

**To the Chair and Members of the
SCHOOLS CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE'S PANEL**

**SCHOOLS CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE'S PANEL WORK PLAN REPORT
2011/12**

Relevant Cabinet Member(s)	Wards Affected	Key Decision
Councillor Tatton-Kelly Cabinet Member for Schools Children and Young People	All	None

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

1. This report updates the Schools, Children and Young People Overview and Scrutiny Panel on the progress of the work plan for 2011/2012. It includes work undertaken in relation to the work plan, information updates and correspondence since the meeting on 16th February 2012.

EXEMPT INFORMATION

2. Not exempt

RECOMMENDATIONS

3. The Panel is asked to:
 - a) consider the work undertaken by the Panel; and
 - b) suggest areas for consideration during 2012/13 municipal year.

BACKGROUND

4. At its meeting on 27th June, 2011, the Panel agreed an outline work plan for the 2011/12 municipal year. It was concluded that the work plan should include fewer items per meeting in order to give the Panel an opportunity to consider key issues in greater detail. The Panel considered four key areas including elective home education, inclusion of children and young people with physical and sensory disabilities in mainstream education, education and health of children in care.

Quarterly performance was also regularly considered and the Cabinet Member addressed the Panel in July to outline his key priorities.

5. The work plan and recommendations sheet are attached at appendix A and reflects the reviews undertaken by Members. The Panel is asked to review the recommendations made and agree any further action required.

Items considered at meeting held on 16th February, 2012.

6. Members will recall that they held discussions on the health of children in care and performance information. Correspondence forwarded to the Mayor is attached at appendices B and C.

Doncaster Children's Trust

7. The minutes of the meetings held on 26th January, 2012 are attached at Appendix D for information and Councillor McNamee, the Panel's representative, may wish to provide a verbal update from the meeting.

Councillor Tatton-Kelly, Cabinet Member for Children and Young People – Key Priorities

8. Attached at Appendix E for the Panel's attention is an update/outline of the Cabinet Member's key priorities. Councillor Tatton-Kelly has suggested that the Panel may wish to consider some of the issues during their work plan for 2012/13.

Work Plan 2012/13

9. Members will recall that at the last meeting areas for review/consideration by the Panel during 2012/13 was raised. The Scrutiny Chairs and Vice Chairs liaison group has expressed the wish that Panels, at their meetings in March, agree the agenda for the June Panel meeting. Members are therefore requested to consider and suggest issues they feel appropriate for the Panel to consider.

ISSUES FOR CONSIDERATION

10. In summary the issues for consideration are:
 - to consider the Panel's work plan and recommendations sheet for 2011/12;
 - to propose the agenda for the June meeting and issues that the Panel may wish to consider during the 2012/13 civic year;
 - note the key priorities of the Cabinet Member for Children and Young People.

OPTIONS CONSIDERED

11. There are no specific options to consider within this report as it provides an opportunity for the Panel to reflect on the work it has undertaken during 2011/12 and to plan areas for deliberation in the forthcoming municipal year.

IMPACT ON COUNCIL'S KEY OBJECTIVES

Priority Theme	Mayor's Priorities for 2011/12	Implications of this initiative
1. Creating a strong, connected and inclusive economy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Drive forward the Doncaster economy • Get the balance of public and private transport right • Promote Doncaster as a tourist destination • Regenerate Doncaster's town centres 	<p>The Overview and Scrutiny function has the potential to impact upon all of the council's key objectives by holding decision makers to account, reviewing performance and developing policy through robust recommendations, monitoring performance of council and external partners services and reviewing issues outside the remit of the council that have an impact on the residents of the borough.</p>
2. Developing stronger communities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Encourage community harmony and cohesion. Treat people as individuals, not by reference to labels and artificial groupings 	
3. Increasing and improving housing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Raise housing standards 	
4. Protecting and improving all our children's lives	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continue to improve education and skills • Build on a strengthening Children's Service 	
5. Improving health and support for independent lives	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Encourage attitudes of self-reliance, self-improvement and mutual respect within Doncaster communities 	
6. Tackling crime and anti-social behaviour	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reduce crime and all forms of anti-social behaviour 	
7. Creating a cleaner and better environment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continue to protect the environment from developers, decay and architectural vandalism 	
8. Internal Transformation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure local people get value for money from council services 	

RISKS AND ASSUMPTIONS

12. To maximise the effectiveness of the Overview and Scrutiny function it is important that the work plan devised is manageable and that it accurately reflects the broad range of issues within its remit. Failure to achieve this can reduce the overall impact of the function.

LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

13. The Council's Constitution states that subject to matters being referred to it by other parts of the Full Council, OSMC or the Executive and any timetables laid down by those references the Schools, Children and Young People's Panel will determine its own work programme (Overview and Scrutiny Procedure Rule 6c).
14. Overview and Scrutiny Panels Terms of reference states that the Panel be empowered to establish ad hoc working groups from within its membership, to undertake project and policy development work, to meet the objectives and targets of its annual work plan.
15. Overview and Scrutiny Procedure Rule 15 (a) states that where, in the opinion of the Chair of an Overview and Scrutiny Panel, the matters under discussion are relevant to matters referred to other Scrutiny Panel(s) he/she shall consider to what extent to invite the participation of the Chair and/or other Members of the other Panel in the deliberations.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

16. The budget for the support of the Overview and Scrutiny function 2011/12 is not affected by this report however, the delivery of the work plan will need to take place within agreed budgets. There are no specific financial implications arising from the recommendations in this report. Any financial implications relating to specific reports on the work plan will be included in those reports.

CONSULTATION

17. No consultation was required for this report.

CONTACT OFFICER AND REPORT AUTHOR

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Background Papers

None

Chris Pratt
Director Children and Young People's Services

22nd February, 2012

Peter Davies
Mayor of Doncaster
Floor 1
The Council House
College Road
Doncaster
DN1 3AJ

Dear Peter,

Performance Information Schools, Children and Young People's Service

Throughout the year the Schools, Children and Young People Scrutiny Panel has received and considered a quarterly performance report for the Schools Children and Young People's Service.

The Panel is pleased to see that overall, progress against the delivery of the Corporate Plan objectives has been very good across the Directorate. The issue of overspend in social care, particularly the employment of agency staff, is always raised during these discussions. The Panel accepts the difficulties both for Doncaster and nationally with regards to the retention and employment of social workers and are pleased that you will soon be considering a policy and strategy to address this issue and very much looks forward to seeing the agreed proposals.

Cont...

During discussions on 16th February, a Panel Member suggested whether a Yorkshire and Humberside Local Authority Co-operative for social workers had been considered. The reason for the suggestion was to try and offset the reliance and dependency on agency staff with more long term accountability. I wondered if this was something you feel could be investigated and would be grateful for your thoughts on the issue.

I would be grateful if you could respond by 9th March, so I am able to report your thoughts on the suggestion to the last Panel meeting later in the month.

Kind regards

Councillor Christine Mills
Chair – Schools Children and Young People
Overview and Scrutiny panel

cc. Chris Pratt, Director of Children and Young People's Service
Cabinet Members

22nd February, 2012

Peter Davies
Mayor of Doncaster
Floor 1
The Council House
College Road
Doncaster
DN1 3AJ

Dear Peter,

Health of children in care

At the beginning of the year the Scrutiny Panel agreed to consider areas of the Children and Young People's Service improvement plan following the Inspection of Safeguarding Services for Looked After Children. At its meeting on 16th February, the Panel received an update on the health of children in care.

Chris Pratt, Director and Suzanne King (Interim Head of Service Children in Care) and representatives from the health sector outlined to the Panel the history and difficulties experienced in the past but focused on improvements that have been made since the Inspection.

The panel acknowledged that children in care are more likely to have experienced traumatic circumstances in their lives which will impact on their health before they enter care, with key issues highlighted as mental health and emotional well-being, teenage pregnancies and sexual health and drug and alcohol misuse, all requiring strong multi-agency support for each individual.

Members were pleased to learn of the improvements that have been made, for example, the appointment of a designated doctor with additional 0.5 named nurse and the joint agency working for obtaining initial medicals and required treatment for children in care.

A brief outline of the proposed new information technology system "Liquidlogic" was explained to the Members. The Panel encouraged its use and recognised the good communication and data transfer this system offers.

The only area that caused concern are the changes taking place in the National Health Service and that support for children in care could be fragmented across four separate areas. This is something that the Panel would like to see the Cabinet monitor ensuring, as Corporate Parents, our children are receiving the best possible health care.

I look forward to hearing your comments on the issues raised and would be grateful for a response by Friday 9th March, so I am able to report your views to the last Panel later in the month.

Kind regards

Councillor Christine Mills
Chair – Schools Children and Young People
Overview and Scrutiny panel

cc. Chris Pratt, Director of Children and Young People's Service
Cabinet Members