

Report to: Children's Services Scrutiny Committee

Date: 5th July 2006

Report of: Director of Legal and Democratic Services

Report No:

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Report Title: **Remit of the Committee**

Non Confidential: This report does **not** contain information which warrants its consideration in the absence of the press or members of the public.

Purpose: To inform Members of the powers and duties of the Committee

Background

At this year's Annual Meeting of Council there were a number of changes to the Executive Portfolios and the Powers and Duties of Scrutiny Committees. Attached is a copy of the revised terms of reference of this Committee.

Also appended to the report is a copy of the portfolios for the Executive Members for Children's Services and Schools as these are the areas to be scrutinised by this Committee.

Recommendations: That Members note the remit of the Committee

CHILDREN'S SERVICES SCRUTINY COMMITTEE – POWERS AND DUTIES

- (1) To monitor and review and make recommendations to the Council and/or to the Executive or an Executive Member with regard to all policy and operational matters falling within the purview of the Executive Members with responsibility for Children's Services and Schools.
- (2) To consider matters referred to the Committee by members of the Committee in accordance with Standing Order 35.
- (3) To recommend to the Council a programme of reviews to be undertaken by the Committee with regard to matters falling within the purview of the Executive Members with responsibility for Children's Services and Schools and to recommend the Council accordingly on the outcome of such reviews.
- (4) To make recommendations to the Council as to such additional/occasional reviews which the Committee wishes to consider outside the annual programme.
- (5) To receive reports on the outcome of Best Value Reviews and Inspectors reports thereon, relating to the services provided by the Children's Services Department.
- (6) The Committee shall have the power to summon the Executive Members with responsibility for Children's Services and Schools and the relevant Chief Officer(s) to attend its meetings to consider, provide information and give evidence on matters before the Committee.
- (7) To set up Scrutiny Panels to undertake in-depth reviews of current policies and practices with a view to identifying areas for future policy development (membership to be agreed by Council).
- (8) The Quorum for a meeting of the Committee shall be five.

Subject to the acts and proceedings of the Committee being approved by the Council.

EXECUTIVE MEMBER PORTFOLIOS

CHILDREN'S SERVICES PORTFOLIO

The designated Executive Member is responsible for all matters relating to the Authority's duties with regard to Children's Services (except any matters specifically reserved to the Council or delegated to any committee or body) and for the development and integration of children's services in accordance with the Council's Scheme of Delegation. As such, the designated Executive Member is responsible for liaising and, where appropriate, working in consultation with other members of the Executive, particularly where matters within the portfolio affect other aspects of Council business or affect the Borough generally.

The designated Executive Member is responsible for ensuring appropriate consultation with partners and the community on matters relating to Children's Services and the integration and development of children's services.

The actions and decisions of the designated Executive Member will, at all times, remain within the context of the policy framework established or any variation thereto approved by the Council.

To have overall responsibility for:

- (1) To provide leadership across the range of the Council's children's services and through engagement with partners
- (2) Ensuring that the Council's children's services meet required standards and comply with statutory requirements.
- (3) Develop the strategic direction of the children's service and bring leaders of partner organisations together in shared vision.
- (4) Work with the Director of Children's Services to develop and implement the Children and Young People's Plan.
- (5) Ensure that Chief Officers are held to account for the contribution made by the services for which they are responsible to improvement in outcomes for children and young people.
- (6) The co-ordination and, where appropriate, provision of children's services as defined in the Children Act 2004 including:-
 - (a) The provision of Social Services for children and young people as determined by the Local Authority Social Services Act 1970, as amended
 - (b) The functions of the Council as Local Education Authority, including all matters concerning the employment of children and young persons (to receive recommendations from Schools Portfolio holder)
- (7) Services to individual pupils and parents in relation to nursery, primary, secondary and post-secondary education and training. (To receive recommendations from Schools Portfolio holder)
- (8) The operation of admission and transfer arrangements and matters concerning appeals in relation to these and to attendance generally, including the Education Social Work Service. (to receive recommendations from Schools Portfolio holder)

The provision of services for pupils with special educational needs, including special schools, support services and units, Educational Psychology Services, and liaison with Health Authorities and Trusts and the designated Executive Member for the Adult Social Care and Health in the provision of those services. (To receive recommendations from Schools Portfolio holder)

- (10) Matters arising from meetings of governors of schools, where these relate to the above areas of activity. (To receive recommendations from Schools Portfolio holder)
- (11) Arrangements for the provision to schools of financial, personnel and IT services, for the supply of materials and equipment, and client procedures in relation to building maintenance, building cleaning, grounds maintenance and school meals. (to receive recommendations from Schools Portfolio holder)
- (12) The development and implementation of the Authority's school improvement strategy, including:- (to receive recommendations from Schools Portfolio holder)
 - Promoting school self-evaluation;
 - the use of data, benchmarks and targets by schools and the LEA;
 - the work of the Advisory Service;
 - criteria and processes for intervening in schools with exceptional needs;
 - training, development and project work;
 - better reporting to Governors; and
 - Identifying and promoting the place of education in regeneration initiatives.
- (13) Ensuring the Council is responsive to its corporate parenting role
- (14) Ensuring the provision of all services to looked after children and those leaving care including education and leisure, employment and training, accommodation and social and emotional support.
- (15) Ensuring the effective operation of social services to children and young people at risk of harm.
- (16) Determining such individual applications for discretionary awards for Further Education Students as are not delegated to the Director of Children's Services, and for Welfare Support for Pupils, together with applications for assistance towards transport costs.
- (17) Determining applications for financial assistance under the Education Act 1996 in connection with pupils wishing to attend at boarding schools.
- (18) Determining retrospective applications for grant, including those cases where no formal application had been made prior to December, 1982 because the applicant had been informed that s/he was not eligible for an award because of residency requirements.

- (19) Co-ordination of integrated children's services.
- (23) The operation of the Youth Service (including 'Connexions') throughout the Borough.
- (20) Fees and charges in relation to activities falling within the remit of the Children's Services Portfolio.
- (21) Risk Management in relation to activities falling within the remit of the Children's Service portfolio.
- (22) Considering any recommendations made by the relevant Scrutiny Committee with regard to any matter within the portfolio.

To submit to the Executive (for approval, where appropriate, by the Council):

- (1) Proposals for the integration and development of children's services.
- (2) Recommendations with regard to Corporate Business Planning Process in respect of the functions performed and the services provided.
- (3) Recommendations with regard to the preparation and submission of bids for grants/loans under Department for Education and Skills and European Union initiatives relating to Children's services.
- (4) Recommendations with regard to reports on standards and quality in local primary schools. (to receive recommendations from Schools Portfolio)
- (5) Recommendations with regard to the Sure Start Plan.
- (6) Recommendations with regard to compulsory purchase matters and blight notices as these are within the remit of Children's Services.

SCHOOLS PORTFOLIO

The designated Executive Member is responsible for all matters relating to the Council's affairs in respect of Schools (except any matters specifically reserved to the Council or delegated to any committee or body) in accordance with the Council's Scheme of Delegation. As such, the designated Executive Member is responsible for liaising and, where appropriate, working in consultation with other members of the Executive, particularly where matters within the portfolio affect other aspects of Council business or affect the Borough generally.

The designated Executive Member is responsible for ensuring appropriate consultation with partners and the community on matters relating to Schools.

The actions and decisions of the designated Executive Member will, at all times, remain within the context of the policy framework established or any variation thereto approved by the Council.

To have overall responsibility for:

- (1) The functions of the Council as Local Education Authority as they relate to schools (To make recommendations to Children's Services portfolio holder)
- (2) Services to individual pupils and parents in relation to nursery, primary, secondary and post-secondary education and training. (To make recommendations to Children's Services portfolio holder)

- (3) The operation of admission and transfer arrangements and matters concerning appeals in relation to these and to attendance generally, including the Education Social Work Service. (To make recommendations to Children's Services portfolio holder)
- (4) The provision of services for pupils with special educational needs, including special schools, support services and units, Educational Psychology Services, and liaison with Health Authorities and Trusts and the designated Executive Member for the Adult Social Care and Health in the provision of those services. (To make recommendations to Children's Services portfolio holder)
- (5) Matters arising from meetings of governors of schools, where these relate to the above areas of activity. (To make recommendations to Children's Services portfolio holder)
- (6) Arrangements for the provision to schools of financial, personnel and IT services, for the supply of materials and equipment, and client procedures in relation to building maintenance, building cleaning, grounds maintenance and school meals. (To make recommendations to Children's Services portfolio holder)
- (7) The development and implementation of the Authority's school improvement strategy (To make recommendation to Children's Services Portfolio holder), including:-
- Promoting school self-evaluation;
 - the use of data, benchmarks and targets by schools and the LEA;
 - the work of the Advisory Service;
 - criteria and processes for intervening in schools with exceptional needs;
 - training, development and project work;
 - better reporting to Governors; and
 - Identifying and promoting the place of education in regeneration initiatives.
- (8) Recommendations with regard to reports on standards and quality in local primary schools. (To make recommendations to Children's Services Portfolio holder)
- (9) The development and implementation of the Council's policies in respect of Area Working.
- (10) The management of the Council's Catering functions, except insofar as these fall within the remit of any other Executive Member portfolio.
- (11) Fees and charges in respect of services and activities relating to the Schools Portfolio.
- (12) Risk management in relation to the services falling within the remit of the schools portfolio.
- (13) Considering any recommendations made by the relevant Scrutiny Committee with regard to any matter within the portfolio.

