

CABINET ITEM COVERING SHEET PROFORMA

AGENDA ITEM

REPORT TO CABINET

12 APRIL 2007

**REPORT OF CHILDREN AND
YOUNG PEOPLE SELECT
COMMITTEE**

CABINET DECISION

Children and Young People – Lead Cabinet Member – Councillor Cunningham

REVIEW OF BULLYING

1. Summary

This report informs Cabinet of the outcomes of the review of bullying undertaken by the Children and Young People Select Committee during February and March 2007.

2. Recommendations

The Committee recommends that:

1. Every effort is 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. 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 child'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 a pupil's school record after a period of time (to be determined) if such behaviour has not continued.

3. Reasons for the Recommendations/Decision(s)

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

The attached report outlines the results of the Committee's work.

4. Members Interests

Members (including co-opted members with voting rights) should consider whether they have a personal interest in the item as defined in the Council's code of conduct (paragraph 8) and, if so, declare the existence and nature of that interest in accordance with paragraph 9 of the code.

Where a Member regards him/herself as having a personal interest in the item, he/she must then consider whether that interest is one which a member of the public, with knowledge of the relevant facts, would reasonably regard as so significant that it is likely to prejudice the Member's judgement of the public interest (paragraph 10 of the code of conduct).

A Member with a prejudicial interest in any matter must withdraw from the room where the meeting is being held, whilst the matter is being considered; not exercise executive functions in relation to the matter and not seek improperly to influence the decision about the matter (paragraph 12 of the Code).

Further to the above, it should be noted that any Member attending a meeting of Cabinet, Select Committee etc.; whether or not they are a member of the Cabinet or Select Committee concerned, must declare any personal interest which they have in the business being considered at the meeting, and if their interest is prejudicial, they must also leave the meeting room during consideration of the relevant item.

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12 APRIL 2007

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YOUNG PEOPLE SELECT
COMMITTEE**

CABINET DECISION

**CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE – LEAD CABINET MEMBER – COUNCILLOR
CUNNINGHAM**

SUMMARY

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RECOMMENDATIONS

The Committee recommends that:

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DETAIL

1. The Children and Young People Select Committee decided to examine bullying as a result of the issue being continually highlighted by young people as part of various consultation exercises.
2. 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 move to accreditation for schools should ensure the highest standards are met to counteract the harmful effects that bullying causes. 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.
3. The lack of accurate statistics to determine the prevalence of bullying is a serious issue that needs to be addressed. Stockton-on-Tees Borough Council is to begin to utilise Sentinel, an Internet based system that will 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 hopes that its views are considered in order to improve the data collection.
4. The Committee undertook 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 plans to talk to more young people than were able to attend this review so that it can determine the effectiveness of anti-bullying strategies from those the strategies are meant to help.
5. Following consideration by Cabinet an action plan will be submitted to the Select Committee setting out how the approved recommendations will be implemented detailing officers responsible for action and timescales.

FINANCIAL AND LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

Financial

No direct financial implications.

Legal

It is legal requirement for schools to have an anti-bullying policy in place.

RISK ASSESSMENT

This subject matter of report is categorised as low to medium risk. Existing management systems and daily routine activities are sufficient to control and reduce risk.

COMMUNITY STRATEGY IMPLICATIONS

The Children and Young People's Plan 2006-09 states that all children and young people in Stockton-on-Tees should be assured of:

living in a safe and secure community where they are protected from harm, abuse, harassment, exploitation or neglect and have the chance to enjoy the opportunity to grow-up with their peer groups and friends.

CONSULTATION INCLUDING WARD/COUNCILLORS

None

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Background Papers

Ward(s) and Ward Councillors:

Property