

Report of the Head of Scrutiny and Member Development

Report to Scrutiny Board (Children and Families)

Date: 14 November 2013

Subject: Cluster Inquiry – Session 1

Are specific electoral Wards affected? If relevant, name(s) of Ward(s):	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No
Are there implications for equality and diversity and cohesion and integration?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No
Is the decision eligible for Call-In?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No
Does the report contain confidential or exempt information? If relevant, Access to Information Procedure Rule number: Appendix number:	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No

1.0 Purpose of this report

- 1.1 At its meeting on 28 June 2013, the Scrutiny Board (Children and Families) considered its work programme for the 2013/14 municipal year. It was acknowledged that the Board had expressed during two meetings, 14 March 2013 and 25 April 2013, a wish to conduct an inquiry which would consider the role and function of Cluster Partnerships and value they have in the delivery of localised services to children, young people and their families.
- 1.2 Terms of reference were agreed by the Scrutiny Board on the 10 October 2013.
- 1.3 The purpose of the inquiry is to make an assessment of and, where appropriate, make recommendations on the following areas:
- The lines of Cluster accountability to organisations within and external to the Local Authority.
 - Cluster governance arrangements and framework
 - Partnership engagement, representation and participation. To identify if there is good representation and participation from partner organisations at a local level across the city.
 - The performance of Clusters and the management of performance and financial information. Ensuring measures are in place which secures total accountability for resources and performance which demonstrates the difference that partnership activities are making across the City.
 - The improvement measures in place to enhance the performance of Clusters where it is required.

- The extent of collaborative and supportive working relationships between Clusters.
- Outcomes for Children and Young People as a result of Cluster intervention and operation to ensure that local investment is providing good value for money and having a positive impact on children, young people and their families.

2.0 Submission of evidence – November Meeting

2.1 In accordance with the terms of reference the Scrutiny Board has requested information on the following areas:

- Overview remit and purpose of Cluster partnerships.
- The different types of cluster partnerships
- Cluster Profiles
- Membership of Cluster Partnerships
- Cluster activities - the services expected to be delivered
- Governance arrangements including lines of accountability
- Role of Local Authority with regard to governance and performance
- Role of Schools Forum with regard to Cluster funding and accountability
- Performance monitoring arrangements

2.2 A review of area working arrangements was commissioned in June 2012. Within the review, elected members identified particular concerns with area committees' links to children's clusters. Some elected members expressed the view that the clusters were working well and there were productive links through jointly funded projects and activities. In other cases, elected members felt that there was a lack of understanding of their roles and structures and relationships were less good.¹ These views were echoed by the Scrutiny Board at the October meeting when the board requested for further clarity on the role and voting rights of Elected Members on clusters and that this information be provided as part of the inquiry.

2.3 Evidence will be submitted to the Board as follows:

- Power point presentation outlining key points as listed in paragraph 2.1. Appended to this report are maps defining wards, clusters and area committees which will be referred to in the presentation. (Appendix A)
- Leeds Childrens Trust Board report, Cluster update – governance and performance arrangements. (Appendix B). This report reflects city level minimum requirements for cluster governance, performance and accountability arrangements. An element of this report ' Cluster performance against obsessions', referred to as appendix 2 in the report will be presented at the December meeting when the Scrutiny Board will focus specifically on cluster partnerships, performance, funding and challenges. See paragraph 2.4

¹ Council Representation on Children and Young People Cluster Partnerships, 4 June 2013, Member Management Committee.

- 2.3 Information presented at the inquiry session will demonstrate a clear line of cluster accountability to the schools forum. Every authority must ensure that a schools forum is constituted in accordance with regulations 4 to 7 of The Schools Forums (England) Regulations 2012. These regulations also define the general framework for the management of meetings and the membership of the forum. Attached for information purposes as appendix C is the 'Schools Forum Guide for Schools and Academies'² and the 'Schools Forums powers and responsibilities 2013-14'³ which provides the Scrutiny Board of a brief summary of the role of local school forums.
- 2.4 In accordance with the terms of reference the Scrutiny Board meeting scheduled for the 10 December will provide the opportunity for a greater focus on the following:
- Six month Cluster performance reports (April – September)
 - Cluster performance and reasoning behind differences in performance
 - Role of Local Authority in improving performance, providing intervention and providing support
 - Cluster to Cluster collaborative working, support and sharing of good practice.
 - Significant challenges including socio-economic impacts faced by specific Clusters
 - Distribution of funding and monitoring of expenditure to ensuring resources, financial or otherwise, are fully utilised and investment is made appropriately.
 - Cluster membership, partnership engagement, participation and effectiveness at a local level.
- 2.5 The Scrutiny Board have an expressed a desire to conduct an element of the inquiry in two cluster areas in order to facilitate more detailed and focused debate. This will be conducted on the 16 January 2014 and will replace the formal Scrutiny Board meeting.

3 Corporate Considerations

3.1 Consultation and Engagement

The Board will undertake consultation where it is deemed appropriate in order to conduct this inquiry or gather necessary evidence.

3.2 Equality and Diversity / Cohesion and Integration.

- 3.2.1 The Equality Improvement Priorities 2011 to 2015 have been developed to ensure our legal duties are met under the Equality Act 2010. The priorities will help the council to achieve its ambition to be the best City in the UK and ensure that as a city work takes place to reduce disadvantage, discrimination and inequalities of opportunity.
- 3.2.2 Equality and diversity will be a consideration throughout the Scrutiny Inquiry and due regard will be given to equality through the use of evidence, written and verbal, outcomes from consultation and engagement activities.

² School Funding Agency 15 June 2013

³ Department of Education

- 3.2.3 The Scrutiny Board may engage and involve interested groups and individuals (both internal and external to the council) to inform recommendations.
- 3.2.4 Where an impact has been identified this will be reflected in the final inquiry report, post inquiry. Where a Scrutiny Board recommendation is agreed the individual, organisation or group responsible for implementation or delivery should give due regard to equality and diversity, conducting impact assessments where it is deemed appropriate.

3.3 Council Policies and City Priorities

This inquiry will assist in achieving outcomes and priorities as defined in the Children and Young Peoples Plan 2011-2015 and the Child Friendly City Priority Plan.

3.4 Resources and Value for Money

There is no resource or value for money implications relating to this report. At the conclusion of the inquiry any identified impact will be reported in the final inquiry report.

3.5 Legal Implications, Access to Information and Call In

None

3.6 Risk Management

None

4.7 Recommendations

The Scrutiny Board (Children and Families) is recommended to:

- 4.7.1 Note and consider the information contained and referenced in this report, and presented verbally to the Board on the 14 of November 2013.
- 4.7.2 Make recommendations as deemed appropriate.
- 4.7.3 Note that the terms of reference may incorporate additional information to extend the inquiry should the Children and Families Scrutiny Board identify any further scope for inquiry or request further witness or evidence during this session.

4.8 Background documents⁴

None

⁴ The background documents listed in this section are available to download from the Council's website, unless they contain confidential or exempt information. The list of background documents does not include published works.