

CHILDREN SCHOOLS AND FAMILIES SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

UPDATE AND WORK PROGRAMME 2003/4

Agenda item
no.

1

18 JUNE 2003

Recommendations made to Cabinet/Executive Member/Chief Officer at the last meeting:

1. STATUTORY CONSULTATION ON ADMISSION RULES FOR COMMUNITY AND VOLUNTARY CONTROLLED NURSERY, INFANT JUNIOR AND PRIMARY SCHOOLS

“Recommendation”

Comments to Cabinet on 24 March 2003:

The Committee suggested that the wording of paragraph xxvi in the Schedule of Co-ordinated Arrangements should be clarified.

The views of the Committee were reported to Cabinet.

2. STATUTORY CONSULTATION ON ADMISSION RULES FOR COMMUNITY AND VOLUNTARY CONTROLLED SECONDARY SCHOOLS

“Recommendation”

Comments to Cabinet on 24 March 2003:

The Committee suggested that:

1. the words 'and those in public care' should be added to Rule (b) for Tring VC School, subject to discussion with the Governing Body.
2. the wording of paragraph xxvi in the Schedule of Co-ordinated Arrangements should be clarified.
3. Rule 6 of the Secondary Rules should be clarified and more closely reflect the wording of the Primary distance rule.

Response

The Executive Member took account of the views of the Committee in formulating his proposals to Cabinet.

Update on petitions presented to the last meeting:

Mr Gareth Lodge presented a petition on behalf of Applecroft Action Group, 'Local Schools for Local Children', concerning the reduction of primary school places at Applecroft Primary School.

The Executive Member and officers agreed to consider all the issues raised and to communicate to all concerned a resolution as quickly as possible. Local Members and the Resources Panel would be kept informed of progress.

Having reconsidered all the possible options, the action group was informed that the admissions process would have to take its course. Of the subsequent eighteen admissions appeals, one was successful.

UPDATE ON PREVIOUS SCRUTINY ITEMS

	ITEM	C'TTEE DATE	EFFECTS OF SCRUTINY	STATUS* (see endnote)
1	Transitional Arrangements between CSF and ACS [joint scrutiny with Adult Care]	23 January 2002	<p>The process of consultation for the draft protocol, which details the Statutory framework, and the roles and responsibilities of all of the partner agencies involved in the transition planning of a young person with disability, will continue through June and July. The consultation to this wider circle now includes schools, Health, and parents.</p> <p>The issues for Disabled Care leavers are being considered further, in a series of helpful meetings, and with legal advice. The requirements of Disabled care leavers will be encompassed within the final version of one Transition Protocol Document.</p> <p>The leaflet for parents about Transition is now ready for print.</p> <p>Transition will be the subject of a joint ACS/CSF presentation to ACS Scrutiny Committee in October.</p>	Ongoing
2	Parent Partnership Service	19 June 2002	Full report on this agenda with parents attending	

	ITEM	C'TTEE DATE	EFFECTS OF SCRUTINY	STATUS* (see endnote)
3	Final Warnings/ Convictions of Looked After Children	19 June 2002	Considered by the Corporate Parenting Panel in November 2002 and May 2003 Full report on this agenda	
4	Monitoring of Schools	19 June 2002	Developments include the implementation of new electronic databases, a more widely differentiated programme of monitoring visits, mid-inspection cycle reviews for a targeted group of schools, the "Leadership for Improvement" programme and the increased use of partnerships between schools. All headteachers and Chairs of Governors have been invited to respond to an evaluation of the differentiated programme of monitoring visits. The results of the evaluation will be reported to Members later in the year. Topic Group to be set up in September 2003 and report to the Scrutiny Committee in January 2004	ongoing investigation
5	Operation Coachman	16 October 2002	Operation Coachman will be on the agenda for the Environment Scrutiny Committee on 21 October 2003. Operation Coachman 2003/04 is currently under way.	ongoing investigation
6	Meeting the Placement Needs of Looked After Children	16 October 2002	Considered by the Corporate Parenting Panel in November 2002 and May 2003 Full report on this agenda	

	ITEM	C'TTEE DATE	EFFECTS OF SCRUTINY	STATUS* (see endnote)
7	Effectiveness of Quadrants	22 January 2003	Visits to quadrants and report on this agenda	Ongoing investigation
8	Provision for Excluded Pupils in Welwyn Hatfield and Hertsmere and Education Support Centres	22 January 2003	<p>The March 2003 Scrutiny Committee concluded that: "The Strategy [or appropriate] Panel would consider the detailed issues regarding Education Support Centres [ESCs], as part of the development of the Achievement and Behaviour Strategy."</p> <p>Further work has taken place with a view to upgrading and extending the existing premises at The Park. Allied to this, a review of ESC funding arrangements has been initiated to produce greater transparency and ensure that Centres can meet the revenue costs of any necessary further expansion.</p> <p>A report will be presented to the Achievement Panel in Autumn 2003 and also a report on ESC accommodation will be provided, as requested, to a future meeting of the Property Panel.</p>	work outside scrutiny
9	Items Referred From Resources Scrutiny Committee - Traffic Light Monitor Indicators	19 March 2003	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The Committee agreed that a programme of reports should be developed on those Traffic Light Monitor indicators relevant to the Children, Schools and Families service, to enable monitoring of trends with a view to possible scrutiny; there is a report on this agenda. 2. The Committee agreed that a report by the Minority Ethnic Curriculum Support Service [MECSS] be put in the CSF Members' Bulletin on projects supporting the achievement of minority ethnic pupils 3. The Corporate Parenting Panel would be asked to look at the Achievements of looked after children [Local L252 and L253]. 	<p>work outside scrutiny</p> <p>ongoing investigation</p>

	ITEM	C'TTEE DATE	EFFECTS OF SCRUTINY	STATUS* (see endnote)
10	Review Of The Scrutiny Of Services For Disabled Children	19 March 2003	<p>1. The Committee welcomed this report and commended progress made as an excellent outcome of scrutiny.</p> <p>2. The Committee were pleased that parents and carers had been involved in this work and would welcome a further opportunity to hear their views on the effect of the changes in practice; this could be achieved by the members of the Topic Group meeting with parents and carers.</p> <p>Action: A meeting has been arranged for the Topic Group to meet with parents on 17 June, with contact with parents being facilitated by Carers in Hertfordshire.</p> <p>3. Areas for further work included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> sharing of good practice <p>Action: A workshop has been arranged on 10 July for disability managers (Local Services) to share learning from various initiatives taken in Local Services.(see Review of Scrutiny of Services for Disabled Children, para 3.4)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> initiatives to recruit and retain occupational therapists <p>Action: OT issues have been discussed by Local Services Managers and a way forward agreed. It is planned for the work to be taken forward by the Principal Officer (OTs) when she come into post in the autumn.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> salaried shared carers 	<p>Ongoing investigation</p> <p>work outside scrutiny</p> <p>work outside scrutiny</p>

			<p>Action: The scheme will be reviewed in 6 months and will include the response to the recent recruitment campaign and the progress made in placing disabled children with complex needs for respite within this scheme.</p> <p>4. The Committee requested more information on the work of the Carers Topic Group and requested an item on this for the CSF Members' Bulletin.</p> <p>The Carers Topic Group is ACS led (Diane Grinstead is the lead AD).</p> <p>CSF is however represented on the Hertfordshire Multi-Agency Carers' Strategy Group which provides the forum for developing work with carers and co-ordinating and auditing the annual action plans for the delivery of the Multi-Agency Carers' Strategy approved at Cabinet on 22 March 2002. Again ACS takes the lead on this Group. This is one of the forums for sharing with partner agencies the Young Carers Action Plan 2003-04 (reported on in the MIB issue 6).</p>	
11	Provision For Children And Young People With Autistic Spectrum Disorder	19 March 2003	<p>1. The Committee agreed that a more user friendly version of the report would be produced and distributed widely. Work on this is currently underway.</p> <p>2. The Executive Member agreed to take forward the recommendations in the report.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Additional funding has been allocated to special schools to provide extra places in the 2003/04 school year ▪ The additional teaching and welfare budget for Statements has been increased by £200,000 to take account of increasing referral rates of younger children ▪ Work is underway to identify and agree appropriate sites for 2 primary and 1 secondary mainstream support units ▪ Guidance on primary-secondary transition is in draft form and will be issued this term 	<p>work outside scrutiny</p> <p>work outside scrutiny</p>

			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ A training programme for teaching and support staff is in place ▪ Joint planning is underway with parent representative groups ▪ CSF has joined a regional research project managed by University College London to evaluate the effectiveness of different methods of intervention in ▪ Further discussion with Health Trusts and the Learning and Skills Council is planned for September. <p>3. Any further work would be taken forward by the Special Needs [or appropriate] Panel.</p> <p>Reports will be planned into the Panel's programme of work as appropriate</p>	work outside scrutiny
12	Primary School Places In St Albans	19 March 2003	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. It was agreed that members would be kept informed of the situation via the appropriate Panel. 2. The Committee recognised members' concerns regarding the provision of extra school places in areas with new housing developments. 3. It was important that forecasting mechanisms and data should be as accurate as possible, while allowing for some flexibility and the possibility of response to demographic changes 	work outside scrutiny

* Status definitions:

- **Ongoing Investigation** – The scrutiny committee has commissioned work, which could be from a topic group, officers, consultants or other parties which is not yet complete but will report to the main committee in the future.
- **Work outside scrutiny** – an item which has been raised by the scrutiny committee where work is being taken forward through another mechanism in response to the item being raised by scrutiny– a panel, external body or officer mechanism for example.
- **Monitoring** – Items which the scrutiny committee has scrutinised in the past where it has asked for occasional or regular updates. This update could be a planned report, in which case the dates should be given, or monitoring through the update report. Items where there is work outside scrutiny can also be monitoring items.
- **Awaiting Action** – Items the committee wishes to scrutinise or review where the timing is unclear due to awaiting events or the outcome of other investigations. E.g. government guidance

SCRUTINY WORK PROGRAMME

	ITEM	C'TTEE DATE	SCRUTINY FOCUS
1.	Traffic Light Monitor Indicators	15/10/03	The Scrutiny Committee agreed at its meeting on 19 March 2003, that a programme of reports should be developed on those Traffic Light Monitor indicators relevant to the Children, Schools and Families Service, to enable monitoring of trends with a view to possible scrutiny.
2.	CSF Plan 2004/05	15/10/03	To give members of the Scrutiny Committee the opportunity to comment on the Draft Plan.
3.	CSF and Health	15/10/03	Originally requested by David Billing in January 2003. Committee agreed to a Members' briefing in April, followed by a more focussed report to the October meeting of the Scrutiny Committee.
4.	Effectiveness of Quadrants	15/10/03	Originally requested by David Billing in January 2003. Committee agreed to scrutiny sessions for all members of the County Council in Quadrants; Topic Group set up by June Committee.
5.	A/AS Level Achievement	15/10/03	To show HCC trends and compare to national results and statistical neighbours.
6.	LEA/ Schools Code of Practice	15/10/03	The Code of Practice governs the relationship between schools and the LEA and details the protocols for how advisers interact with school leaders and governors.
7.	Children and Young People's Preventative Strategy		
8.	Development at West Herts College		Topic Group set up by June meeting of the Committee
9.	Leavesden Green		
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	ITEM	C'TTEE DATE	SCRUTINY FOCUS
1.	CSF Plan 2004/05	21/01/04	To incorporate results of the consultation on the draft Plan and give the Scrutiny Committee the opportunity to comment to Cabinet on 26 January 2004.
2.	Children, Schools and Families Proposed Resource Budget 2004/05 – 2007/08	21/01/04	The Scrutiny Committee will be invited to comment on the budget proposals put forward by Cabinet; Cabinet will consider these comments on 9 February 2004 before making recommendations to the full County Council on 12 February 2004
3.	Monitoring of Schools	21/01/04	Originally requested by Ivor Ambrose in June 2002. Reported to CSF Scrutiny Committee in October 2002 and Topic Group to be set up in September 2003 to scrutinise the effectiveness of the implementation of the new policy developed by the Achievement Panel. This report will give the findings and recommendations of the Topic Group.
4.	Transitional Arrangements between CSF and ACS	21/01/04	Originally requested by Fiona Guest in January 2002. Joint scrutiny with Adult Care and Health Scrutiny Committee at October meeting of Adult Care and Health Scrutiny Committee meeting, to which all members of CSF Scrutiny Committee will be invited. This report will summarise work so far.
5.	Operation Coachman	21/01/04	Originally requested by Cliff Broadhurst in October 2002 and referred to Environment Scrutiny Committee for further scrutiny and setting up of a Topic Group. This report will set out the findings and recommendations of the Topic Group.

	ITEM	C'TTEE DATE	SCRUTINY FOCUS
1.	Statutory Consultation on Admission Rules for Community and Voluntary Controlled Nursery, Infant, Junior and Primary Schools	17/03/04	To enable the Scrutiny Committee to comment on the statutory consultation proposals and consider responses received to the statutory consultation proposals for community and voluntary controlled primary schools. Rules to be approved by County Council on 30 March 2004.
2.	Statutory Consultation on Admission Rules for Community and Voluntary Controlled Secondary Schools	17/03/04	To provide the Scrutiny Committee with an opportunity to comment on the proposed rules for community and voluntary controlled secondary schools and the scheme of co-ordination as part of the consultation and consider responses received to the consultation. Rules to be approved by County Council on 30 March 2004
3.	Admission Rules for Sixth Forms of Community and Voluntary Controlled Secondary Schools	17/03/04	To provide the Scrutiny Committee with an opportunity to comment on the proposed rules for sixth forms of community and voluntary controlled secondary schools Rules to be approved by County Council on 30 March 2004
4.	Review of the Provision of Services for Children and Young People with Autistic Spectrum Disorder	17/03/04	To report on the developments in provision of services for children with autistic spectrum disorders since the Topic Group reported in March 2003.
5.	Further Review of Provision Services for Disabled Children	17/03/04	Last reported to Committee in March 2003 – this report will detail developments over the past year.

	ITEM	C'TTEE DATE	SCRUTINY FOCUS
1	The Effectiveness of Hertfordshire's Implementation of the CSF Direct Payments Scheme	23/06/04	The Direct Payments Policy sets out the commitment that the County Council makes to those with a parental responsibility for a disabled child and young disabled people aged 16/17 following the implementation of the Carers and Disabled Children Act 2000.

Note: there will also be an Update & Work Programme Report to each meeting on all new and live scrutiny items and the work programme for forthcoming meetings.