
To
Scrutiny Co-ordination Committee

5th November, 2008

Subject
Scrutiny Chairs' Progress Reports - Scrutiny Board 2

1 Purpose of the Briefing Note

- 1.1 To inform Scrutiny Co-ordination Committee of the work of Scrutiny Board 2 during the period June to mid-October 2008, together with recommendations and other outcomes of this work.

2 Recommendations

- 2.1 The Committee is asked to note the information contained in this briefing note and to consider any further action required.

3 Information / Background

3.1 Activity

- Gifted and Talented
- Misuse of Alcohol by Young People in Coventry
(both the above items were issues following on from the previous board's work.)
- Aiming High for Disabled Children
- Value for Money review of Children's Transport
(a cross party Scrutiny Review Group was convened to look into this and an interim report is expected at the end of November 2008)
- Scrutiny Board visits to Children's Homes, Children's Neighbourhood Services board members visited Council Homes in October 2008 (visits to City Council homes have been completed and other visits, including to Northern Care Homes are in the process of being arranged)
- Transition for young people with additional support needs
- Coventry Safeguarding Children's Board, including:
 - i) an introduction to issues around safeguarding (03/09/2008)
 - ii) a meeting with the Safeguarding Board representatives for a presentation of its 2008-2009 Business Plan and its key achievements 2007-2008 (01/10/2008)

3.2 Recommendations

- 3.2.1 The Board has, thus far, not chosen to make any recommendations to Cabinet regarding the items considered. In September however in response to a report back on the visit to The Grange the Board referred concerns regarding repairs and maintenance issues and the responses and costing of Building Services to Scrutiny Board 3.

3.3 Outcomes

- 3.3.1 In considering the Council's response to the misuse of alcohol by young people in the City the Board noted the links between alcohol and sexual health. The Board has a meeting scheduled for later this year that will focus on sex and relationship education and the work of the Teenage Pregnancy Partnership.
- 3.3.2 In responding to a presentation on the recent value for money report on Children's Transport the Board has established a Children's Transport Scrutiny Review Group which is investigating the current considerable overspends in delivering special needs and social care transport services. Members will be considering various options for re-focusing the Council's transport policies before reporting back to Scrutiny Board 2, ScruCo and Cabinet.
- 3.3.3 The Board continues to take an interest in the short breaks offered to children with moderate/complex physical and learning disabilities. Developing from this one of the major work programme items for the Board this year is the transition of young people receiving children's specialist services into adult services. The Board has received a very positive report from the Head of Children's Specialist Services and the Head of Adults' Services detailing the developing joint working in this area. In fact the Board has chosen to focus on the needs of young people with less severe needs who generally do not meet the eligibility criteria for adults' services. The Board will meet with Connexions and other providers of universal services to ensure that the needs of disabled young people are being met in the City.
- 3.3.4 In holding a special meeting to scrutinise the work of the Coventry Safeguarding Children Board the Board sought to focus on a priority area for Children's Services in the City. Safeguarding was the Every Child Matters outcome which performed worst in the previous Area Performance Assessment and the Board brought together colleagues from West Midlands Police, Coventry Primary Care Trust and the voluntary sector to investigate the various efforts under way to protect Coventry's children and young people. The meeting provided a good opportunity for Members to see first hand the excellent partnership working being undertaken by the different agencies and question them on the various outcomes from this work.
- 3.3.5 In concluding the meeting the Board requested further detailed information be provided at the next Safeguarding meeting relating to Common Assessment Framework (CAF) training, the introduction of a new Police ICT system and issues relating to interagency intervention thresholds.

4 Conclusion

- 4.1 Much of the Board's work at recent meetings has been preparatory and will support meetings due to take place over the next few months. The next meeting will focus on performance issues and the latest set of schools results. These plus the early indications of LAA indicators will influence the Board's work programme post Christmas.

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