

**MEMORANDUM**

**Date: 23 January 2002**

**To: All Members of the County Council  
and of the Children, Schools and Families  
Scrutiny Committee  
All Chief Officers**

**From: COUNTY SECRETARY'S  
DEPARTMENT**

**Ask for: Julia Harries**

**Ext: 25563**

**Minicom: 6611**

**My Ref: JH**

**Your Ref:**

cc: CSF officers  
All officers named for 'actions'  
Committee section

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**CHILDREN, SCHOOLS AND FAMILIES SCRUTINY COMMITTEE  
WEDNESDAY 23 JANUARY 2002**

**MINUTES**

**ATTENDANCE**

**MEMBERS OF THE COMMITTEE - 22, QUORUM - 6**

County Councillors (16)

D E Billing, R S Clements, E M Clarke, K J Coleman, A D Dodd, A K Gray, F Guest,  
D W Hills, T G M Kent (Chairman), L R Kercher, B J Lamb, M H O'Neill, D A A Peek,  
S Quilty, R H Smith (Vice-Chairman), J Taunton

Representative Members

**Voting (6)**

Parent Representatives

P Cherry	North area
M W Thompson	South area
C Broadhurst	East area
T Douris	West area

Church Representatives

J Reynolds	Education Board of the Diocese of St Albans
M Stothard	Archdiocese of Westminster Schools Commission

Teacher Representatives (non voting) (6)

P Brooks	National Association of Governors and Managers
I Gibson	National Association of School Masters/ Union of Women Teachers
J Hayes	National Union of Teachers
G Rowlands	Association of Teachers and Lecturers
S Springett	National Association of Headteachers

Co-opted members from the Health and Voluntary Sectors (1)

J Linskill                      Director of Nursing, Children's and Older People's Services for  
North Herts and Stevenage NHS Trust

**EXECUTIVE MEMBERS**

D Beatty (Resources), R I N Gordon (Children, Schools and Families), D E Lloyd,  
J M Pitman (Adult Care)

**Other Members in attendance**

N E Agar, P T J Channell, G D Game, P V Goggins, M Green, R Mays,  
D Royall, P A Ruffles, I Simpson, C J White

Upon consideration of the agenda for the Children, Schools and Families Scrutiny Committee meeting on 23 January 2002 as circulated, copy annexed, action was taken or decisions were reached on individual items as recorded below:

**CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS**

**(i)     Membership changes**

K J Coleman had replaced B C Engel

E M Clarke had replaced T I Ambrose

- (ii)** The Chairman welcomed J Linskill, Director of Nursing, Children's and Older People's Services, North Herts and Stevenage NHS Trust to the meeting as a non-voting co-opted member of the Children, Schools and Families Scrutiny Committee.

L Wallace, Chair of Hertfordshire Association for Young People and C Whittle, Hertfordshire and Bedford MENCAP, were welcomed as a non-voting co-opted members of the Children, Schools and Families Scrutiny Committee, although they were unable to attend this meeting.

**(iii)   NOTIFICATION OF OTHER BUSINESS**

The Chairman moved that the following item, 6(iii) Proposed Closure of Musley Infant School, Ware, be taken as urgent business.

**MINUTES**

The minutes of the meeting of the Children, Schools and Families Select Committee held on 17 October 2001 were confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

**PUBLIC PETITIONS** (Standing Order C11)**ACTION**

- (i) **Victoria Shaw**, representing The Friends of Musley Infants School, Ware, presented a petition of 3812 signatures regarding the proposed closure of the school.

Stuart  
Freel

[This issue was discussed at 6(iii)]

**QUESTIONS****ACTIO  
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- 1 **David Billing** asked the Executive Member, **Robert Gordon**, the following question:

*'In regard to the Youth Service:*

1. *When will its management be decentralised, so that local staff can be fully integrated into the CSF Quadrants?*
2. *Does the Cabinet support the case for rationalising the capital assets of the Service, so that the condition and suitability of the buildings retained can be urgently improved, and when will such work start if it is approved?'*

The Executive Member, **Robert Gordon**, replied:

*'The administration wishes to consider the issues of Youth Service management, staffing and premises in the broader context of our strategy for working with young people and in the light of relevant external developments.*

*These include the creation of Connexions, the development of the Youth Offending Team; the government's recent documents on 'Transforming Youth Work' and 'Working Together - Connexions and The Statutory Youth Service' and still wider issues including leisure provision and community safety.*

*In due course, the CSF Strategy Cabinet Panel will be invited to consider the issues and make recommendations to Cabinet.'*

Julian  
Edwards  
Janice  
Mottram  
John  
Evans

**David Billing** asked the following supplementary question:

*'When will it be possible to bring the urgent matter of the means of funding for updating buildings forward?'*

**Robert Gordon replied:**

*'These are important issues and it is important to get them right. I would anticipate that this would be considered at the Panel meeting after next.'*

- 2 **David Billing** asked the Executive Member, **Robert Gordon**, the following question:

*'Will the Executive Member assure the Committee that the "Children with Disability" fora will be re-instated in those areas of the County where they have been discontinued, so that there is a consistent policy on this means of involving parents as stakeholders? Would he also state clearly what is happening to all other CSF-related local fora, including:*

- a) Learning disability locality planning groups*
- b) other groups involving CSF and NHS?'*

The Executive Member, **Robert Gordon**, replied:

*'Prior to April 2001, 'Children with Disabilities' fora were in place in six districts of the then Social Services Department. **Currently** only four of these meetings happen on an organised basis (Welwyn/Hatfield, Broxbourne, North Herts and Stevenage) and not all of them have designated Chairmen. The co-ordination was via the Locality Development Workers (now with Corporate Services) and where it has been possible to arrange for a Team Manager to take over the co-ordination, as in Welwyn/Hatfield, this has occurred.*

*Links are in place with Adult Care Services about a number of key strategic issues affecting children with disabilities, for example, transition and issues for carers. Arrangements for locality planning for 'Adults with Learning Disabilities' are unchanged. Community Learning Disability teams have been re-organised into seven units and are developing their operational practices which will include improved liaison with carers.*

*The Department, together with Corporate Services will now develop 'Children with Disabilities' meetings across the county in order to provide a framework for discussions of key issues affecting these children.*

*With respect to Health, formal links now exist between all of the Primary Care Trusts and Quadrants, whereby Quadrant Managers are now*

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Julian  
Edwards  
Janice  
Mottram  
John  
Evans

*members of each Trust Executive. Each Primary Care Trust now has a children's lead, and they are working with Quadrant staff on improvements to local arrangements for working together. All of the other Trusts have also appointed lead officers for children's services.*

*The new strategic Health Authority is reviewing Health Services for children in Hertfordshire, and the service is actively participating in that review. We are also, in conjunction with Health, drawing-up a Strategy for Disabled Children. Health colleagues are also members of the Area Child Protection Committee and also play a key role in local Child Protection meetings.*

**David Billing** asked the following supplementary question:

*'In relation to children with disabilities, can you confirm that the way forward is in accordance with paragraph 3 of your answer?'*

*'Would it be possible for this Committee to scrutinise our links with the Health Service in the summer term?'*

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Julia  
Harries to  
b/f for  
March  
Scrutiny  
Committee  
meeting  
Julian  
Edwards to  
note

**Robert Gordon** replied:

*'Yes to the first question. Regarding the second question, it is for the Committee to decide what it wishes to scrutinise.'*

**3 Tanis Kent** asked the Executive Member, **Robert Gordon**, the following question:

*'As a result of several cases I have heard of lately, I am concerned about the amount of training that is being given to teachers and support staff who have to deal with autistic children especially in primary schools.'*

*Can the Executive Member say:*

- (i) What training is being offered to classroom assistants who are employed to work with an autistic child?*
- (ii) Are they all offered training and do they all undertake it?*
- (iii) Is a record kept of assistants who have been trained so that their*

*expertise can be used for another child, and we build up a pool of expertise?*

- (iv) *If an autistic child is placed in a mainstream class what training is given to the class teacher?’*

The Executive Member, **Robert Gordon**, replied:

- (i) *‘One day’s training is offered to all new classroom assistants (nursery and primary) in the first week of the term in which an identified child with autism starts at that school. Seventy classroom assistants have been trained since January 2001.*

*A two-day course is run for teachers and classroom assistants in primary schools each term. Many schools send both a teacher and a classroom assistant for the two days which means strategies are more easily transferred from the training into the classroom. Each course is always over-subscribed. One hundred and twenty classroom assistants and teachers will have been trained between September 2001 and July 2002.*

- (ii) *Yes – all classroom assistants who are working with children with autism are offered training. Approximately 90% take up this training.*
- (iii) *Yes - a record is kept of all classroom assistants who have received training in autism. This record can be used to identify classroom assistants who have expertise in working with children with autism. There are two hundred classroom assistants on the list to date.*
- (iv) *A two-day course is run for teachers and classroom assistants in Primary schools each term. Sixty mainstream class teachers have been trained since January 2001.*
- In addition a school receiving a pupil with autism is offered whole school awareness training for all staff. This training is also offered to receiving schools at times of transfer (i.e. pre-school to nursery, nursery to infant, infant to junior, junior to secondary). Training is accepted by the majority of schools and usually takes place within the first half-term of a visiting teacher's involvement. Thirty schools have received whole school awareness training since January 2001.’*

- 4** **Seamus Quilty** asked the Executive Member, **Robert Gordon**, the following question:

*‘Will the Executive Member update the committee regarding the*

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*number of teaching vacancies in Hertfordshire schools – including, where available, the number of vacancies concealed by problematic mismatches and temporary arrangements?’*

The Executive Member, **Robert Gordon**, replied:

*‘The termly survey of vacancies at 17 January is being collated, with schools being invited to respond by 1 February. I will arrange for this updated information to be circulated to members as soon as it is available.’*

- 5 **Barbara Lamb** asked the Executive Member, **Robert Gordon**, the following question:

*‘Will the Executive Member comment on the admission by the Government that average class size and pupil:teacher ratios in maintained secondary schools in Hertfordshire have worsened since the Labour Government was elected in 1997?’*

The Executive Member, **Robert Gordon**, replied:

*‘The tables below confirm the deterioration previously acknowledged by the government – notwithstanding that Hertfordshire has passported SSA increases to schools and exceeded the target for delegation.*

*They also provide both national and statistical neighbour comparisons for information where they are available, which, confirm that Hertfordshire schools do considerably better than those in other LEAs – while all have suffered since Labour came to power in 1997.’*

### Pupil:teacher ratios

#### **Hertfordshire**

Jan 97	Jan 98	Jan 99	Jan 00	Jan 01
15.9	16.1	16.3	16.6	16.7

#### **Statistical Neighbours\***

Jan 97	Jan 98	Jan 99	Jan 00	Jan 01
16.6	16.8	17.1	17.4	17.5

#### **England**

Jan 97	Jan 98	Jan 99	Jan 00	Jan 01
16.7	16.9	17.0	17.2	17.1

### Class size

#### **Hertfordshire**

Jan 97	Jan 98	Jan 99	Jan 00	Jan 01
20.3	20.2	20.6	20.8	21.0

#### **Statistical Neighbours\***

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Mick  
Connah

Jan 97	Jan 98	Jan 99	Jan 00	Jan 01
20.8	21.1	N/A	N/A	21.7

**England**

Jan 97	Jan 98	Jan 99	Jan 00	Jan 01
21.7	21.7	21.9	22.0	22.0

\*These are the neighbours defined by Ofsted as “very close” to Hertfordshire: Bedfordshire, Cheshire, Essex, Kent, Surrey and West Sussex.

- 6 **Tony Dodd** asked the Executive Member, **Robert Gordon**, the following question:

*‘For each third sector organisation receiving direct financial support under the 2001/02 CSF revenue budget, will the Executive Member confirm the amount of that support in the current year and the amount currently proposed for each such organisation (and any additional such organisations) under the draft budget for 2002/03?’*

The Executive Member, **Robert Gordon**, replied:

*‘The detailed information requested for 2001.02 is given in the attached schedules.*

*Funding to voluntary organisations falls into three broad categories as follows:*

**1. Contracts / Partnership Agreements (Schedule 1)**

*In situations where the department’s core business is better delivered by such organisations, the service needs to be subject to an appropriate contract and monitoring arrangements. The draft budget assumes that subject to the contractual arrangements, these organisations will receive the same level of support in 2002/03, with an additional provision in respect of inflation.*

**2. Grants Programme (Schedule 2)**

*Some organisations receive annual funding and the Best Value review suggests a more transparent and equitable process. Organisations have received a prospectus and in their application form will identify how their grant will enable them to contribute to the achievement of the services’ priorities for next year. Applications close in mid February and outcomes are expected to be notified mid March. The draft budget assumes aggregate expenditure to be static in real terms.*

**3. Specific Funding Streams Requiring Review (Schedules 3 &**

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*Some funding currently goes to voluntary organisations in order to deliver service priorities relating to specific areas of service delivery. It is necessary to work with potential partners to develop proposals for how these should be integrated into a Voluntary Partnership Strategy. The draft budget assumes aggregate expenditure to be static in real terms.*

*The administration plans to review arrangements for funding voluntary sector organisations in order to meet our objective of building the capacity of the sector to contribute to service priorities and in order to implement the recommendations that emerged from the Best Value review of voluntary sector funding.*

7 **Richard Smith** asked the Executive Member, **Robert Gordon**, the following question:

*'Will the Executive Member comment on recent proposals by the Government to allow the swifter exclusion of pupils involved in serious bullying and/or the carrying of weapons and to reduce the likelihood of such exclusions being overturned on appeal?'*

The Executive Member, **Robert Gordon**, replied:

*'We have yet to receive formal guidance from the DfES on the announcement and until we do it is impossible to comment in detail. However, I welcome the apparent and overdue recognition by the government that bullying and violence in schools is unacceptable as it undermines the learning opportunities of other children and may even threaten the personal safety of children and staff.'*

*Our draft Service Development Plan includes extensive strategies designed to reduce such behaviour, but where those strategies fail the education and safety of others must not be put at risk through obstacles to justified exclusion.*

**Richard Smith** asked the following supplementary question:

*'Noting the increased use by the Government of direct grants to secure its objectives does the Executive Member anticipate grant assistance, or failing that credit approvals, to enable us to expand the provision of Education Support Centres in the County?'*

**Robert Gordon** replied:

*'Would that this were possible. However, there are finite resources available.'*

- 8 **Cliff Broadhurst** will ask the Executive Member, **Robert Gordon**, the following question:

*'Last month the Local Government Association, after widespread consultation, announced that it was endorsing the recommendations of an independent commission to replace the current 3 term school year structure with a 6 term structure.'*

*The Commission, set up by the Local Government Association, is recommending moving to a standardised yet flexible framework of six terms of broadly equal length by 2005/2006.*

*The consultation which, unfortunately, Hertfordshire did not participate in, made a great many recommendations (too many to list here) some of which received between 80 and 90% support, and an overall approval rating of 60%.*

*Almost exactly one year ago to the day I wrote to the Director of Education as he was then, requesting Hertfordshire's involvement in the consultation, but mainly due to the onset of Children Schools & Families he was understandably unable to commit to the process. He did however say that "If there is any mileage in this we would obviously want to have a full public debate".*

*Would the Executive Member agree with me that in light of independent commissions recommendation, endorsed by the LGA, that there is indeed some mileage now in these proposals and the time is approaching to have that 'full public debate'?'*

The Executive Member, **Robert Gordon**, replied:

*'I am grateful to Mr Broadhurst for raising this issue. While it has not been raised with me by any teacher or parent, it is worthy of consideration and I will arrange for the issue to on the agenda for the next meeting of the CSF Strategy Cabinet Panel.'*

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John Evans  
Julian  
Edwards  
Janice  
Mottram

## **PART 1 ('OPEN') BUSINESS**

### **1. FUNCTIONS AND REMIT OF THE CHILDREN, SCHOOLS AND FAMILIES SCRUTINY COMMITTEE**

[Officer contact: Julia Harries, Committee Administrator,  
Tel: 01992 555563]

The Committee noted the report.

**ACTION**



**2(a) BEST VALUE PERFORMANCE PLAN 2002/03****ACTION**

[Officer contact: Geoff Brown Strategic Planner  
Tel: 01992 555370]

[Comments from the BVPP workshop circulated and attached to the minutes]

The Committee discussed the report and made a number of comments. These included:

- that the draft BVPP was well aligned with the draft CSF Development Plan for the meeting of the Cabinet on 28 January 2002,
- that the wording on the Promise on Youth Crime could be reconsidered - 'youth disorder', 'youth nuisance' and 'youth crime and disorder' were suggested,
- that the promise on educational outcomes should include other ways of looking at achievement,
- it was recognised that the draft BVPP did not contain the very detailed level of performance measures that were used internally.

**Scrutiny Committee comments to Cabinet on 28 January 2002**

- that the promise on youth crime could be reworded,
- that the promise on educational outcomes should include other ways of looking at achievement,
- that the performance measures should be linked with the broader performance indicators in the CSF Development Plan, but that the value of detailed performance measures, which would not be part of the BVPP, should not be lost.

Anne Fisher  
Geoff Brown

**2(b) CSF PROPOSED RESOURCE BUDGET 2002/03 - 2005/06**

[Officer contact: Martin Surtees, Assistant Director  
Tel: 01992 555710]

The Committee discussed the report and made the following comments to Cabinet:

**Scrutiny Committee comments to Cabinet on 28 January 2002**

Concern was expressed about the continued uncertainties in respect of this year's budget (para. 4.3.6) and the reduction of grant,

Members indicated that if growth was available the priorities expressed in Annex 1 and growth for the Primary Sector were appropriate strategies,

On the Capital programme, it was noted that it appeared that due to the limited funding available, many of the schemes bid for had been deferred, or could not be funded at this stage, as per the Cabinet minutes,

The Committee were pleased that the budget recognised that Health connections work was commencing,

The Committee welcomed the fact that the budget contained early recognition of the financial implications of the Committee's scrutiny work on services for disabled children,

The Executive Member (Resources) confirmed that the report reflected the decisions taken by the Cabinet in the light of available capital resources.

**ACTION**

Martin Surtees

**3 CSF DEVELOPMENT PLAN 2002/07**

[Officer contact: John Evans, Deputy Director  
Tel: 01992 555703]

[Performance measures and revised Appendix 2B circulated and attached to the minutes]

The Committee discussed the report and made the following comments to Cabinet:

**Scrutiny Committee Comments to Cabinet on 28 January 2002:**

- this document was a tremendous achievement and thanks and congratulations were given to all those involved with the production of the Plan,
- it could be useful if the targets in Strategic Area 8, Priority 8.5 could include the percentage of children obtaining their first choice school,
- Strategic Area 1, Priority 1.7, the percentage of schools with serious weakness or requiring special measures could be broken down into primary and secondary schools,
- the targets for the previous year could be shown to measure achievement and progress.

**4 CHILDREN, SCHOOLS AND FAMILIES SCRUTINY WORK PROGRAMME**

[Officer contact: Julian Edwards, Service Planning Manager,  
Tel: 01992 555941]

The Committee discussed the report and made a number of comments. These included:

- that the note-taking and follow up reports had been excellent during the scrutiny of disabled children, and were a credit to officers,
- this was a good lesson in how to carry out scrutiny,
- regarding the issue of Attainment of Pupils and Achievement at A/AS level, an assurance was given that the Cabinet Panel would be flexible in its approach to this and would welcome expert advice during the policy development process.

**ACTION**

John Evans  
Julian Edwards  
Janice  
Mottram

Julian Edwards  
Janice Mottram  
Jackie Goodhall  
Les Craggs

**ACTION****Consensus of the Scrutiny Committee:**

- that the work so far on disabled children had been very successful and thanks were due to the Topic Group and all involved for this,
- the style of scrutiny was important, direct contact with parents and staff being very helpful,
- that it was important to separate scrutiny and policy development,
- the Committee agreed with the proposed routes for the two outstanding scrutiny items, as follows:

the scrutiny of Disabled Children should be completed by the existing Topic Group with a final report back to the Scrutiny Committee on 20 March 2002

the scrutiny of Attainment of Pupils and Achievement at A/AS Level should be completed by the Achievement Panel.

Julian Edwards  
Julia Harries to  
note for agenda  
list

Julian Edwards  
Janice Mottram  
Jackie Goodhall  
Les Craggs

**5(i) CHILDREN OUT OF SCHOOL**

[Officer contact: Lesley Hewitt, Head of Education Welfare Practice,  
Tel: 01992 588580]

The Committee discussed the report and made a number of comments. These included:

- this was a good report and thanks were given to all concerned,
- it would be useful for Members to receive regular updates on the numbers of children out of school, and this could be done through a CSF bulletin,
- details regarding children educated otherwise than at school could be included in this bulletin,
- the link between poor attendance and poor performance needed further investigation.

Lesley Hewitt  
Ray Shostak

	<b>ACTION</b>
<p><b><u>Consensus of the Scrutiny Committee:</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- this was a good report, but further information was required to understand the progress made,</li> <li>- that regular updates would be available to members in a bulletin,</li> <li>- that members could monitor progress through the bulletin and then bring forward scrutiny items in the usual way.</li> </ul>	<p>Lesley Hewitt Ray Shostak</p>
<p><b>5(ii) CASUAL ADMISSIONS</b></p> <p>[Officer contact: Nick Powley, Education Access Manager, Tel: 01992 555933]</p> <p>The Committee discussed the report and made a number of comments. These included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- it was recognised that there was a problem in this area which would need policy changes,</li> <li>- the possibility of setting up a Topic Group for further scrutiny of this issue was discussed,</li> <li>- this issue was worthy of early attention and would be considered by the Achievement Panel.</li> </ul>	<p>Nick Powley Les Craggs Jackie Goodhall</p>
<p><b><u>Consensus of the Scrutiny Committee:</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- that there were important issues to consider,</li> <li>- that the process for dealing with Categories 1 and 2 of casual admissions had been changed following scrutiny, but this had not happened in respect of Category 3,</li> <li>- the Committee welcomed an approach that enabled a wider group of Headteachers to be involved,</li> <li>- the Committee agreed by a majority that this issue should be referred to the appropriate Cabinet Panel for consideration of further policy development.</li> </ul>	<p>Nick Powley Les Craggs Jackie Goodhall</p>

**5(iii) FIXED TERM EXCLUSIONS**

[Officer contact: Nick Powley, Education Access Manager,  
Tel: 01992 555933]

The Committee discussed the report and made a number of comments.  
These included:

- there was a variance in the way schools use fixed term exclusions and why they do so,
- the issuing and checking of school work given out to excluded pupils was a cause for concern,
- information on exclusions of less than 5 days would be provided to Members,
- it would be useful to have information regarding the link between exclusions and performance.

**Consensus of the Scrutiny Committee:**

- there were further areas where greater detail was needed but there were overall policy issues because of the serious impact of this on many children's achievement and schools should get the support they needed,
- this item should be referred to the Achievement Panel for policy development.

**6(i) PROSECUTION OF PARENTS**

[Officer contact: Lesley Hewitt, Head of Education Welfare Practice,  
Tel: 01992 588580]

Eleanor Clarke explained that there were concerns regarding the increase in prosecutions, in particular which quadrants had an increase and whether this was correlated with parents obtaining a ranked school.

The Committee discussed the report and made a number of comments.  
These included:

- the number of prosecutions was balanced across the quadrants; detailed information would be provided on the breakdown,
- prosecutions did not always result in children returning to school, particularly in the case of Year 11 children.

**ACTION**

Nick Powley

Nick Powley  
Les Craggs  
Jackie  
Goodhall

**Consensus of the Scrutiny Committee:**

That the Committee would defer the decision whether or not to scrutinise the issue of Prosecution of Parents until the March meeting when a report with further information would be on the agenda. This report would include information on:

- how many parents do pay the Magistrates fine,
- further figures for all the quadrants,
- Year 7 children out of school scrutiny work,
- details of prosecutions broken down into year groups.

**6(ii) TRANSITIONAL ARRANGEMENTS BETWEEN CHILDREN, SCHOOLS AND FAMILIES FOR YOUNG DISABLED PEOPLE**

[Officer contact: Ken Harvey, Principal Officer, Disabled Children,  
Tel: 01992 556982]

Fiona Guest explained the concerns regarding young people with disabilities undergoing the transition between Children, Schools and Families and Adult Care.

The Committee discussed the report and made a number of comments. These included:

- this was a very helpful report,
- reviewing of the Action Sheets was important and this could be done through the members' CSF bulletin,
- if after attending the conference, members felt there were areas to scrutinise, this could be brought forward to the Committee in the usual way.

**Consensus of the Scrutiny Committee:**

- that all members of the Scrutiny Committee should be invited to attend the further conference on transition into adulthood, [para.3.6 of the report].

**ACTION**

Julian  
Edwards/  
Julia Harries  
to note for  
agenda lists

Lesley Hewitt

Ken Harvey

Ray Shostak

Julian Edwards/  
Julia Harries to  
note for agenda  
lists

Appropriate CSF  
officers to invite  
all members of the  
Committee  
including  
Parent/Church/  
Teacher/Health  
and Voluntary  
Sector  
representatives

**6(iii) PROPOSED CLOSURE OF MUSLEY INFANT SCHOOL, WARE**

[Officer contact: Stuart Freel, Area Planning Manager (East),  
Tel: 01992 555863]

The Committee heard a petition on this item before discussing the report.

The Chairman introduced the report and explained why this issue should be scrutinised by the Committee at this meeting.

Members discussed the report and made a number of comments. These included:

- that a comparison of the average cost per place at Musley with other schools was published in the Section 52 Statement,
- further information of the schools with the next highest average cost per place would be contained in the report to Cabinet,
- detailed information regarding the type of population used for the basis of housing projections in Ware, i.e. working, child-bearing or total, would be in the Cabinet report,
- that the East Herts Plan projected 400 new homes over the next 10 years (with 50 in addition); 1000 new homes would produce one form of entry, therefore the 400 would produce half a form of entry; there was a gap between supply and demand,
- if Musley was to close, there were places available at schools in Ware, within reasonable walking distance of those children previously attending Musley; there would be a map in the report to Cabinet to show this,
- Musley School was a lovely school, providing excellent quality of education for all its pupils,
- concern was expressed regarding the difficulties caused to children when changing schools; pupils had to attend nursery/preschool before going to Musley and then had to move to another school for Key Stage 2,
- it was important that all members of the County Council should have an opportunity to debate this issue more fully.

**ACTION**

Stuart Freel to respond to petitioner

Stuart Freel

Stuart Freel

Stuart Freel  
Ron Coxall

**Scrutiny Committee Comments to Cabinet on 11 February 2002:**

- that there were a large number of questions regarding relevant information; officers undertook to provide clarification and detail in the report to Cabinet,
- it was recognised that the school provided a very high quality of education to all its pupils,
- there was concern expressed over the impact of transition between schools on pupil education.

**ITEMS REFERRED TO THE COUNTY COUNCIL**

The Opposition chose agenda item 6(iii), Proposed Closure of Musley Infants Schools, Ware to be reported to Council on 14 February 2002.

**ACTION**

Stuart Freel  
Dave Roberts

Ray Shostak  
Julia Harries  
Ron Coxall  
Stuart Freel

**Andrew Laycock  
County Secretary**