

Children and Young People Select Committee

Update to Executive Scrutiny Committee – 6 October 2014

Update on Progress (including issues/problems/successes)

Scrutiny Review of Employment and Education

The Select Committee provided 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.

Taking into account all the evidence presented, the Committee concluded that the existing policy should remain in place. Whilst acknowledging the issues raised by Tees Active, the Committee felt that the age threshold for unaccompanied children of 10 years was appropriate and sent a clear expectation to parents around the age at which children should be accompanied in a public building.

The final report was endorsed by Cabinet on 4 September 2014.

School Organisation and Admission Arrangements

The Committee approved a scope and project plan for its next review of School Organisation and Admission Arrangements on 19 June. The overall aim of the review is to ensure that the process and criteria for identifying priorities for 2014/15 has been transparent and robust and then to be involved in ensuring that the public consultation December 2014 – March 2015 is carried out appropriately and that the outcomes and report to Cabinet on recommendations in March 2015 have been subject to Scrutiny, prior to lodging with Secretary of State in April 2015.

On 16 July, the Committee received an introductory presentation from officers setting the context for the review. Discussion at the meeting focused on the need for a clear policy on in-year transfers and moves and planning for the impact of new housing development.

The meeting on 25 September focused on key priorities and proposals for consultation.

Other Work

The Committee also received a report on the performance of children's services at Quarter 1 for 2014/15 and a presentation on the independent evaluation of Heathwatch. Members took the opportunity to ask a range of questions on the performance report and identified where further more detailed information was required. The Chair and Vice Chair are meeting with officers to progress this.