

STOCKTON-ON-TEES BOROUGH COUNCIL

CABINET RECOMMENDATIONS

PROFORMA

Cabinet Meeting12th April 2007

1. Title of Item/Report

Review of Bullying - Report of Children and Young People Select Committee

2. Record of the Decision

Cabinet considered a report of the Children and Young People Select Committee relating to a review it had undertaken on Bullying in Schools.

The Select Committee had decided to examine bullying as a result of the issue being continually highlighted by young people as part of various consultation exercises.

During the review the Committee was pleased to learn of the priority being given by dedicated officers within Stockton's schools and the number of initiatives being introduced to tackle this pervasive problem. In particular, the Committee felt that the move to accreditation for schools should ensure the highest standards were met to counteract the harmful effects that bullying caused. Recognition should be given to Stockton's Anti-Bullying Service in providing advancement in addressing incidences of bullying in the borough and supplying professional support to Stockton's schools.

It was explained that the lack of accurate statistics to determine the prevalence of bullying was a serious issue that needed to be addressed. Stockton-on-Tees Borough Council was to begin to utilise Sentinel, an Internet based system that would begin to record the information that the Committee asked to receive at the beginning of this review. Whilst the Committee would welcome such information it raised a number of concerns regarding the quality of the data and issues about data protection. The Committee hoped that its views were considered in order to improve the data collection.

Cabinet noted that the Committee had undertaken the majority of the evidence gathering during an intensive, day-long session, and as part of this were pleased to hear directly from some of Stockton's young people. In future the Committee planned to talk to more young people than were able to attend this review so that it could determine the effectiveness of

anti-bullying strategies from those the strategies were meant to help.

Following consideration by Cabinet an action plan would be submitted to the Select Committee setting out how any approved recommendations would be implemented, detailing officers responsible for action and timescales.

RESOLVED that:-

1. every effort be made to encourage Stockton's schools to work with the Anti-Bullying Officer to achieve accreditation status annually.
2. where suitable the accreditation scheme be extended to run at establishments other than schools to ensure young people have the highest level of protection from bullying.
3. primary schools ensure that all appropriate information regarding issues of bullying as it has affected year 6 pupils is shared with relevant secondary schools prior to the end of the school year to aid the transition of pupils.
4. Cabinet reject the following proposal submitted by the Select Committee and instead agree that the system demonstrated as part of the review be introduced in consultation with schools and trade unions:- 'consultation takes place with all Stockton Borough schools and trade unions to determine the level of support for the introduction of any centralised recording system'.
5. the Government and Council definitions of bullying be circulated to school governing bodies for consideration for inclusion in their school policy.
6. performance data taken from the [Sentinel] system should be anonymous.
7. the accused person's name in all unproven cases of bullying must be removed from the system at the conclusion of an investigation.
8. recorded incidences of bullying be removed from the systems records after a period of time (to be determined) if such behaviour has not continued.

3. Reasons for the Decision

This review was undertaken primarily because bullying had been shown to be a major cause of concern for young people in the borough in

several different consultations.

The key objectives for the review were as follows:

- to improve recording and awareness of bullying in Stockton schools
- to stimulate appropriate actions within schools

4. Alternative Options Considered and Rejected

Recommendation 4 of the Select Committee report.

5. Declared (Cabinet Member) Conflicts of Interest

None

6. Details of any Dispensations

Not Applicable

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

Midnight Friday 20th April 2007

Proper Officer
13 April 2007