

STOCKTON-ON-TEES BOROUGH COUNCIL

CABINET RECOMMENDATIONS

PROFORMA

Cabinet Meeting15th March 2007

1. Title of Item/Report

Review of Teenage Pregnancy - Report of Children and Young People Select Committee

2. Record of the Decision

Cabinet noted that the Children and Young People Select Committee had been tasked with reviewing the approach taken by the Teenage Pregnancy Partnership that existed in Stockton Borough to tackle the increased number in conceptions and pregnancies occurring in the borough. This was set against a national target that expects a 50 per cent reduction in the under 18 conception rate by 2010.

The Committee established that close working relationships were required between the four mainstream agencies – the Primary Care Trust, Education Department, Social Services and Children and Youth Services/Connexions.

The Teenage Pregnancy Co-ordinator played a key role in the delivery of the partnership's strategy. The Committee was therefore concerned when it learnt that the position at the time of the review was funded as a temporary contract which threatened the continuity of the service. The Committee supported the changes made to mainstream the co-ordinator's post having raised this issue as part of this review.

A major element of future reductions in teenage conceptions and pregnancies was the implementation of adequate sex education in schools. The Committee was keen to engage with the borough's schools to determine how schools met the requirements. Sex education had tended to focus on the biology of reproduction and disease and not the broader issues of sex and relationships.

The Committee was pleased to learn about the 'Lucinda and Godfrey' resource available for primary schools and specially packaged resources in secondary schools, designed and delivered in partnership with the North Tees Primary Care Trust, and was therefore hopeful that the improvements and the links that had been developed across the two school types would begin to show a reduction in the pregnancy rates of

teenage girls in the borough.

Focused contraception/sexual health services, trusted by teenagers and well known by professionals working with them was the factor stated by the Department for Education and Skills as having the biggest impact on conception rate reductions in the high performing areas. The Committee explored this issue with officers from the North Tees Primary Care Trust and heard that an increased number of 12 and 13 year-old girls present themselves to clinics in the borough but was reassured by the approach health professionals adopt.

The review was in part instigated by the percentage increase in teenage conception and pregnancy in the borough. What this belied was the low number of girls directly affected but which had a large impact on percentage figures. Comparison with other Tees Valley authorities showed how they are all susceptible to small numerical change.

The Committee recognised the effort and importance that was given to this issue by all parties on the Teenage Pregnancy Board and welcomed the reduction in the teenage pregnancy statistics in 2005 that were published after the Committee completed this review.

RESOLVED that

1. the creation of the new permanent role of Teenage Pregnancy Co-ordinator be supported and the Council and the PCT board be urged to support the continued funding of this post in order to provide essential staff continuity to help tackle the issue of teenage pregnancy.
2. all schools be encouraged to ensure that all young people have equality of access to the wide range of SRE information and services available.
3. Head Teachers, Governing Bodies and the Teenage Pregnancy Partnership be encouraged to consider ways of integrating SRE into the curriculum of all primary schools in the borough.
4. the role of the youth service be examined as part of the monitoring of the review.
5. the revised Teenage Pregnancy Strategy be presented to the Committee for consideration together with details of the funding arrangements and that the Committee receive reports and updates presented to the Teenage Pregnancy Strategy Board and Teenage Pregnancy Regional Co-ordinator as part of the monitoring of the review.

3. Reasons for the Decision

This topic was identified as an area meriting a scrutiny review at a meeting of the Scrutiny Liaison Forum held on 8 March 2006. The issue was subsequently referred to the Children and Young People Select Committee for approval, and passed to a meeting of the Executive Scrutiny Committee as part of the work programming procedure.

The objectives/aims developed by the Committee for the review were as follows: -

- To address a rise in the teenage conception rate in Stockton by:
 - Exploration of mainstreaming funding arrangements.
 - Improving the co-ordinated approach.
 - Provision of more timely performance information.

The review addresses the following strategic corporate objective:

§ Children and Young People – Objective 2: Be Healthy: Improve the health of children in the Borough – with the main aim being to reduce the under 18 conception rate by 50% by 2010 (1998 baseline year, 52 per 1,000 population)

4. Alternative Options Considered and Rejected

None

5. Declared (Cabinet Member) Conflicts of Interest

None

6. Details of any Dispensations

None

7. Date and Time by which Call In must be executed

Midnight on Friday 19th March 2007

Proper Officer
19 March 2007