCFS represents the views of service users and residents throughout the city in local forums and bodies at strategic and key decision making levels in the city. Over 100 VCF Sector representatives participate in the partnership and strategy groups of the Leeds Initiative, the city's local strategic partnership. The development of the Sustainable Community Strategy, the Vision for Leeds, and Leeds Strategic Plan 2008-11 including the development of the Local Area Agreement (LAA) could not have been achieved without a robust VCFS framework that speaks for and represents citizens and service users.
33. We know that the partnerships, both with and within the sector, have been strengthened through the work to develop the current LAA supported by Leeds Voice. The process enabled the VCFS to engage equally and consistently in the design process resulting in the identification of the sector's key contributions for each of the new priorities and indicators.
34. We were informed that the Narrowing the Gap Board of the Leeds Initiative has recognized the importance to the city of maintaining a vibrant and thriving VCFS and has recently established a new partnership group to support the sector, the VCFS Partnership Group. The group will be a vehicle for developing and securing a consensus approach to policies, strategies and action which will enable the VCF sector to contribute to the delivery of the Leeds Strategic Plan 2008 -11.
35. The Group will have a focus on the service improvement priorities of community engagement, active citizenship and a thriving VCF Sector.
36. We referred to this during our discussions with representatives from the VCFS including Leeds Voice and thought it useful to attach to our report the terms of reference and the outline work programme for this Strategy Group as Appendix 1.

# Conclusions and Recommendations



## **C. Engagement with the VCFS to Support Service Development and Implementation**

37. There is considerable engagement activity led by Council services taking place on a daily basis. Engagement can be with individual citizens or with and through voluntary, community and faith sector groups to extend the reach and effectiveness of this activity. It would not be possible to detail all the engagement activity involving the VCFS, therefore a sample of these activities has been provided at Appendix 2 using examples provided by Children's Services and Adult Social Services.

38. Children's Services has worked with VCFS organisations to develop more creative ways in which to engage with children and young people from different backgrounds and communities across the city. The examples provided by Adult Social Services demonstrate engagement activity from consultation with service users, involvement in strategy and service development and redesign, through to involvement in decision-making to commission services.

## **D. Engagement with the VCFS to Support Area Based Initiatives**

39. There are a range of engagement activities described in Appendix 3 that have been employed to support the work of the Area Committees in South Leeds. These provide an indication of the VCFS involvement

in area-based community engagement activities. These include the VCFS brokering community engagement and influencing service delivery at the local level; undertaking commissioned community engagement activity; and contributing to Area Delivery Plan priorities and outcomes.

40. The review of Area Working considered by Executive Board in July 2008 set out the need for Area Community Engagement Plans that will set out the planned engagement activity for an area. This will include the production of a community profile; a calendar of planned communication and engagement activity; and an annual report. This annual report will provide the Area Committees with an overview of the engagement activity along with key outcomes delivered in their wards over the last year and the forward plan for the year ahead. This planned approach provides an opportunity to consider and plan for the involvement of VCFS organizations in the delivery of this activity.

## **E. Funding to VCFS**

41. We received details of the total payments made by the Council to the VCFS in 2007/2008 amounting to £114m.

42. We were provided with detailed audited accounts for this period showing grants and other financial

## Conclusions and Recommendations



assistance provided to the VCFS in Leeds in 2007/2008.

43. A summary of this information is set out in Appendix 4 attached.

### F. Key Issues Identified with Representatives from VCFS

44. We heard from and met with representatives from Leeds Voice, St Luke's Cares and South Leeds Health for All.
45. Members of our working group visited SLATE (South Leeds Alternative Trading Enterprise), Hope of Africa, the Guru Nanak Nishkam Sewak Jatha temple and St Luke's Cares Smoothie Bar.
46. We recognised the valuable work being done and the potential opportunities and challenges of working with the VCFS organisations to enhance community engagement.
47. We identified from our discussions with the VCFS a number of common issues and concerns.
48. We applaud the fact that the Council has established a range of policies and procedures that require the Council to engage with the VCF Sector including:
- ◇ Community Engagement Policy (see paragraph 21 )
  - ◇ Community Engagement Toolkit (see paragraph 21)
  - ◇ Aspiring to achieve Level 4 of the Equality Standard for Local Government (see paragraph 24)

- ◇ Developed the VCFS Partnership Group (see paragraph 34)
- ◇ Established a community engagement sub-group of the above which includes representatives of Leeds Voice, Leeds City Council and VCFS organisations.
- ◇ Is a signatory to the Compact for Leeds (see paragraph 27)

49. We were concerned that whilst some Council services are already fully engaged and have recognised the value of involving VCFS at an initial or early stage in reviewing services (example Children's Services Commissioning Board), there are other areas, where the VCFS perceive that they have not been involved, or where the degree of involvement and communication were minimal. Whilst we recognise that there may be good reason for this we thought it appropriate for a review to be undertaken.

### Recommendation 1:

**That the Director of Environment and Neighbourhoods co-ordinates work across the Council to undertake a Compact for Leeds awareness and compliance self assessment. This will enable the Board to assess the extent to which Council services engage with and recognise the value of VCFS in developing and improving their plans and policies in order to deliver a customer based service.**

50. We were repeatedly told during our

## Conclusions and Recommendations



discussions with the VCFS of the significant funding pressures they are suffering as a consequence of the end of the Single Regeneration Budget and the Neighbourhood Renewal Fund and the budget constraints being faced by the Council. Funding has been withdrawn from many organisations including the Sikh Temple as new commissioning requirements are established. We acknowledged that VCFS schemes are highly vulnerable to financial variations. Sustainability of VCFS organisations and projects are essential if they are to be successful.

51. We noted from the funding and grant arrangements summarised in Appendix 4 that many schemes are only funded for a 12 month period which prevents or reduces incentives to develop medium and long term strategies and initiatives. By the time a project is established and staff recruited and trained, in reality there are only six months useful output from a project.

52. It was stressed to us by the VCFS that there has been a marked move in recent years away from a 'grants culture' to a service commissioning and outcomes-based system, with local VCFS organisations recognised and acknowledged as vital partners in a wide range of complex and comprehensive service provision, including the planning and implementation of those services demands stability of funding.

53. We feel that if the Council is genuine about ensuring that the VCFS is business ready for commissioning activities then it

must try and offer greater financial stability by guaranteeing funding for longer periods.

54. It is clear from what we were told by representatives from the VCF Sector that there also needs to be more work undertaken to ensure that project sponsors are supported to develop planned exit strategies and that this should be introduced at an early stage in circumstances where the Council decides to cease funding a particular project to avoid lack of continuity of service, uncertainty for the organisation and project concerned and the potential for bad publicity for the Council when funding ceases.

55. We believe that there is strong leadership within the sector which is supported by the Council and that there is greater co-ordination and collaboration amongst all parties concerned. However, the size, diversity and complexity of the VCFS in Leeds means that sometimes it is difficult for service managers to identify which groups are best placed to support and deliver engagement activity. The potential exists to improve and further strengthen leadership and collaborative arrangements within the sector to improve the service offered to the Council and its partners and for Council service managers to use the skills and knowledge of the sector to greater effect.

56. We were concerned that because of the complexity of this matter

## Conclusions and Recommendations



there was likely to be an element of overlap in services provided by VCFS, if not direct duplication. Some organisations may be competing against one another as a result. Clearly competition can be healthy or destructive but we have not been able from the small sample of VCFS organisations we met to take an informed view on this except to say that further research should be undertaken to support improvements in this area.

establish whether the Council provides a consistent and coherent approach to engaging with the VCF Sector and whether resourcing and monitoring of contracts / funding agreements are effectively communicated and that resourcing opportunities are disseminated properly, fairly and easily understood. The response from the VCF Sector on this complex issue was as expected mixed.

### **Recommendation 2:**

**That through the VCFS Partnership Group the Director of Resources and the Director of Environment and Neighbourhoods**

**(a) reviews the period of funding attached to grant awards to VCFS organisations with a view to phasing in 3 – 5 year awards from April 2010 for appropriate schemes.**

**(b) identifies and provides appropriate support to enable VCFS organisations to develop planned exit strategies to better manage expiry of funding awards**

**(c) strengthens leadership and collaborative arrangements within the Council and in the VCFS to minimise the potential for the duplication of commissioned activity in order to maximise the effectiveness and efficiency of the services being provided by April 2010.**

58. We were informed that advice is available through the Council's and Leeds Initiative's websites on funding and commissioning issues.

59. However, it was generally felt by representatives from the VCFS and accepted by Council officers that more could be done to simplify the funding process and provide better quality advice and support to local VCFS organisations.

60. We were concerned that some smaller organisations would not have the capacity to compete under the commissioning process. We were advised by officers that the level of information required from organisations would be appropriate for the level of funding and risk involved.

61. We noted how some VCFS organisations are working together as a federation of voluntary organisations as in Hull which has brought economic advantages and empowerment.

62. We know that the VCF Sector has been responding to a number of

57. In our discussions we wanted to

## Conclusions and Recommendations



changes in the external environment. This includes the ending of a number of external discretionary grant programmes; a shift in the funding priorities of other programmes; and public sector partners moving to a commissioning approach which can require a changed approach from those seeking resources. The Council and its partners are also subject to changing central government expectations and periodically review and revise their priorities and arrangements to deliver on these. This can create both challenges in terms of managing change but also new opportunities for agencies to work together. To enable the meaningful involvement of the VCFS in delivering community engagement during such periods of change, we feel that greater emphasis and priority should be placed on providing quality training and support to the VCF Sector.

63. We were concerned to ensure that information and support is provided to grass roots community groups. They can provide a real opportunity for communities to come together to meet their local neighbourhood needs and for a different range of voices to be heard. These groups are often dependent on voluntary activity and the leadership abilities and efforts of a small number or single key individual within the community and for this reason can face difficulties in sustaining activity over the longer term. We also recognised that the strength and importance of community groups is not in delivering services to their communities but in articulating effective and coherent responses to change and opportunity so that each locality continues to thrive (rather than recoil as events appear to threaten and even overwhelm them). This contrasts

with voluntary organisations which tend to be agencies tooled up to deal with particular areas of interest and need.

### Recommendation 3:

**That through the VCFS Partnership Group the Director of Environment and Neighbourhoods identifies**

**(a) what further improvements could be made to simplify the current procedures and processes (including funding) and how the Council in conjunction with the VCF sector could better provide quality support including training and advice to local voluntary organisations.**

**(b) the impacts of current commissioning strategies on smaller organisations and identifies what safeguards could be developed to prevent losing the valuable services of these smaller organisations that provide a valuable service to the local community.**

**(c) the opportunities to develop federated or collaborative working across VCFS infrastructure organisations to extend support to a wider range of organisations within the sector and benefit both their organisation and their service user and maximise the impact of public and other resources.**

**(d) the opportunities to develop targeted information and support to community organisations to support their development and enable them to address local issues.**



## Conclusions and Recommendations



64. We referred to the “Compact for Leeds” during our discussions with the VCFS.
65. This "Compact" is an agreement between the Voluntary, Community and Faith Sector and the public sector to improve their relationship for mutual advantage. The Compact for Leeds, was launched by the Leeds Initiative in September 2003, and was the starting point for transforming the relationships between the statutory and voluntary sectors. This work has been driven forward by the Compact Implementation Group. It has provided a useful framework document to outline the respective roles of the Council and the VCFS and the expectations of each relative to the other. It has been a very effective tool to support and improve the relationship between the Council and the VCFS.
66. A view was expressed by the VCFS that the “Compact” could be used by all partner organisations to undertake self-assessment awareness and compliance with the Compact Codes of Conduct.
67. We were advised that the Compact Codes needed to be reviewed in the light of changes made to the structure and operation of VCFS.

### Recommendation 4:

**That through the VCFS Partnership Group the Director of Environment and Neighbourhoods**

**(a) encourages all signatory partner organisations to undertake a self assessment to monitor awareness and compliance with the “Compact” Codes of Conduct and that this be monitored by the Council from January 2010.**

**(b) reviews the effectiveness of the “Compact” Codes of Practice in 2009/2010 in the light of changes in the environment and infrastructure, and that the outcome be reported to this Scrutiny Board.**

68. Working with the VCF Sector to promote and deliver engagement activity is well established in Leeds and the sector has a real role to play. Arrangements are in place that involve the VCFS at a city-wide level with representation through Leeds Voice on the Leeds Initiative, the local strategic partnership; at a service level there is a wide range of partnerships with service specific expertise; and at a locality level, each of the area committees have varying mechanisms for engaging with the sector to reflect the needs of their communities and the skills of the local VCFS groups.

## Conclusions and Recommendations



69. We are aware that Area Committees are about to significantly strengthen their community engagement responsibilities, including a brief to agree Area Community Engagement Plans with the goal of delivering better outcomes from local services.

70. The role which Area Committees could play in improving and enhancing links with local VCFS organisations by promoting initiatives such as the Extended Schools programme for example, is one that the VCF Sector wants to develop. We feel this should be encouraged.

### **Recommendation 5:**

**That the Director of Environment and Neighbourhoods identifies opportunities and initiatives that will further improve and enhance links with local VCFS organisations to support the delivery of the Area Committee's work in localities and that they be reported to this Scrutiny Board.**

71. We acknowledged that a key benefit of working with the VCFS to improve and enhance community consultation and engagement is that VCFS groups are generally community based and have direct contact with large numbers of local people, some of which focus on those groups who can be 'hard to reach'. The sector can offer a means for improving the targeting of engagement and extending its reach. However, we understand that further work is required in some thematic and

geographical areas to map the available resource and expertise to maximize its potential impact.

### **Recommendation 6:**

**That the Director of Environment and Neighbourhoods supports the VCFS Partnership Group to map the available resource and expertise within the sector to improve the targeting and engagement of "hard to reach" groups.**

72. A number of VCF Sector organisations expressed a view that they thought there was a gap in youth service provision for 8 to 13 year olds and that this should be investigated through consultation with VCFS groups to identify local needs and offer solutions. It was reported that this was a discretionary service and that the Children's Services Scrutiny Board had undertaken an inquiry on this service for 8 to 13 year olds in 2007/08 which had made a number of recommendations. The final report and recommendations was published in May 2008.

73. We noted that Talking Point, the Council's consultation database, is a tool to help teams across the council share information on consultations currently underway, as well as recording the results of past consultations.

74. We feel that Talking Point needs more publicity and promotion

# Conclusions and Recommendations



amongst Council Staff, Elected Members and the wider community.

## **Recommendation 7:**

**(a) That the Head of Scrutiny and Member Development arranges a seminar in 2009/2010 for members on the aims, benefits and use of Talking Point.**

**(b) That the Assistant Chief Executive (Planning, Policy and Improvement) considers how best to promote this service amongst officers and the wider community.**

## **Recommendation 8**

**That the Director of Environment and Neighbourhoods develops a time-tabled action plan to implement any changes identified in 2009/10 and submit these to Scrutiny Board for consideration.**

# Monitoring Arrangements



## Monitoring arrangements

- Standard arrangements for monitoring the outcome of the Board's recommendations will apply.
- The decision-makers to whom the recommendations are addressed will be asked to submit a formal response to the recommendations, including an action plan and timetable, normally within two months.
- Following this the Scrutiny Board will determine any further detailed monitoring, over and above the standard quarterly monitoring of all scrutiny recommendations.

# Evidence



## Reports and Publications Submitted

- Minutes of Scrutiny Board (City & Regional Partnerships) meeting held on 21st July 2008
- Terms of Reference for the Board's Inquiry dated 21<sup>st</sup> July 2008
- Report of the Head of Scrutiny and Member Development with the report of the Chief Regeneration Officer which focused on how the VCFS supports Council engagement activity considered on 25<sup>th</sup> September 2008
- Minutes of Scrutiny Board (City & Regional Partnerships) meeting held on 25<sup>th</sup> September 2008
- Fact sheets from South Leeds Health For All and St Luke's Cares circulated to the Board on 23<sup>rd</sup> October 2008
- Links to the internet circulated to Board Members providing access to additional background documents on
  - ◇ The Ripple Effect : The Economic Contribution of the VCFS in Leeds
  - ◇ A Strategic Review of Voluntary, Community and Faith Sector Representation
  - ◇ The Voluntary, Community and Faith Sector Approach to Reducing Worklessness
  - ◇ Smoothie Bar Business Plan
- Pie chart showing total payments to VCFS 2007/08
- Pie chart providing breakdown by type of funding to VCFS 2007/08
- Headline analysis of VCFS payments 2007/08
- Minutes of Scrutiny Board (City & Regional Partnerships) meeting held on 23<sup>rd</sup> October 2008
- Notes of VCFS Partnership Group meetings held on 11<sup>th</sup> December 2008
- Notes of meetings held with the organisations Hope for Africa (16th February 2009) and St Luke's Urban Bar (2nd March 2009)

## Evidence



### Witnesses Heard

- Sue Wynne, Head of Regeneration Policy & Planning, Environment & Neighbourhoods Directorate
- Keith Lander, Deputy Area Manager, South East Team. Environment & Neighbourhoods Directorate
- Matthew Lund, Corporate Consultation Manager, Chief Executive's Directorate
- Ms Lisa Wright, Director, Leeds Voice
- Ms Louise Megson, Chief Executive, St Luke's Cares
- Ms Judith Hickman, Operations Manager, South Leeds Health for All
- Mr Richard Lancaster, Priority Neighbourhood Worker, South Leeds Health for All

### Dates of Scrutiny

- 23<sup>rd</sup> June 2008                      Scrutiny Board (City & Regional Partnerships) Meeting
- 21<sup>st</sup> July 2008                        Scrutiny Board (City & Regional Partnerships) Meeting
- 25<sup>th</sup> September 2008              Pre Meeting Scrutiny Board (City & Regional Partnerships) Talking Point Presentation
- 25<sup>th</sup> September 2008              Scrutiny Board (City & Regional Partnerships) Meeting
- 23<sup>rd</sup> October 2008                 Scrutiny Board (City & Regional Partnerships) Meeting
- 11th December 2008              Voluntary, Community & Faith Sector Working Group Visit to the Guru Nanak Nishkam Sewak Jatha (Leeds) Temple and South Leeds Alternative Trading Enterprise (SLATE)
- 16th February 2009                Voluntary, Community & Faith Sector Working Group Visit to the Hope of Africa project
- 2nd March 2009                    Voluntary, Community & Faith Sector Working Group St Luke's Smoothie Bar
- 15<sup>th</sup> January 2009                 Scrutiny Board (City & Regional Partnerships) Meeting

Scrutiny Board (City & Regional Partnerships) – Voluntary, Community & Faith Sector  
Final Inquiry Report – Published on the 11th March 2009

[scrutiny.unit@leeds.gov.uk](mailto:scrutiny.unit@leeds.gov.uk)

# Appendix 1



Appendix 1

## VCFS Partnership Group

### Terms of Reference

#### 1. Role and purpose

The VCFS High Level Partnership Group will be a vehicle for developing and securing a consensus approach to policies, strategies and action which will enable the VCF Sector to contribute to the delivery of the Leeds Strategic Plan 2008-11. The Group will have a focus on the following service improvement priorities: -

<b>Service Improvement Priority</b>	<b>Measure</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Enable a robust and vibrant voluntary , community and faith sector to facilitate community activity and directly deliver services</li><li>• An increased number of local people engaged in activities to meet community needs and improve the quality of life for local residents</li><li>• An increase in the number of people who feel they can influence decisions in their locality</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• NI 7 Environment for a thriving third sector</li><li>• NI 6 Increased number of people participating in regular volunteering</li><li>• NI 4 Percentage of people who can feel they can influence decisions in their locality</li></ul>

#### 2. Responsibilities

Developing collaborative approaches to support and work with the VCFS organisations in the City to enable the sector play a full and equal part in the delivery and review of the Leeds Strategic Plan 2008-11

Improving the knowledge and understanding of the VCF Sector and the interface between partner organisations and the sector

Sponsoring debate and discussion with all stakeholders on policy, operational and resourcing issues that impact on the viability of the VCF Sector

Contributing to and influencing the service planning and commissioning frameworks of the Leeds Initiative strategy and partnership groups and partner organisations

To work collaboratively on the development of specific policies, strategies and programmes to enable VCF organisations to contribute to identifying service needs,

# Appendix 1



shaping interventions and participating in service delivery and decision-making processes where appropriate

To monitor progress and evaluate the impact of interventions, capture learning and disseminate good practice across service providers and the VCF Sector

Responding on behalf of the Leeds Initiative to central and regional Government for on third sector policy initiatives

### 3. Frequency of meetings

Meetings will be held bi-monthly. A schedule of meetings for the year will be drawn up and circulated.

### 4. Membership:-

- Sandie Keene - Director of Adult Social Services (Chair)
- Ian Cameron - Director of Public Health
- Rosemary Archer - Director of Children's Services
- Mark Milsom - Chief Superintendent, West Yorkshire Police
- Richard Norton - VCFS Strategy Group
- Richard Jackson - VCFS Infrastructure Consortium
- Kathy Kudelnitzky - Leeds Initiative
- Lelir Yeung - Head of Equality
- Sue Wynne - Head of Policy & Planning - Regeneration
- Lisa Wright - Director of Leeds Voice
- Jane Stageman - Senior Policy Manager/ Leeds Area Agreement

Responsibilities of individual representatives are:-

- To attend meetings regularly on an agreed basis
- To consult with relevant staff / networks to inform their contribution to meetings
- To report back through the relevant management structures in their respective organisations
- To share information with relevant staff and networks

### 5. Linkages

The Group will provide oversight and strategic direction to the VCFS Task Group to enable the delivery of its work programme.

The Group will report periodically to the Narrowing the Gap Board on its achievements and forward work programme.



# Appendix 1



The Group will engage with partnership and strategy groups of the Leeds Initiative as appropriate and in particular those with responsibility for commissioning services.

The Group will receive information and intelligence reports from the City Council's VCFS Resources Group to inform future strategy to support the delivery of Leeds Strategic Plan Outcomes

## 6. Work programme priorities

### Resourcing

- Establish a shared understanding of commissioning frameworks and approaches employed by partners including the use of terminology relating to contracts, grants and service level agreements.
- Support to increase the capacity of the sector to respond to commissioning opportunities
- Identify new resourcing opportunities to support VCF Sector activity to deliver active citizenship, community empowerment and public services to communities
- Identify opportunities for support other than financial e.g. joint working.
- Compact code of practice - review effectiveness and review in light of changes in environment / infrastructure

### Active Citizenship

- Developing a directory of civic participation opportunities, training and support
- Supporting the recruitment and retention of volunteers
- Sustainable asset transfer and delivery of community benefits - development of policy / option appraisal and risk assessment
- Compact code of practice - review effectiveness and requirement to update in light of changes in environment / infrastructure

### Community Empowerment

- Map existing key community engagement mechanisms and activities that will contribute to the achievement of NI4
- Identify and disseminate best practice
- Identify new opportunities / challenges to be addressed to contribute to the achievement of NI4
- Identify appropriate shared partnership engagement mechanisms
- Build a shared understanding of residents' perceptions of public service delivery

To be reviewed periodically - 6 monthly intervals minimum.

## Appendix 2



### VCFS ENGAGEMENT IN SERVICE BASED ACTIVITY

Leeds City Council's Children's Services and Adult Services provide good examples of effective service led engagement, delivered in partnership with the Voluntary, Community and Faith Sector.

#### Children's Services

Children's Services supports the work of Children Leeds, which has developed the Children and Young People's Participation Strategy 2007 in response to a number of initiatives and policies that require organisations to involve children and young people. They include:

- Every Child Matters and the Children Act 2004
- National Service Framework for Children's and Maternity Services 2004
- Youth Matters 2006.

The aims of the strategy are:

- To provide a framework for all organisations across the Children Leeds partnership to assist them in involving children and young people in the design, delivery and review of the services that affect them
- To provide a mechanism for establishing and embedding good participatory practice in Leeds and
- To set out the range of activities underway in Leeds and the support available.

The Voluntary, Community and Faith Sector play key roles in developing and delivering the strategy and supporting and enabling children and young people to take active roles in developing and delivering strategy and services in Leeds e.g. Leeds Children and Young People's Plan 2006-2009 places a strong emphasis on developing services and strategies *with* children, young people and families. A revised plan for 2009-14 is in development. All partners involved in children's services as well as children and young people themselves, will be involved in shaping the plan.

There is an infrastructure which supports the development and implementation of the CYPPS, it includes:

**The Strategic Participation Group**, which works alongside services to ensure that they involve children and young people. Membership comprises representatives from various statutory and voluntary organisations.

**Leeds Participation Team**, which is a forum of practitioners who come together to influence and support the work of the strategic participation group. Many of the members are voluntary sector organisations, including:

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- BARCA
  - The Cupboard
  - The Project
  - Getaway Girls
  - The Market Place
  - Youth on Health
  - Youth Point
  - Young Sexual Health Action Group
  - National Children's Homes
- Public sector members include:
- Arts and Regeneration
  - Education Leeds
  - Leeds Careers
  - Youth Service

The Children and Young People's Participation Strategy has led to the development of some creative and effective approaches to engaging children and young people, examples include:

**Youth Point**, a voluntary sector member of the Leeds Participation Team, delivers a wide range of services for young people in North West Leeds, including youth arts projects, volunteering projects, information and support. Youth Point's 'Make it Happen' project supports young people to be involved in decision making. They provide young people with information about the participation opportunities available to them such as steering group meetings and youth forums and are supported to access those opportunities.

**ROAR** (Reach Out and Reconnect) – is a city wide partnership group for children and young people to work at a strategic level in the planning and development of services for children and young people. ROAR is not a fixed group, but a forum that involves many different groups working with children and young people. ROAR is facilitated by The Project (voluntary organisation).

### **Youth Offer: Breeze Youth Promise**

Leeds Youth Council (LYC) was consulted in December 2006 about the general principles, expectations and shape of the youth offer. They decided to call it the Breeze Youth Promise and gave the council's youth service a clear steer about what it should look like.

The youth service then consulted 400 service providers through Open Forums in March 2007 based on LYC's steer. It also held a multi agency seminar, attended by 40 people in April 2007, where proposed entitlement statements were devised. The draft entitlement statements were presented to LYC and to Reach Out And Reconnect (ROAR) groups of young people to find out young people's views. LYC and ROAR carried out consultation with 972 young people in summer 2007. This consultation resulted in changes to the entitlement statements proposed by agencies in April.

## Appendix 2



LYC and ROAR produced a brilliant promotional Breeze Youth Offer DVD and this was shown in numerous settings. For example it was presented to Scrutiny Board and was shown twice in November at the switch on of the Christmas lights event.

LYC and ROAR have continued to work hard on the Breeze Youth Promise and have made further changes which they believe make it a more deliverable and relevant youth offer. Approximately 30 young people have sustained involvement in this.

LYC has merged two of its sub groups, Enjoy and Achieve and Economic Wellbeing, to form a new sub group responsible long term for the Breeze Youth Promise.

The Breeze Youth Promise is finalised but the young people want it to be formally signed off by LYC (very imminent) before it is officially launched. The next stage for the LYC sub group is to agree a communication strategy.

### **Adult Social Care**

In line with government priorities and strong local tradition, the engagement of the voluntary and community sector plays a key role in the commissioning, design and delivery of services; in promotion of personalised services; and in maintenance of quality. The sector is also a key ally to local statutory organisations in connecting to those who are disadvantaged, socially excluded, or reluctant to access formal statutory services. The overall focus is on health and wellbeing as part of a whole system. New Joint Commissioning arrangements are being set up in which the VCF Sector will be fully represented.

Adult Social Care is supporting engagement in a number of different ways:

### **Local Involvement Network (Leeds)**

The Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act 2007 brought an end to Patient and Public Involvement Forums (there were three in Leeds) and the national Commission for Patient and Public Involvement on 31<sup>st</sup> March 2008. The national budget was reassigned by the Department of Health to enable Local Authorities (as required under the Act) to commission an organisation to act as host for a new Local Involvement Network (LINK) in their area. The LINK replaces local PPI forums and also extends to social care.

A procurement exercise has just been completed, led by Adult Social Care, to appoint the host organisation which has involved representatives of the VCF Sector as members of both the Project Team and the Procurement Board. This was handled by the VCF sector with great tact because local VCF organisations were potential or actual bidders.

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The purpose of the LINK as described in the Act is to:

- promote and support the involvement of people in commissioning, provision and scrutiny of local care services ( “care services” refers to both health and social care)
- enable local people to monitor and review the standard of local care services and report on how they could be improved
- obtain the views of local people about their experience of local care services and their care needs.

The LINK will have powers to visit local health and social care service (with the exception of social care for children) raise issues of concern in relation to health and social care services with statutory organisations, and the right to make representation directly to Scrutiny Board. An especial responsibility of the LINK is to reach people whose voices are seldom heard.

The LINK includes both individuals and VCF Sector organizations; membership / participation are flexible and subject to local decisions about governance.

Local Authorities were charged with making LINK transitional arrangements to ensure that section 221 activities (Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act 2007) are carried out in the interim period between the dis-establishment of the PPI Forums and the establishment of the LINK. Adult Social Care supported by the local NHS and VCF Sector established a LINK Preparatory Group from 1<sup>st</sup> April which has been meeting regularly, with commissioned independent support from the Leeds Older People’s Forum.

A Host organisation for Leeds was appointed at the beginning of September (the Shaw Trust) and it is commencing work to establish the LINK on a more formal basis.

It is likely, as the LINK develops, that it will become the source for patient, service user and carer representation on health and social care matters. However VCF representation is likely still to be organised separately, for example through Leeds VOICE.

### **Specialised Involvement Networks**

Adult Social Care, working with Leeds PCT and others where appropriate, supports the **Leeds Older People’s Forum** and the **Leeds Advocacy Network**. It also contributes to the Leeds VOICE Health Forum and the Community Health Development Network.

## Appendix 2



### **Organisations funded by Adult Social Care to focus on Community Engagement**

Adult Social Care Services with the Leeds PCT provide funding to Leeds Involvement Project (a voluntary sector organisation) to develop engagement and involvement with the Service User and Carer communities. Using this funding, Leeds Involvement Project supports and maintains a number of Service User and Carer led forums that includes the Alliance of Service User and Carers, Black and Minority Ethnic Disabled People's Consultation Group and the Equipment Users Advisory Group. Some groups (e.g. the Alliance of Service User and Carers also receive direct joint funding from Adult Social Care and the PCT).

Additionally, funding is provided through the Leeds Strategic Partnership and Development Team to support three reference groups, the Disability Reference Group, the Older People's Reference Group and the Black and Minority Ethnic Disabled People's Consultation Group.

The Reference Groups and the Forums supported by Leeds Involvement Project are used by Adult Social Care Services, amongst other statutory organisations, to support their engagement and involvement with Service Users and Carers. Additionally, the Forums as they are led by Service Users and Carers, raise their own issues of concern with Council employees and Elected Members.

Examples of their involvement as representatives of these groups are as follows:

- A representative of the Alliance of Service Users and Carers sits on Scrutiny Board (Social Care)
- The Alliance of Service Users and Carers is working with Adult Social Care Commissioning Services and Independent Sector Providers on the quality of service provision – this is a long term arrangement.
- Representatives from each of the Reference Groups sit on the Leeds Strategic Partnership and Development Boards.
- Representatives of the Equipment Users Advisory Groups sits on the Partnership Board
- A representative of the Alliance of Service Users and Carers Chairs the LINK (Local Involvement Network) Preparatory Group.

Adult Social Care also contributes funding to local community health projects such as South Leeds Health for All and Women's Health Matters which have engagement as one of their primary objectives. Local Healthy Living Centres have a similar role.

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### **Mental Health**

Adult Social Care supports Volition, which is an alliance of voluntary sector organisations that either provide mental health services for or work with people who have mental health needs. It is part of Volition's remit to promote the contribution of the voluntary sector in strategic planning and the development of services. Volition has over 60 members from all areas of the voluntary sector providing services to people in Leeds.

### **The Independent Disability Council (Leeds)**

Adult Social Care Services, together with the Corporate Equality Unit have provided support to the development of the Independent Disability Council (Leeds). The IDC(Leeds) is an organisation of disabled people who are committed to the positive and meaningful involvement of disabled people in the development and delivery of public services. It was launched in July 2008 with the intention of seeking to represent the disabled people of Leeds and Organisations of disabled people through peer led representation.

### **Service re-design**

Adult Social Care services is committed to the involvement of VCF Sector organisations in the re-design of services. The Adult Social Care Business Plan 2008/09 states: "Our vision represents a broad approach to working with partners across the Council, the PCT, and the independent, Voluntary, Community and Faith Sector to ensure the best use of all our resources to improve the wellbeing of the population of Leeds."

All projects and programmes must identify key stakeholders, including VCF Sector organisations, and in many instances, organisations are represented on Project and Programme Boards.

### **Supporting Wellbeing**

Adult Social Care is directed towards the seven Health and Wellbeing outcomes promoted by Government Green and White Papers:

- improved health and emotional well-being;
- improved quality of life;
- making a positive contribution;
- choice and control;
- freedom from discrimination;
- economic well-being; and

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- personal dignity.

These objectives cannot be achieved without the engagement of individuals and community groupings at all stages. They also depend not just on the availability of services but more general community wellbeing. A recent report of the Local Wellbeing Project confirms that wellbeing is enhanced through processes of neighbourhood and community engagement / empowerment through

- providing greater opportunities for residents to influence decisions affecting their neighbourhoods
- facilitating regular contact between neighbours
- helping residents gain the confidence to exercise control

Adult Social Care recognises its role in promoting wellbeing in this way and sees the contribution of the VCF Sector as being absolutely crucial.



## Appendix 3



### **VCFS Involvement in Area Committee Engagement Activity**

This appendix presents examples of the way in which area committees in South Leeds have worked with VCF Sector organisations to enhance community engagement activity and improve the delivery of services which seek to take advantage of the extensive history that some VCF Sector organisations have of positive community relationships. These cover 3 aspects of the relationship of the Area Committees and the VCF Sector:-

- The role that the VCF Sector plays in brokering community engagement and influencing services.
- The role of the VCF Sector in delivering commissioned services.
- The role of the VCF Sector in delivering services which contribute to area delivery plan outcomes.

#### **The VCF Sector in South Leeds**

South Leeds has an extensive array of VCF Sector organisations. These are distributed throughout the whole area, but exist in either greater numbers, or where they cover the whole area, are more active in the less affluent inner city areas. Many of these organisations, particularly in the faith sector have been in existence for long periods of time, but there are also examples of voluntary based organisations that have been successfully delivering services for tens of years.

This history has been influenced by the relative deprivation of parts of South Leeds and the potential to attract funding. Beeston Hill and Holbeck for example has over the last ten years benefited greatly from funding streams such as the Single Regeneration Budget, Neighbourhood Renewal Funding and European funding. Such funding streams have increased the financial support available for those organisations who are delivering outcomes which accord with the regeneration priorities inherent in the funds objectives.

#### **The role of the VCF Sector in brokering community engagement and influencing services.**

The nature of the VCF Sector is both diverse and disparate, and whilst much collaboration takes place there are also elements of competition between organisations. Because of these factors LCC frequently relies on support from VCFS umbrella organisations such as Leeds Voice and Voluntary Action Leeds (VAL). These organisations have in the past been able to attract various forms of funding to underpin the important role that they play in coordinating, supporting and helping to progress and sustain organisations within the sector. However over the last couple of years such funding has become increasingly scarce.

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To ensure that the VCF Sector is able to influence and shape policy and planning, Leeds Voice has developed the South Leeds Super Forum. The forum membership is open to all VCF Sector organisations operating in South Leeds, and as such has the potential to draw upon and include a large number of local people from a great variety of different backgrounds and interests. Amongst other things the Super Forum elected representatives on to the board and sub groups of the South Leeds District Partnership. The forum met in advance of the meetings of the former District Partnership Board and was able to consult with the membership of individual organisations on the content of Board papers. In this manner the VCF Sector was able to contribute in a coordinated manner to the discussions at the Board. With the demise of the District Partnership board the Super Forum will still meet, and coordinate input into the various thematic partnerships that exist in the area.

As changes take place in the ways in which area committees undertake community consultation it is anticipated that the VCF Sector will continue to play a key role in supporting the committees to undertake engagement. Several area committees are making plans to put in place a systematic approach to consulting their communities on the achievement of the Leeds Strategic Plan (LSP) priorities, so far as they are relevant to the area committee area. In South Leeds, this will take the form of a meeting held in advance of the area committee, focusing on one of the key themes from the LSP. The first of these events will take place in September at the Inner South Leeds Area Committee and be led by Children's Services. It is hoped that this will attract a wide audience from the local population and the VCF Sector will be supporting both the content of the event and attempts to attract the audience. Whilst we will need to review the effectiveness of this as an approach as we go along, at this point it is intended to hold similar events, albeit with different themes before each of the South Area Committee meetings. This will enable the committees to have an overview of each of the themes of the LSP. On the whole VCF Sector organisations involved in this form of activity receive no specific payment from the Area Committees.

In addition to such ongoing activities, the VCF Sector also play an important role in assisting with time limited or service specific engagement activity. There are numerous examples of this, however the most ambitious scheme to take place in South Leeds over recent years involved Leeds Voice undertaking participatory appraisal research in 2006. This programme of consultation was designed to influence the priorities and spending profile for the Intensive Neighbourhood Management (INM) programme delivered as part of the Safer Stronger Communities Fund Programme. Local people were trained to lead the consultation and they planned and delivered the project with the assistance of a team of staff from Leeds Voice. The team stood at bus stops, outside shops and schools and many other places to talk to local residents and hear their views. This approach involved over 1,000 people, a full evaluation report was written by Voice which helped to determine

## Appendix 3



the priorities and projects that formed the INM programme which has subsequently been implemented over the last two years. The participatory appraisal programme received a national award for good practice in relation to adult learning.

### **The role of the VCF Sector in delivering commissioned services.**

The South Leeds Area Committees have taken an approach to the use of their well being funding which seeks to commission services in accordance with the priorities identified in their Area Delivery Plans. Such priorities are at least in part based upon a local interpretation of the LSP. Some of these services, for example the mobile youth bus commissioned from St Luke's Cares, and the 'I Love South Leeds' Festival commissioned from Health for All, may be designed to promote engagement amongst other priority outcomes, in these examples reducing anti social behaviour and promoting cohesion. However, there are other examples of the VCF Sector delivering commissioned services which primarily focus on engagement activity. For example, South Leeds Area Committees have since 2005, developed small scale action plans designed to improve the most problematical neighbourhoods (Neighbourhood Improvement Plans commonly known as 'NIPs'). Community development activity takes place, to engage the local community as fully as possible in this work, prior, during and following the conclusion of the NIP. In 2006, both South Area Committees agreed funding for one 'Priority Neighbourhood Development Worker' post in each area. Health for All were commissioned to manage the project and employ the workers. The project has been very successful and has since secured two further years of funding from the Area Committees. The Development Workers have played a crucial role in the successful implementation of several NIPs as well as supporting 'in bloom' groups, and they provide a useful link between the residents of Leeds, the Council in general and in particular the Area Committees.

### **The role of the VCF Sector in delivering services which contribute to ADP outcomes**

Many VCF Sector organisations deliver services which accord with stated area committee priorities or contribute to the achievement of ADP outcomes, without recourse to well-being support. The most frequent example of this probably relates to activities for young people. Supporting the delivery of services to young people, with the aim of promoting community cohesion, and diversion from anti-social behaviour, has been a consistent priority for South Leeds Area Committees. Indeed a scrutiny enquiry in 2006 found that approximately 30% of the overall revenue allocation to the ten Area Committees was spent on such activity, and many community consultation exercises frequently cite services for young people as being a key priority.

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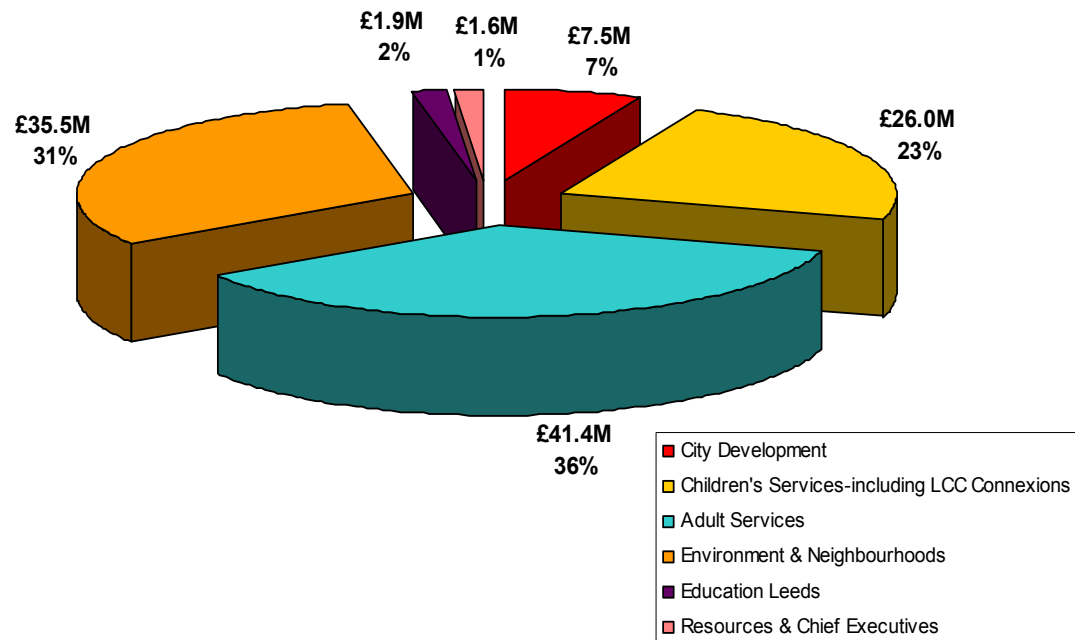


In South Leeds, several organisations provide such services. One of these is the Hamara Healthy Living Centre, which provides traditional open access youth clubs two nights per week, sports activity aimed at promoting cohesion by linking up young people in LS11 and LS10, whilst encouraging Asians youths to become involved in rugby. They also run holiday clubs, junior gym based training, accredited coaching awards courses, information advice and guidance sessions, and focused cohesion work. Whilst Hamara, clearly have their own mechanisms for capturing these outcomes and there is some links with the statutory youth service there is no clear overall process for capturing the detail of such outcomes. Hence it is difficult to be entirely prescriptive in describing (to central government for example) the extent of such activity.

## Appendix 4



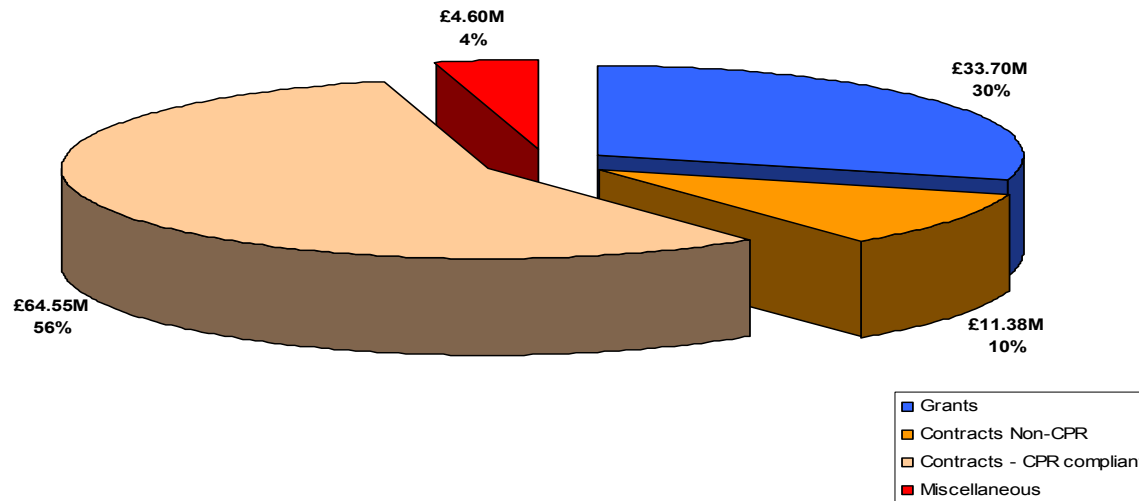
### Total VCFS Payments 2007/8 - £114M



## Appendix 4



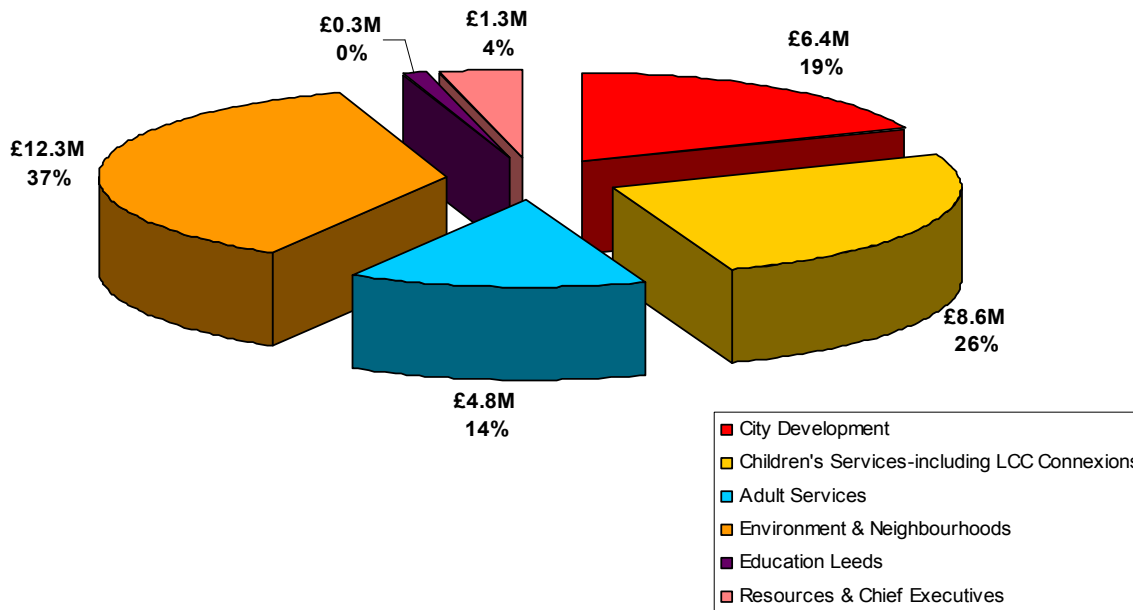
### Breakdown by Type of Funding - £114M



# Appendix 4



## Grants to VCFS 2007/8 - £33.7M



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Originator: Peter Marrington

Tel: 39 51151

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**Report of the Head of Scrutiny and Member Development**

**Scrutiny Board: Children's Services**

**Date: 11 June 2009**

**Subject: Determining the Work Programme 2009/10**

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**Electoral Wards Affected:**

Ward Members consulted  
(referred to in report)

**Specific Implications For:**

Equality and Diversity

Community Cohesion

Narrowing the Gap

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**1.0 Purpose of Report**

1.1 The purpose of this report is to determine the Board's work programme for 2009/10.

**2.0 Introduction**

2.1 Previous agenda items have provided inputs to the development of the Board's work programme. Having considered the written information and having discussed relevant issues with those present at the meeting, the Board is now asked to consider formulating a draft work programme.

2.2 In formulating its work programme the Scrutiny Board shall determine;

- How any proposed inquiries meet criteria approved from time to time by the Scrutiny Advisory Group (Attached as Appendix 1)
- whether the programme can be adequately resourced and timetabled.

2.3 A skeleton work programme is attached as appendix 2.

**3.0 Recommendation**

3.1 Members are requested to consider the content of the Board's work programme for the coming year.

**Background Papers**

Council's Constitution - Scrutiny Board Procedure Rules

## SCRUTINY BOARD PROCEDURE RULES GUIDANCE NOTE 7

### INQUIRY SELECTION CRITERIA

#### 1.0 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 The Scrutiny Board Procedure Rules require Scrutiny Boards, before deciding to undertake an Inquiry, to:

*Consider how a proposed Inquiry meets criteria approved from time to time; and*

*Consult with any relevant Director and Executive Member*

- 1.2 This is to ensure that Scrutiny Boards, when agreeing to undertake an Inquiry, have considered carefully the reasons for that Inquiry, its objectives, whether it can be adequately resourced in terms of Member and Officer time and have sought the views of the relevant Director and Executive Member.
- 1.3 The decision whether to undertake an Inquiry or not rests with the Scrutiny Board.

#### 2.0 INQUIRY SELECTION CRITERIA

- 2.1 At the time of deciding to undertake an Inquiry, the Scrutiny Board will refer to the Inquiry Selection Criteria within this Guidance Note and formally identify which of the agreed criteria the proposed Inquiry meets. The Board will also record the comments of the relevant Director and Executive Member. This process will be recorded in the Scrutiny Board minutes.

## INQUIRY SELECTION CRITERIA

**Scrutiny Board** \_\_\_\_\_

**Inquiry Title** \_\_\_\_\_

**Anticipated Start Date** \_\_\_\_\_

**Anticipated Finish Date** \_\_\_\_\_

**The Inquiry meets the following criteria**

- It addresses the Council's agreed Strategic outcomes by reviewing the effectiveness of policy to achieve strategic outcomes as defined by the Leeds Strategic Plan
- Shaping and developing policy through influencing pre-policy discussion

It fulfils a performance management function by

- Reviewing performance of significant parts of service
- Addressing a poor performing service
- Addressing a high level of user dissatisfaction with the service
- Addressing a pattern of budgetary overspends
- Addressing matters raised by external auditors and inspectors

- Addresses an issue of high public interest
- Reviews a Major or Key Officer decision
- Reviews an Executive Board decision
- Reviews a series of decisions which have a significant impact
- Has been requested by the Executive Board/Full Council/Scrutiny Advisory Group
- looks at innovative change

Comments of relevant Director and Executive Member (Attach additional sheet if necessary)

Date

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**Scrutiny Board (Children's Services)  
Draft Work Programme 2009/10**

Item	Description	Notes	Type of item
<b>Meeting date – 9 July 2009</b>			
<b>Youth Service Surveys</b>	To consider the results of the youth service surveys of users and non-users	Requested by the Board in April 2009	
<b>Performance Management</b>	Quarter 4 information for 2008/09 (Jan-Mar)	All Scrutiny Boards receive performance information on a quarterly basis	PM
<b>Meadowfield Primary School</b>	To agree the Board's report arising from the Inquiry	This report is carried over from 2008/09	RP
<b>14-19 Education Review</b>	To conduct the final session of the Board's Inquiry	This inquiry is carried over from 2008/09	DP

**Scrutiny Board (Children's Services)  
Draft Work Programme 2009/10**

Item	Description	Notes	Type of item
<b>Meeting date – 17 September 2009</b>			
<b>Formal responses to Scrutiny Board recommendations</b>	To receive the formal response to the following final inquiry report: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Protecting our Environment</li> </ul>	This report was produced by the Young People's Scrutiny Forum	MSR
<b>Performance Management</b>	Quarter 1 information for 2009/10 (April - June)	All Scrutiny Boards receive performance information on a quarterly basis	PM
<b>Children's Services and the Children and Young People's Plan</b>	To maintain an overview across the Board's portfolio, and to monitor the development of the Children's Services arrangements in Leeds	The Board has previously agreed to monitor progress against the priorities in the Plan on a quarterly basis	PM
<b>Recommendation Tracking</b>	This item tracks progress with previous Scrutiny recommendations on a quarterly basis		MSR
<b>Ofsted Inspections</b>	Biannual update on Ofsted Inspections and schools causing concern	The Scrutiny Board agreed in 2006/07 to consider these reports to Executive Board	PM

**Scrutiny Board (Children's Services)  
Draft Work Programme 2009/10**

Item	Description	Notes	Type of item
<b>Meeting date – 15 October 2009</b>			
<b>Formal responses to Scrutiny Board recommendations</b>	To receive the formal response to the following final inquiry reports: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Entering the Education System</li> <li>• Meadowfield Primary School</li> </ul>		MSR
<b>Meeting date – 12 November 2009</b>			

**Scrutiny Board (Children's Services)  
Draft Work Programme 2009/10**

Item	Description	Notes	Type of item
<b>Meeting date – 10 December 2009</b>			
<b>Performance Management</b>	Quarter 2 information for 2009/10 (July-Sept)	All Scrutiny Boards receive performance information on a quarterly basis	PM
<b>Children's Services and the Children and Young People's Plan</b>	To maintain an overview across the Board's portfolio, and to monitor the development of the Children's Services arrangements in Leeds	The Board has previously agreed to monitor progress against the priorities in the Plan on a quarterly basis	PM
<b>Recommendation Tracking</b>	This item tracks progress with previous Scrutiny recommendations on a quarterly basis		MSR
<b>Meeting date – 28 January 2010</b>			
<b>Meeting date – 25 February 2010</b>			



**Scrutiny Board (Children's Services)  
Draft Work Programme 2009/10**

Item	Description	Notes	Type of item
<b>Meeting date – 25 March 2010</b>			
<b>Performance Management</b>	Quarter 3 information for 2009/10 (Oct-Dec)	All Scrutiny Boards receive performance information on a quarterly basis	PM
<b>Children's Services and the Children and Young People's Plan</b>	To maintain an overview across the Board's portfolio, and to monitor the development of the Children's Services arrangements in Leeds	The Board has previously agreed to monitor progress against the priorities in the Plan on a quarterly basis	PM
<b>Recommendation Tracking</b>	This item tracks progress with previous Scrutiny recommendations on a quarterly basis		MSR
<b>School performance and Ofsted Inspections</b>	Annual report on school performance and biannual update on Ofsted Inspections and schools causing concern	The Scrutiny Board agreed in 2006/07 to consider these reports to Executive Board	PM
<b>Meeting date – 22 April 2010</b>			
<b>Annual Report</b>	To agree the Board's contribution to the annual scrutiny report		

Key:

RFS – Request for scrutiny

RP – Review of existing policy

DP – Development of new policy

MSR – Monitoring scrutiny recommendations

PM – Performance management

B – Briefings (including potential areas for scrutiny)

**Scrutiny Board (Children's Services)  
Draft Work Programme 2009/10**

<b>Working Groups</b>			
<b>Working group</b>	<b>Membership from 2008/09</b>	<b>Current position</b>	
<b>Safeguarding - Resources</b>	Councillor Hyde Councillor Driver Mr Britten Mr Falkingham Ms Foote Prof Gosden	Inquiry carried over from 2008/09 – scope agreed. Dates to be confirmed.	
<b>Safeguarding – Preventative Duty</b>	Councillor Driver Councillor Lancaster Mr Britten Mr Falkingham Ms Kayani Ms Morris-Boam	Inquiry carried over from 2008/09 – scope agreed. Dates to be confirmed.	
<b>14-19 review</b>	Councillor Hyde Councillor Cleasby Councillor Driver Councillor Lancaster Mr Britten Mr Falkingham Professor Gosden	Inquiry carried over from 2008/09 – meeting with employers to be arranged	
<b>Attendance</b>	Councillor Hyde Mr Britten Mr Falkingham Professor Gosden	The Board agreed in May 2009 that the working group should review progress before the end of the 2009 calendar year.	



Originator: Kate Arscott

Tel: 247 4189

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## Report of the Head of Scrutiny and Member Development

### Scrutiny Board: Children's Services

Date: 11 June 2009

### Subject: Draft Report – Education Standards – Entering the Education System

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**Electoral Wards Affected:**

**Specific Implications For:**

Equality and Diversity

Community Cohesion

Narrowing the Gap

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## 1.0 Introduction

- 1.1 During 2008/09 the Scrutiny Board (Children's Services) carried out an inquiry focused on young children entering the formal education system for the first time.
- 1.2 The inquiry was completed in March, and the Board is now in a position to report on its conclusions and recommendations resulting from the evidence gathered. A draft report is attached.

## 2.0 Consultation

- 2.1 Scrutiny Board Procedure Rule 14.3 states that "where a Scrutiny Board is considering making specific recommendations it shall invite advice from the appropriate Director(s) prior to finalising its recommendations. The Director shall consult with the appropriate Executive Member before providing any such advice. The detail of that advice shall be attached to the report".
- 2.2 The Director of Children's Services has indicated that there is no specific advice that she wishes to provide at this stage, before the Board finalises its report.
- 2.3 Once the Board publishes its final report, the Director will be asked to formally respond to the Scrutiny Board's recommendations within three months.

### **3.0 Recommendations**

3.1 The Board is requested to:-

- (i) Agree the Board's final report and recommendations.
- (ii) Request that a formal response to the recommendations is produced in line with normal procedures for scrutiny inquiry reports.

### **Background papers**

None



**Leeds**  
CITY COUNCIL

# **Education Standards – Entering the Education System**

**DRAFT**

## **Scrutiny Inquiry Report**

# Introduction and Scope



## Introduction

1. At the start of the 2008/09 municipal year, we agreed to carry out an inquiry into Education Standards, with a focus on Entering the Education System.
2. This followed on from previous work which we had undertaken in 2007/08 into the support available for young people at risk of becoming NEET (Not in Employment, Education or Training). One of the conclusions which we drew was that in fact many of these young people can be identified at a very early stage. We therefore decided to explore the support on offer to those vulnerable to underachievement when they first enter the education system.
3. We commissioned a small working group to define the scope for the inquiry, and identify areas where the board could add value to work already underway to improve education standards in Leeds.
4. The group identified two main areas of focus for the inquiry – namely the methods used to assess education standards during early years and reception, and the way in which the information gathered is used by childcare and education providers and shared between the many different organisations involved.
5. In particular, we decided to examine the following areas:
  - How information on attainment is collected by childcare providers, and in particular what impact the introduction of the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) will have on this
  - How this information is shared with primary schools
  - How attainment is measured within primary schools, both on entry to foundation stage and at KS1
  - More broadly, how the transition between pre-school provision and primary provision is managed
  - How children at risk of underachievement are identified at an early stage, and how information relating to them is shared between the different services involved
  - How information about the needs of all children aged 0-7 and their families is collected and used by other services.
6. This was done by means of inquiry sessions in full board meetings, and also via visits to a range of provision across the city.
7. The inquiry ties in with priorities around early intervention and family support in the Leeds Strategic Plan and the Children and Young People's Plan, along with Local Area Agreement targets.

# Conclusions and Recommendations



## Background

8. Supporting all children to achieve their full potential at the earliest possible stage is important for a number of reasons.
9. Firstly, there is significant evidence to suggest that good quality childcare can improve outcomes later in a child's educational career. Some of this evidence was provided to us as part of our inquiry. A recent national report from the 'Effective Pre-school and Primary Education Project', which has followed more than 3000 children since 1996, concluded that those children who had attended a good quality pre-school had better outcomes in English and Maths at age 11 than those who had not.
10. Early evaluations of the Sure Start project and the introduction of Children's Centres are also beginning to show that children attending these settings, and therefore receiving additional support and good quality childcare, are achieving better outcomes than their peers in similarly disadvantaged areas who have not had the benefit of this provision.
11. In addition, there is a growing consensus that identifying those children at risk of underachievement at an early stage can have a positive impact on wider social problems such as social dysfunction, violence, drugs, alcohol and family breakdown. This view was the main finding of the 'Early intervention: Good Parents, Great Kids, Better Citizens' report, published by the Centre for Social Justice and the Smith Institute in September 2008. The report argued that early intervention was not only cheaper, but also more effective in terms of tackling these problems. This approach is currently being targeted in Nottingham, which was launched as a City of Early Intervention in April 2008.
12. Finally, identifying children at risk of underachievement can also have a positive impact on safeguarding, as underachievement is often (although by no means always) linked to wider problems within the child's home environment, and support for the family at this early stage can help to prevent difficulties developing later on.
13. The Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS), introduced in September 2008, is designed to be a more refined means of assessing the progress of all children as they complete this first stage of their educational career. It replaced the existing Foundation Stage Profile. In theory the EYFS can be used to identify children in need of additional support in relation to specific areas of learning, and one of our objectives for this inquiry was to consider how well this system is operating.

## Conclusions and Recommendations



14. Because all Early Years providers are required to deliver the EYFS framework, (unless they have an exemption from the Secretary of State), they are also open to inspection by Ofsted from September 2008 onwards. This should enable local authorities to identify and address those areas where childcare is currently not of a satisfactory standard. This is particularly significant when bearing in mind that, broadly speaking, children in deprived areas do not have access to the same quality of childcare as children in more affluent areas. Clearly it is important that all children have access to high quality Early Years provision, particularly in light of the very positive impact which this can have on those at risk of underachievement.

15. In addition to the EYFS, and the use made of the information gathered as part of this process within childcare settings, we also felt that the transition between Early Years settings and Primary school was extremely important in terms of enabling all children to achieve their full potential.

16. Not only can transition itself be an alarming and even traumatic process for the child if handled inappropriately (which could have the knock on effect of temporarily halting or even reversing development), but the transition

period is also a time when potentially the body of knowledge built up by the child's Early Years provider about his or her development and family background can be lost, or at least not fully transmitted to the new setting. If children at risk of underachievement are to be effectively identified and supported then it is essential that transition is a smooth process, and that there are clear links between providers for the sharing of information.

### Current position

17. As we discovered during our initial investigations, many of the above themes have already been recognised and are being acted upon by the Early Years Service and Education Leeds.

18. In particular, a great deal of work has already been undertaken in terms of embedding the Early Years Foundation Stage, and forging stronger links between Early Years and Education providers. This has been achieved through various means, including a comprehensive training programme, offered prior to the introduction of the EYFS to providers across all types of setting, and by the appointment of a joint post to facilitate progress and improvement in Early Years and Education.



## Conclusions and Recommendations



19. However, in spite of this good work, the sector still faces some significant challenges. This is most notable when the progress against the two targets agreed with DCSF for this area is considered. These two targets are as follows:

1. To increase the percentage of pupils with a good level of overall achievement (GLA) at the end of the Foundation Stage.<sup>1</sup>
2. To reduce the gap between outcomes for the lowest achievers and the average for all pupils.<sup>2</sup>

20. While Leeds has made some progress in these two areas in recent years, the specific targets for 2008 were not met in either area. Only 47.2% of children (3580 out of a cohort of 7586) achieved a good level of overall achievement at the end of the Foundation Stage, against a target of 50%, and the gap between the lowest achievers and the average was 39.8% compared with a target of 33% and a national average of 36%.

<sup>1</sup> A good level of achievement is defined as achieving 78+ points including 6+ in all PSED (Personal, Social and Emotional Development) and CLL (Communication, Language and Literacy) strands.

<sup>2</sup> Calculated as the difference between the median score of the full cohort and the mean score of the lowest achieving 20%, expressed as a percentage of the median score of the full cohort.

21. To stand a chance of achieving both of these targets it was clear to us that those children at greatest risk of underachievement needed to be identified and supported in order to raise standards overall.

22. During our consideration of performance management data and also the biannual report on standards in primary education in Leeds, we strongly welcomed the emphasis on narrowing the gap and achievement for all pupils. We feel that this is a healthier approach than previous targets which have tended to encourage 'hothousing' of border line pupils to achieve the next level in Key Stage assessments.

23. In addition to working to achieve the DCSF targets, the local authority also has a statutory duty to improve the 'Every Child Matters' outcomes, and reduce inequalities, for all 0-5 year olds. This is known as the Early Years Outcomes Duty (EYOD).

24. Five key objectives have been identified in Leeds, which form part of the EYOD. In summary, these are:

1. To develop a strategic partnership
2. To develop the analysis and reporting of data
3. To develop continuous quality improvement systems
4. To develop integrated working

## Conclusions and Recommendations



5. To develop and promote partnership working with parents.

25. We were keen to identify areas where we could build upon the good work already being done by Education Leeds and the Early Years service in order to increase the chances of the DCSF targets and the EYOD objectives being met, and of children in Leeds being helped to achieve the best possible outcomes, in the next municipal year and beyond. In particular, many of our recommendations are strongly linked to the EYOD objectives.

### Links between Early Years and Education settings

26. First of all, it is important to recognise that traditionally children in this age group have been supported by two clear and separate sectors with historically quite different cultures and emphasis – Early Years, and Primary Education. In order for all children to be effectively supported it is essential that these two sectors work together effectively, and that the dividing line between the two is softened, if not erased altogether.

27. As mentioned above, efforts are already being made by Leeds City Council and Education Leeds to achieve this, and we were made aware of many examples of

effective collaboration during the course of our inquiry.

28. However, we also discovered that this positive experience is by no means universal across all providers in the city. For example, on our visit to the Kids Academy private nursery in Holt Park, we discussed with staff the arrangements for transferring information about children attending the nursery to their primary school during the transition process. We were concerned to hear that while a comprehensive report was produced for every child on leaving the nursery, covering their progress against each area of the early years curriculum, staff did not feel that this was necessarily always used to full effect by the primary schools. In particular, there did not appear to be any arrangements for ensuring that children did not cover topics at primary school which they had previously completed at nursery.

29. There were also no clear processes for supporting any Gifted and Talented children, who may have achieved all of the EYFS outcomes by the time they left nursery, and staff expressed concerns that potentially some of these children could end up 'coasting' during their first year at primary school while the rest of their class caught up.

## Conclusions and Recommendations



30. The specific problem in this case, and one which we feel may well be mirrored across the city, is not so much that the primary schools in the area were not doing enough to support the children who had joined them from the Kids Academy nursery, but that the nursery staff themselves had no way of knowing whether the information that they had provided was being made use of or not.

31. We feel that central to solving this problem is the development of 'parity of esteem' between the two types of provider. In particular, the valuable contribution made by all Early Years settings to the achievement of children needs to be recognised by Primary schools across the city.

32. The reason why this is perhaps not the case in all areas at present may be due to a lingering perception that Early Years providers simply offer 'care', while schools are only focused on education and achievement. Clearly in the modern learning environment, both groups of providers are responsible for fostering good achievement, and developing the overall wellbeing of each child, and this must be recognised by staff working in both sectors.

33. In addition, it was pointed out to us during the course of our inquiry that the historic division between Early Years and Education has meant

that staff working in each sector do not necessarily share the same skill base in terms of assessing child development.

34. The Early Years service and Education Leeds have produced a guide to assessment in Early Years called 'The Seven Stage Process', and this has been a useful tool in ensuring that similar techniques are used across the board. However, we are of the opinion that this work needs to be continued and built upon in order to ensure that all staff work together to ensure the best outcomes for children.

### Recommendation 1

**That the Director of Children's Services and the Chief Executive of Education Leeds continue to develop and implement ways of promoting parity of esteem between different settings, in particular by developing more effective means of communication, not just from Early Years providers to schools, but vice versa. Also, that joint training for staff from both areas is extended to ensure that everyone working in the sector has a good shared understanding of child development. That progress in these areas is reported back to the Children's Services Scrutiny Board within three months.**

# Conclusions and Recommendations



## Children's Centres

35. In some parts of the city, the introduction of Children's Centres is also helping to promote stronger working relationships between schools and Early Years providers.
36. Many Children's Centres share a site, and sometimes even a building, with a primary school and consequently there are clear links and lines of communication between the two.
37. During our inquiry we visited an excellent example of this system in practice, at Hunslet St Mary's Primary school, where one of the two Hunslet Children's Centre sites is also located.
38. From the time when the Children's Centre was first established, a decision was taken by management to involve staff from all the primary schools in the area in the planning process, and to foster strong ties between teaching and Early Years staff.
39. This has clearly worked extremely well at Hunslet St Mary's. Children going through the Early Years Foundation Stage are taught together in one class, so that there is no distinction between the children in the final year of Early Years provision at the Children's Centre and those in reception at the Primary school. The class is taught by a foundation stage teacher, who has experience in both types of setting.
40. A concerted effort is also made to ensure that there is a very smooth transition for the children moving from the foundation stage unit into Year 1. This is seen as a year long process, and children gradually become accustomed to the life of the rest of the school during their year in reception.
41. Not only does this mean that the children experience a virtually seamless move from Early Years to education, but also any information about the children's achievement can be effectively transmitted between staff members. In addition, staff also reported that the arrangement made safeguarding much easier, as there was far more 'joined up working' between the school and the range of different agencies involved in the work of the Children's Centre.
42. While we were extremely impressed with the provision on offer at Hunslet St Mary's and Hunslet Children's Centre, we did also have some concerns about what we perceived as weaknesses in the current system, which may well be replicated in Children's Centres elsewhere.
43. While there is no denying that children who attend the Children's Centre at a young age, and go on to become pupils at Hunslet St

## Conclusions and Recommendations



Mary's, will benefit from an extremely high standard of care and education, we did have some concerns about links with other schools in the area.

remedy the situation, particularly in terms of stronger governance arrangements, with representatives from all local primary schools involved.

44. Theoretically, every Children's Centre should serve a whole community, and not just a small section of that community. We were disappointed to discover that while Hunslet Children's Centre was attempting to foster strong links with other primary schools in the area, these links did not appear to be nearly as strong as those with Hunslet St Mary's.

47. We also felt that Children's Centres could improve their ties with surrounding schools, and further expand the support which they offer to vulnerable children, by becoming a more integral part of the 'Extended Services' cluster in their area. Clearly there are strong parallels between the type of support offered to younger children via Children's Centres, and that offered to older pupils via Extended Services. There is also a great deal of potential for sharing information about any young people or families experiencing difficulties.

45. This was borne out by the fact that the vast majority of parents whose children attended the Children's Centre at Hunslet St Mary's wanted their children to move on to the primary school. While this is testament to the great relationship which exists between the school and the Children's Centre, we would have been more reassured to see a Children's Centre with strong links to all of the local primary schools, and a feeling among parents that the transition to any local school would be seamless.

46. Clearly it is always going to be easier for a Children's Centre to have stronger links with a school situated in the same building rather than one further afield. However, we did feel that there were some steps which could be taken to

### Recommendation 2

**That the Director of Children's Services reports back to us within 3 months on the steps being taken to ensure that:**

- a) all Children's Centres in the city are committed to serving the whole community in which they are located
- b) the children experience as seamless a transition as possible, regardless of which school they move on to.
- c) assistance is offered to those Centres, or schools, which are having difficulty in establishing these ties, and
- d) all Children's Centres are encouraged to form stronger ties with their Extended Services cluster where this is not already happening.

# Conclusions and Recommendations



## Additional support for providers

48. As previously outlined, the central reason for improving links between schools, Children's Centres and other Early Years providers is to promote the identification and support of those children who are at risk of underachievement.
49. The Early Years Foundation Stage has the potential to be an excellent tool for staff working with children in any setting to help with this identification process, as children are assessed against a range of areas covering intellectual, emotional and physical development.
50. Many settings are already making full use of this to pinpoint the areas in which certain children need additional support. For example, we were told about a project at Whingate primary school whereby a group of boys in the nursery were identified as having a very low stage of development for 'Disposition and Attitudes', and were helped to overcome this via a pirate topic which included a strong emphasis on speech, language and teamwork. The end result of this, and other similar projects at the school, was that the overall Foundation Stage Profile results were the best ever in 2008, with the school far exceeding the Leeds target for a good level of overall achievement.
51. However, we were concerned about the fact that Leeds is home to a huge range of different types of Early Years provision, and that not all of these providers may be fully equipped to make best use of the EYFS. To give an idea of the situation, in addition to local authority provision in the city, there are around 96 private child care providers, 110 voluntary sector organisations and 1000 childminders.
52. In particular, we were concerned that some childminders may not be able to cope with the increased demands of implementing the EYFS due to the other pressures on their time. Although a comprehensive programme of training has been provided, and continues to be provided, by the Early Years service, due to the fact that the majority of childminders work alone, many may find it difficult to access this training.
53. We also felt that there was a danger that financial pressures on some private nurseries could have a negative impact on implementation of the EYFS. In particular, as there was no longer a requirement for teacher support, and most private nurseries could not afford to employ a qualified teacher, the balance between care and education in a nursery setting was not necessarily as equal as it could be.

## Conclusions and Recommendations



54. The forthcoming review of the nursery education grant should help to ease the financial pressure on some private nurseries. However, we felt that more targeted support should be offered to these settings.

### Recommendation 3

**That the Director of Children's Services takes steps to ensure that greater targeted support is offered to both childminders and private nurseries, in implementing, and making best use of, the Early Years Foundation Stage. Also, that a system is established to enable close monitoring of provision across all settings in order to identify those which may be in need of assistance. That progress in both these areas is reported back to the Children's Services Scrutiny Board within three months.**

### Common Transition document

55. The example quoted above, of the work carried out at Whingate primary school, is also a demonstration of how the principles of the EYFS can be used to identify children at risk of underachievement while they are still in the early stages of the Foundation Stage.

56. Many Early Years providers carry out similar work, and it is vital that the information gathered by these providers is not just used to inform work within the setting, but also shared with the primary school which the child moves on to.

57. As mentioned above, some possible methods of facilitating better transfer of information between providers are to promote parity of esteem between the different sectors, and ensure that Children's Centres have stronger links with all of the schools in their area. However, it also became apparent to us during the course of our investigations that the form in which the information is presented is also of great importance.

58. Schools which receive children from a wide range of settings struggle particularly with this, as while they may receive accurate and useful information from every provider, this is likely to be in a wide range of different formats which can make coordination of evidence quite challenging.

59. In order to address this problem, a 'Common Transition Document' has been produced by the Early Years service. This has been piloted, and is due to be rolled out across the city, along with the accompanying guidance, this spring.

## Conclusions and Recommendations



60. Having been struck by the need for such a document, we were pleased to see that one had been developed, although perhaps a little disappointed to see that it was not already more widely used. However, we hope to see the Transition Record used positively by providers across the city in the coming years.

61. In addition, we feel that there may be a case for encouraging the use of this document wherever a young child moves from one setting to another. For example, not only during the transition from pre-school provision to primary school, but also when a child moves from the care of a childminder to nursery.

### **Recommendation 4**

**That the Director of Children's Services and the Chief Executive of Education Leeds report back to us within three months on the steps being taken to promote the EYFS Transition Record as widely as possible, and to encourage as many settings as possible to make use of it.**

### **Working with parents**

62. One of our main concerns when considering the assessment of children, particularly at such a young age, was to ensure that there was no danger of children

being 'labelled' or stigmatised in any way. Indeed, the main criticism levelled at the EYFS, in the media and elsewhere, when it was introduced was that it was a 'pre-school curriculum', which would set unrealistic standards for children and lead to the very young being cast as failures before they had even set foot in primary school.

63. Our exploration of the issue has convinced us that this is certainly not the case. There is a consistent message running throughout all of the EYFS guidance that all children develop at different rates and that they must be allowed to learn at their own speed. In fact, one of the central priorities of the EYFS is "*Children developing at their own pace with the support of an allocated staff member*".

64. However, it is clear that even taking into account the different rates at which children develop, there will always be some who are obviously in need of additional support. In these cases, it is essential that this support is delivered as sensitively as possible, in order to maximise the benefits for the child and minimise any negative impact. In particular, it is important that parents are fully involved in the process, and understand that their child (or their parenting style) is not being criticised in any way.

65. One extremely effective means of offering additional support in a



## Conclusions and Recommendations



'parent friendly' manner is via Children's Centres. Due to the fact that a wide variety of different agencies are involved in the running of Children's Centres, it is relatively easy for a child attending nursery provision at the centre to be referred on to a specialist service such as speech therapy. Children who attend other provision in the area can also access support via Children's Centres and benefit from the co-location of many different services.

66. The fact that Children's Centres are not seen as a solely educational environment also makes it easier for staff working there to engage with those parents of children having difficulties who may not have had a positive experience of education themselves, and therefore may be wary of school based intervention. This theory was confirmed by staff working at Hunslet Children's Centre, who reported that parenting workshops and other activities run at the centre had proved very popular with parents who may otherwise have been difficult to reach, and that in turn this had led to them feeling more comfortable in the school environment.

67. Children's Centres are not the only means of offering this type of additional support, and many other providers in the city are also developing innovative ways to support children and their families.

We learnt about another piece of work at Whingate primary school where targeted support was offered to several children whose level of 'Personal and Emotional Development' were found to be below average due to family circumstances. The parents of these children were also targeted to attend 'stay and play' sessions, and workshops. This helped to improve the achievement of the children, and also fostered stronger relationships between the parents and the school staff.

68. Involving parents is crucial due to the fact that any support offered by providers can be further built upon and developed at home, where the vast majority of early learning takes place. In addition, there is evidence to suggest that greater parental involvement in children's learning can help to improve wider social inclusion and cohesion, which is particularly significant bearing in mind that underachievement is often part of a wider network of social problems in more deprived areas.

69. Education Leeds and the Early Years service are already fully aware of the need for strong parental involvement and the benefits that it can bring. In addition to the examples above, the city ran a successful 'Parents and Partners in Early Learning' project in 2007-2008. However, we would like to see the benefits of this work

# Conclusions and Recommendations



further built upon, and examples of good practice used to drive improvements in all types of provision.

## Recommendation 5

**That the Director of Children's Services and the Chief Executive of Education Leeds ensure that every effort is made to avoid stigmatising those children who are identified as being in need of additional support during the EYFS, and that any support offered takes account of the need to involve parents as much as possible in order to maximise the benefits for the child's development. That progress in these areas is reported back to the Children's Services Scrutiny Board within three months.**

## Links with Health and Social Care

70. As already discussed, the Early Years Foundation Stage is an excellent tool for providers to use in identifying those children who are not only at risk of educational underachievement, but may also need support in other areas, particularly in terms of safeguarding.

71. As we are all only too well aware, strong links between the range of different agencies which work with and support young children are essential to effective safeguarding

arrangements, and in particular links between education, early years, health and social care services, and the voluntary sector, are crucial.

72. Much work is already being done to develop and improve these links, and as we explained above, Children's Centres are particularly effective in terms of delivering this 'joined-up working' due to the way in which they are set up.

73. In addition, we discovered during the course of our inquiry that strong links already exist at a senior and strategic level between the different agencies. For example, senior managers from Social Care are represented on all school wedge partnerships, and a service level agreement has been developed between the Early Years service and health visitors.

74. However, despite all of this work, we did not see a huge amount of evidence of partnership working with Health and Social Care on the ground during the course of our visits. We feel very strongly that the commitment at a strategic level needs to be rolled out to all individual providers across the city.

# Conclusions and Recommendations



## Recommendation 6

**That the Director of Children's Services and the Chief Executive of Education Leeds report back to us within three months on the steps being taken to ensure that 'joined-up' working becomes a fact of life for all providers working within the Early Years Foundation Stage, including the voluntary sector, and that the existing strategic commitment to partnership working between education, Early Years, Health and Social Care, along with current examples of good practice, are used as a basis from which to roll out these improvements across the city.**

Educational Needs (SEN) and those from the Gypsy/Roma and Travellers of Irish Heritage groups.

77. We were particularly struck by the extreme disadvantages often faced by children born into Gypsy/Roma or Irish Traveller communities, and the consequent poor levels of achievement among children from these backgrounds. For example, in 2008, 50% of White British children (2873 from a cohort of 5746) reached a 'good level of achievement' in the Foundation Stage Profile compared with just 14% of Irish Traveller children (1 from a cohort of 7) and 0% of children of Gypsy/Roma origin (from a cohort of 22) (although this needs to be seen in the context of small cohorts of children in the latter categories).

## Support for vulnerable groups

75. As well as looking at the tailored support on offer to those children who may be experiencing difficulties in specific areas, we also examined the more general support on offer to 'at risk' groups during the course of our inquiry.

76. A number of specialist staff within the Early Years service and Education Leeds work with different groups which are particularly vulnerable to underachievement, including children from Black and Minority Ethnic (BME) communities, children with Special

78. We discovered that a significant amount of work is being done to support children and their families within these communities, although it is perhaps too early for the positive benefits of this work to be seen as yet. However, the principle of engaging parents and making the most of their support is central to much of the activity being carried out.

79. Similarly, there are programmes in place to support children from BME communities and those with Special Educational Needs.

## Conclusions and Recommendations



80. However, we did have some concerns about the fact that in both cases there appeared to be separate teams in Early Years and Education Leeds to work with each of these groups. While there are evidently good working relationships between the different teams and groups of staff, we felt that support could be offered in a more seamless manner if it was handled by one single group of staff, covering both age ranges. The way that things currently stand, there could potentially be similar problems in the transition between different support teams as can occur when children move from one setting to another.

81. We also had some concerns about the current levels of funding for children with SEN, and the consequent capacity of some providers, particularly those in the private sector, to adequately support these children. During the course of our visits we heard of several examples of Early Years providers who could only find funding for a limited amount of support for children with these additional needs.

82. We discovered that a revised inclusion strategy is currently being developed by a sub group of the Sure Start partnership. However, we were keen to see further work being done to improve the support already on offer to these children.

### Recommendation 7

**That the Director of Children's Services and the Chief Executive of Education Leeds report back to us within three months on how the support on offer to those groups of children identified as being at high risk of underachievement, such as Black and Minority Ethnic children and those with Special Educational Needs, is being made as seamless as possible, particularly during the transition period.**

### Recommendation 8

**Also, that the Director of Children's Services and the Chief Executive of Education Leeds carry out a review of the funding for children with Special Educational Needs within Early Years, within the next three months, with a particular focus on ensuring that children are offered the same level of high quality support, regardless of the type of setting which they attend.**

### Coordination of services

83. Finally, we recognise that a number of our recommendations so far have related to ensuring that similar levels of service are on offer in different parts of the city, and that examples of good practice are shared.

## Conclusions and Recommendations



84. We would like to see a stronger system in place to monitor the different services on offer and to moderate governance and partnership working arrangements.

85. This could help in resolving a number of the issues which we have raised, such as the variation in support offered in different geographical areas and by different types of provider, and the need for stronger links between different services, particularly at a local level.

86. One possible means of achieving this may be through the Area Management Boards, which already play an important role in coordinating services in different parts of the city. By focusing on provision for children in this age group, the Area Management Boards could help to ensure that the same high standards are maintained across the wide range of different providers in the sector.

### Recommendation 9

**That the Directors of Children's Services and Education Leeds develop a means of coordinating and moderating different services and their associated governance arrangements to ensure that there is a consistently high standard of service across all providers. That the option of making use of the Area Management Boards to achieve this be considered. That a report on progress is brought to the Children's Services Scrutiny board within the next 3 months.**

# Evidence



## Monitoring arrangements

Standard arrangements for monitoring the outcome of the Board's recommendations will apply.

The decision-makers to whom the recommendations are addressed will be asked to submit a formal response to the recommendations, including an action plan and timetable, normally within two months.

Following this the Scrutiny Board will determine any further detailed monitoring, over and above the standard quarterly monitoring of all scrutiny recommendations.

## Reports and Publications Submitted

- Report of the Early Years Service and Education Leeds – Inquiry into educational standards – Entering the Education System – November 2008
- Parents as Partners in Early Learning project report
- Feedback letter from the National Assessment Agency on the annual Foundation Stage Profile moderation process
- Early Years Foundation Stage training programme outcomes
- Pilot Transition Document – Draft Guidance
- Pilot Transition Document (draft)
- Outcomes at the Foundation Stage in Leeds 2008. Report Version No: 1a (Results for all Leeds settings including PVI's)
- KS1 data report
- Report of the Early Years Service and Education Leeds – Inquiry into educational standards – Entering the Education System – March 2009
- Sure Start for Travellers – Evaluation Report
- Report on Education Leeds Gypsy Roma Traveller Achievement Service (GRTAS), Early Years.

# Evidence



## Witnesses Heard

Andrea Richardson - Quality and Standards Manager, Early Years Service

Christine Halsall - Head of Primary School Improvement, Education Leeds

Liz Bradley - Early Years Foundation Stage Improvement Manager, Early Years Service

Sharon Hogan - School Improvement Adviser (Early Years), Education Leeds / Early Years Service

## Dates of Scrutiny

25 September 2008 – Working Group to scope Terms of Reference (Councillor Lancaster, Councillor Hyde, Councillor Morgan, Tony Britten, Professor Gosden)

13 November 2008 – Scrutiny Board meeting

9 February 2009 – Visit to Hunslet St Mary's Primary School and Hunslet Children's Centre (Councillor Geoff Driver)

10 February 2009 – Visit to Childminder (Sandra Hutchinson)

20 February 2009 – Visit to Kids Academy Nursery (Sandra Hutchinson, Ian Falkingham, Councillor Karen Renshaw)

23 February 2009 – Visit to Kids Unlimited Nursery (Councillor Brenda Lancaster, Celia Foote)

5 March 2009 – Scrutiny Board meeting

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