

AGENDA ITEM

REPORT TO CABINET

4 SEPTEMBER 2014

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

CABINET DECISION

Children & Young People – Lead Cabinet Member – Councillor Ann McCoy

SCRUTINY REVIEW OF A SAFER PLACE FOR CHILDREN

1. Summary

The attached report presents the Children & Young People Select Committee findings following the Scrutiny Review of *A Safer Place for Children* policy guidelines. The Select Committee were asked to undertake an independent review of the policy guidelines *A Safer Place for Children* which had been developed by the Local Safeguarding Children Board in August 2012 and were subsequently adopted by Stockton Borough Council's Cabinet. The guidelines were intended to support organisations responsible for public settings to create an appropriately safe environment for children.

2. Recommendation

That the existing *A Safer Place for Children* policy guidelines be endorsed.

3. Reasons for the Recommendations/Decision(s)

The report presents the findings of the scrutiny review that took place as part of the agreed work programme for 2013/14.

4. Members' Interests

Members (including co-opted Members) should consider whether they have a personal interest in any item, as defined in **paragraphs 9 and 11** of the Council's code of conduct and, if so, declare the existence and nature of that interest in accordance with and/or taking account of **paragraphs 12 - 17** of the code.

Where a Member regards him/herself as having a personal interest, as described in **paragraph 16** of the code, in any business of the Council he/she must then, **in accordance with paragraph 18** of the code, 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 and the business:-

- affects the members financial position or the financial position of a person or body described in **paragraph 17** of the code, or

- relates to the determining of any approval, consent, licence, permission or registration in relation to the member or any person or body described in **paragraph 17** of the code.

A Member with a personal interest, as described in **paragraph 18** of the code, may attend the meeting but must not take part in the consideration and voting upon the relevant item of business. However, a member with such an interest may make representations, answer questions or give evidence relating to that business before the business is considered or voted on, provided the public are also allowed to attend the meeting for the same purpose whether under a statutory right or otherwise (**paragraph 19** of the code)

Members may participate in any discussion and vote on a matter in which they have an interest, as described in **paragraph 18** of the code, where that interest relates to functions of the Council detailed in **paragraph 20** of the code.

Disclosable Pecuniary Interests

It is a criminal offence for a member to participate in any discussion or vote on a matter in which he/she has a disclosable pecuniary interest (and where an appropriate dispensation has not been granted) **paragraph 21** of the code.

Members are required to comply with any procedural rule adopted by the Council which requires a member to leave the meeting room whilst the meeting is discussing a matter in which that member has a disclosable pecuniary interest (**paragraph 22** of the code).

CABINET DECISION

SCRUTINY REVIEW OF A SAFER PLACE FOR CHILDREN

SUMMARY

The attached report presents the Children & Young People Select Committee findings following the Scrutiny Review of *A Safer Place for Children* policy guidelines.

RECOMMENDATION

That the existing *A Safer Place for Children* policy guidelines be endorsed.

DETAIL

1. The Select Committee were asked to undertake an independent review of the policy guidelines *A Safer Place for Children* which had been developed by the Local Safeguarding Children Board in August 2012 and were subsequently adopted by Stockton Borough Council's Cabinet. The guidelines were intended to support organisations responsible for public settings to create an appropriately safe environment for children.
2. The key issue in relation to the operation of the policy guidelines was the age threshold for unaccompanied children. After taking into account all the views expressed, Members concluded that the age threshold of 10 years for unaccompanied children was appropriate and sent a clear expectation to parents around the age at which children should be accompanied in a public building and therefore recommended that the existing policy guidelines be endorsed.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

3. None

LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

4. None

RISK ASSESSMENT

5. This review is categorised as low to medium risk. Existing management systems and daily routine activities are sufficient to control and reduce risk.

SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITY STRATEGY IMPLICATIONS

6. The following Council Plan themes/objectives are relevant:
- Ensuring children and young people are safe

EQUALITIES IMPACT ASSESSMENT

7. This report is not subject to an Equality Impact Assessment because it is making no major change to any policy or service provision.

CONSULTATION INCLUDING WARD/COUNCILLORS

8. The proposals in this report have been developed in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Children and Young People and the Corporate Director of Children, Education & Social Care. The Select Committee invited feedback on operation of the policy from council services/ commissioned service, voluntary and community sector organisations via Catalyst and member agencies of the Local Safeguarding Children Board.

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Education related? No

Background Papers None

Ward(s) and Ward Councillors

The proposals as a whole are not ward specific.

Property

None