

# Children & Young People Select Committee

A meeting of Children & Young People Select Committee was held on Wednesday, 9th September, 2009.

**Present:** Cllr David Harrington (Chairman), Cllr Jim Beall, Cllr Phillip Broughton, Cllr Mrs Ann Cains, Cllr Mick Eddy, Cllr Maurice Frankland, Cllr Miss Barbara Inman, Cllr Alan Lewis, Cllr Andrew Sherris.

**Officers:** Dawn Coyle, Ian Edmunds, Jane Harvey, Andy Lister, Jayne Palmer, Shaun McLurg (CESC); Graham Birtle, Fiona Shayler (LD); Jim Bell (R).

**Also in attendance:**

**Apologies:** were submitted on behalf of Mr Cash, Mr Davies and Mr Lupton.

## 1 Declarations of Interest

Councillor Mrs Cains declared a personal/non prejudicial interest in relation to Agenda Item No. 4 Efficiency Improvement and Transformation Review of Child Placements and Residential Care further to being a member of the Schools Forum.

## 2 Draft Minutes - 19th August 2009

The minutes of the meeting held on 19th August, 2009 were agreed as a correct record.

## 3 Efficiency Improvement and Transformation (EIT) Review of Child Placements and Residential Care

This report focuses on a number of activities delivered by some of the service units sited within the Complex and Additional Needs (CAN) Team. In particular the work of the following teams were highlighted;

SEN Section  
Hartburn Lodge  
OASIS  
The Children with Medical Needs Team

As an aid to Members, the overall structure of the CAN team was detailed with the definition of Complex and Additional Needs used within the Borough as was agreed in the 2007 Complex Needs Review.

Ian Edmunds - Manager of Complex Needs, Andy Lister - Manager SEN, Jane Harvey - Manager of Learning Support, Dawn Coyle, Manager of Hartburn Lodge provided members with a verbal update and were thanked by members for the clarity of their report. It was stated that the area of child placements and residential care was a constantly fluid changing environment. Proportionally the authority was similar to other local authorities such as Darlington, Middlesbrough, Redcar and Cleveland.

Discussion was held on external placements, it was stated that these were funded through the Direct Schools Grant provided to the LA by the Government to secure educational provision. External placements could be difficult with

regard to providing contact for families due to the associated costs of travelling, logistics etc. Historically the LA has placed fewer children/young people in out of borough specialist residential provision with such being essentially for those with the most complex needs which could not be met within in-house provision.

A number of authorities in the Northern Region would be holding a meeting to identify and discuss options for developing respite provision for children with continuing health care needs. Officers noted that independent specialist provision could vary in costs especially for youngsters with more complex needs. Officers always tried to negotiate on costs and where possible and used the National Contract which pegged future fees to inflation rises. Not all providers had signed up to this.

It was felt that there were two groups of children where further input was required:-

- Children with extreme behavioural needs that schools were unable to manage
- Complex physical and social needs, including extreme Autism Spectrum Disorders

It was suggested that there maybe some scope to address some of these issues through Building Schools for the Future (BSF). Similarly commissioning other sub-regional provision should be explored.

All aspects of the service received positive parental feedback but a new National Indicator (NI54) was being introduced from April 2010. Officers had some concern that the length of this could put some parents off .

CONCLUDED that the information received be noted.

#### **4 Work Programme**

The next meeting would be held on Wednesday 16th September. Also, Jackie Ward, Team Manager - Child Placement, would be making some additions to her previous report and would submit this to Members.

CONCLUDED that the Work Programme be noted.

#### **5 Chairman's Update**

The Chair requested that Members consider the project plan at their next meeting and consider issues for the next phase of their review.

CONCLUDED that the Chair's update be noted.