

AGENDA ITEM

COMMITTEE: CHILDREN & YOUNG PEOPLE

DATE: 22 MARCH 2007

SUBJECT: SCRUTINY ANNUAL REPORT 2006-07

REPORT BY: SCRUTINY OFFICER

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IMPLICATIONS:

LEGAL	✓	COMMUNITY SAFETY
EQUALITIES		ENVIRONMENT
FINANCIAL		CONSULTATIONS
STAFFING		OTHER

WARDS AFFECTED: NONE

PURPOSE

1. The purpose of this report is to submit the draft 2006-07 Annual Report of Scrutiny to the Committee.

RECOMMENDATION(S)

2. **The Scrutiny Committee is recommended to consider their draft annual report and to approve it as their report to the Scrutiny Board.**

BACKGROUND

3. The Council's constitution requires each of the scrutiny committees, once a year, to approve and submit to the Board a report on the work they have undertaken. It also requires the Board, once a year, to approve and submit to the Council a report on the whole of the work of scrutiny. This process normally takes place in the cycle following the annual meeting of the Council so that the reports relate to the municipal

year. The timetable for this year's annual report has been brought forward so that the report of the Board can be submitted to the meeting of the Council on 17th April 2007.

REPORT

4. The production of last year's report was done electronically and hard copies were only produced for inclusion with the Council agenda. The report was typeset and graphics were applied to make it an attractive publication. This version was then posted on the Council's website and the publication was circulated by e-mail as a link to the document. It is intended to adopt the same approach for the 2006-07 annual report.
5. Subject to the approval of the Board at their meeting on 6th March 2007, the reports of the five committees will be put together and submitted as the Board's report to the Council.
6. Attached, as an appendix is the draft of the 2006-07 annual report that has been prepared to reflect and record the work carried out by this scrutiny committee.

LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

7. There are no legal implications to this report and this has been agreed with the relevant solicitor in Legal Services on 13 March 2007

PROPOSAL/OPTION

8. The committee is asked to consider the attached draft report and to approve it as their report to the Scrutiny Board.

APPENDIX

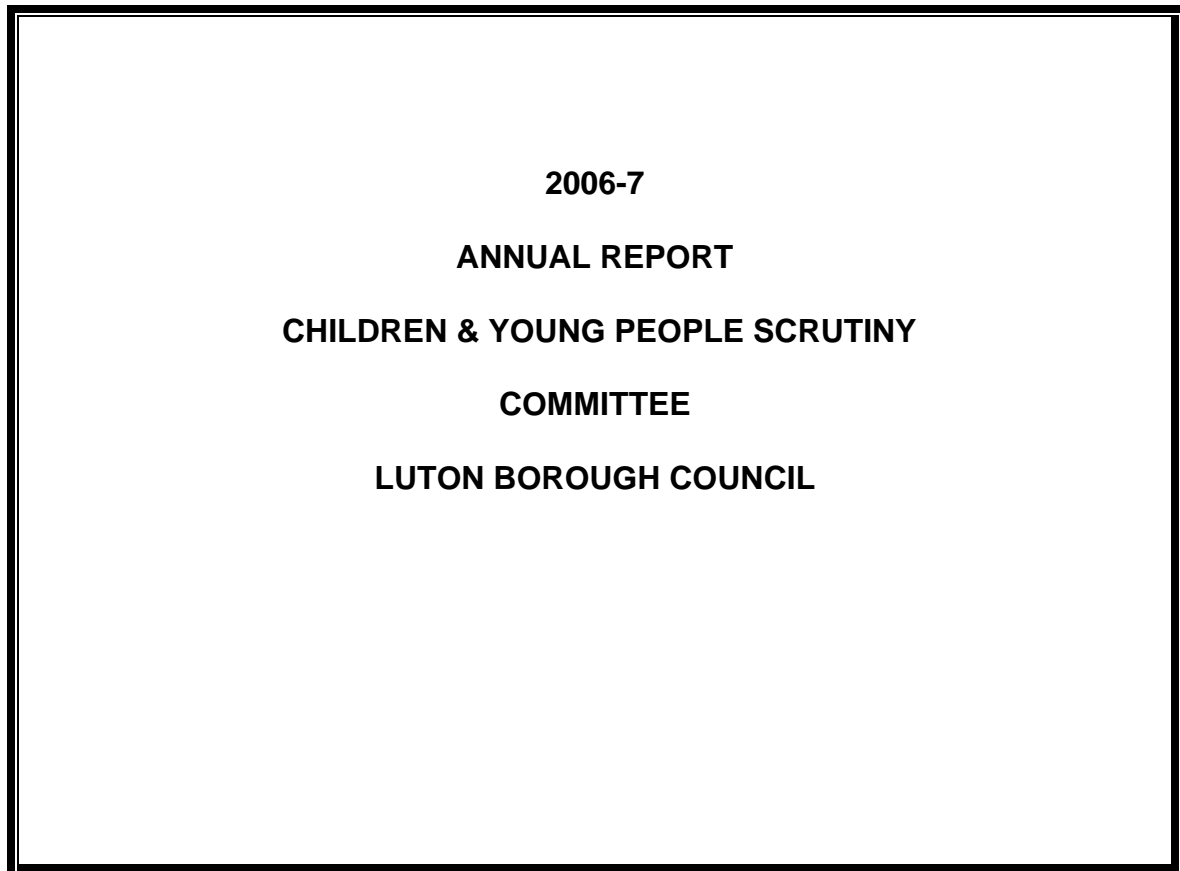
7. Draft 2006-07 Annual Report of the committee.

LIST OF BACKGROUND PAPERS

LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 1972, SECTION 100D

Scrutiny Annual Reports for previous years.

APPENDIX 1



ANNUAL REPORT OF THE:

CHILDREN & YOUNG PEOPLE SCRUTINY COMMITTEE: 2006-07

Revised terms of reference and renaming of the Committee

1. In response to the Every Child Matters agenda the Life Long Learning committee's terms of reference and its title was changed. Similar changes have been made in other local authorities as well. These changes were considered necessary to focus on the five outcomes for Children and Young People and to monitor the progress of the Children & Young People's Plan. Its main terms of reference are derived from the former Life Long Learning and Social Inclusion Scrutiny Committees. The two corresponding directorates were also renamed as: The Children & Learning Directorate and the Housing and Community Living Directorate.
2. Bringing all the matters that affect children & young people together under one committee in Luton will enable the committee to monitor the progress towards achieving the aims of the Every Child Matters Agenda as reflected in the Council's Children and Young People's Plan.
3. C&YPSC¹ is one of the five scrutiny committees of the Council. It met 4 times during the year and made several commendations to the Executive during the year. No decisions of the Executive were 'called in' to this committee during this municipal year.
4. The key decisions made by the committee during the year are appended as Appendix 1 to this report.
5. CHILDREN & YOUNG PEOPLE SCRUTINY COMMITTEE: Revised Terms of Reference and Membership (Pl. see table below). The Councillor Membership of the committee will continue to be supplemented by the Co-optees who represent the Diocesan Board, Parent Governors & Employees. These co-opted Members bring a great deal of expertise and first hand knowledge of the education sector and young people to the committee and they are fully involved in the Committee's work.

¹ Children and Young People Scrutiny Committee

TABLE: 1

MEMBERSHIP	FUNCTIONS
COUNCILLORS A. IQBAL D. CHAPMAN (CHAIR) D. HINKLEY G. CAMPBELL J. BAILEY M. ASHRAF M. DOLLING M. PANTLING R. HARRIS S. RODEN S. TIMONEY CO OPTEES DIOCESAN REPRESENTATIVES B O'BYRNE J. CHIPPERTON PARENT GOVERNOR REPRESENTATIVES: 2 VACANCIES EMPLOYEE REPRESENTATIVES M. AUSTIN G. RYAN I.SMITH	a) Schools b) Education and Achievement c) Training d) Further Education and Higher Education e) Links f) Post 16 and Learning Skills ~council g) Adult Education h) Developing Young people as Citizens i) Youth Services j) To Scrutinise the effectiveness of the implementation of Section 10 Of the Children ~Act 2004 k) To Oversee and scrutinise the process towards achieving the ECM Agenda l) To consider how these outcomes will be achieved and assessed. m) To monitor progress n) To receive periodic reports on the progress that is being made in relation to any aspect of the Children and young People's Plan. o) To carry out scrutiny reviews of topics relevant to the panel. p) To Examine any proposals to establish a Children's Trust q) To keep under review the arrangements for safeguarding children at risk in Luton. r) To hold the power to co-opt additional members representing the interest of children and young persons e.g. Children's Trust, voluntary Sector, Health Service.

REPORT

- The Scrutiny committee's main role is to examine the provision of services for Children and Young People in Luton and ensure that they are provided at the highest possible standard. It runs in a similar fashion to a House of Commons select committee. Members can make recommendations for improvement to service managers, and the Executive. They can acquaint themselves with best

practice by inviting officers responsible for achieving that improvement in other best practice authorities to come to Luton and share their ideas and offer advice on how our services can improve. Sometimes Members, accompanied by relevant officers, visit the best practice authorities as a cross party group and, where appropriate they invite user representatives to accompany them as well.

7. The Committee has continued to scrutinise a variety of high profile issues within its terms of reference that are of key strategic importance to the citizens of Luton. The government published “Every Child Matters Agenda: “Change for Children”. It sets out the key elements of the national programme of change in Children and Young Peoples services, which is given statutory force by the Children Act 2004. In the section on ‘support for Local Change’, the Government introduced the concept of the ‘Improvement Cycle for Children’s Services. The cycle sets out an annual process of local needs analysis, a ‘priorities’ conversation with representatives of Government Office and the key inspectorates.

THE CHILDREN & YOUNG PEOPLE’S PLAN

8. Each local authority has to produce a local Children and Young People’s Plan. The plan sets out how the priorities are to be addressed; the actual delivery and commissioning of services, a process for evaluation through Annual performance assessment every three years, and Inspection via the Joint Area Review.
9. The inspectorates, with Ofsted in the lead, have been developing and consulting on a number of documents as follows:
 - **The framework for the inspection of children’s services**
 - **Joint Area Reviews of Children’s Services**
 - **Annual performance assessment of council children’s services**
 - **Inspection of children’s services key judgements and evidence**
10. Taken together these documents constitute the ‘architecture’ of how Children and Young People Services will be planned, monitored and evaluated from this point forwards. The outcomes of these processes will have significant implications for Children and Young people, the relevant directorates, the Council as a whole and its local partnerships.
11. Luton has, in consultation with its partners, produced its Children’s Plan and an ensuing action plan for its implementation. This document, as well as its implementation will become the focus of scrutiny and is being monitored by several local authority scrutiny committees.

KEY EVENTS UNDER THE AUSPICES OF THE C Y P S COMMITTEE IN 2006-7

The Changes to the Terms of Reference and the Renaming of the Committee.

12. Since the changes to the terms of reference the committee has conducted its business on 4 occasions and its new emphasis on Children and young people. has already taken effect

Workshop on Building Relationships for Effective Scrutiny

13. Workplace Potential is an organisational development consultancy. Under the auspices of the Centre for Public Scrutiny a workshop was being developed on building partnership relationships for effective scrutiny. It requested the committee for an opportunity to pilot the workshop with Members, Officers, and Co opted Members of the committee. In view of the importance of working with various partnerships emerging at a local level and particularly for the ECM objectives Members agreed to take part in the pilot. The workshop took place on the 1 December 2006.

The Workshop and its Key Outcomes

14. A greater understanding of the diversity between and within partner organisations. A shared understanding of the language used by different partners.
15. Clarity of roles, responsibilities and commitments within partnerships.
16. Tools and approaches needed to build effective partnerships where difference is valued and how all resources, including people, are utilised.
17. Community Leadership within the sphere of public scrutiny and how officers may support elected councillors to undertake this role.
18. The opportunities and barriers to partnership working.

Process for the Selection and Prioritisation of Scrutiny topics for 2007-8

19. In order to manage and prioritise the committees work programme the scrutiny officer presented a topic selection matrix plotting all the topics that were suggested by the service, Equalities Forums, the topics being scrutinised by other local authorities, suggestions by members of the Public, User Groups. Discussions were also held with the Children and Young People Strategic Board. However no specific suggestions for topics by the Board have as yet been received. Further efforts will be made to assist our partnership organisation in suggesting topics for scrutiny. The Committee agreed that as this was a year

for looked after children it be adopted as a theme for the year and identified the following topics for inclusion in their work programme.

Theme for the Year and Scrutiny Topics

20. The Committee chose 'Looked after Children as a Theme for the year'. Following the discussions at the Children's Panel it decided to prioritise a scrutiny review of the protocols regarding looked after children particularly regarding confidentiality. The following topics were also prioritised for Scrutiny:
 - a. Anti Bullying Strategies – including the impact of Homophobic Bullying
 - b. General Health /Obesity amongst children and young people
 - c. Parenting strategy
 - d. Improving support for Vulnerable Families and Children especially hard to reach groups
 - e. School Meals
 - f. Teenage Pregnancy.
 - g. Key stage 4 attainment esp. in Mathematics (including focus on black and minority ethnic pupils)
21. The involvement of Children and young people in Scrutiny is one of the biggest challenges for the committee. The following were suggested as possible points of contacts:
 - a) Luton Children's Panel.
 - b) Youth MP
 - c) Youth Service groups at least 10 per Area
 - d) Data base details of a large number of Young people who would be prepared to be involved in future surveys
 - e) Publicity in educational institutions, community Centres, internet Cafes

KEY CHALLENGES FOR 2007- 8

The key challenges for the year ahead need to be recognised. The committee is requested to add to the following:

22. Build better working relationships with its partners in achieving the five outcomes
23. The involvement of Children and Young People especially those from the socially excluded groups.
24. Financial pressures both for the Local Authorities and the Children and Young people
25. Building a scrutiny framework for the monitoring of the Children's Plan
26. Marking the year of Looked after Children by a programme of events in association with our Partners.

APPENDIX 1

Scrutiny Committee deliberations for the year 2006-7

Review of the Music Service

1. The Review of the Music Service recommended that the Strategic Manager Expressive Arts examine the possibility of increasing the Local Authority contributions to help assist low income families to encourage children to continue to benefit from the Music Service. A comparison of charges levied at other local authorities was also requested.

Rathbone in Luton (REF: 8.1)

2. Rathbone's mission is to provide young people who are experiencing significant disadvantages the right opportunities to learn and to achieve. Jonathan Foot, Divisional Director and Emma Smith, Centre Manager from Rathbone gave a presentation to the Committee on Rathbone.
3. Members agreed that following OfSTED's review of Rathbone a report be submitted to the Committee advising it of the outcome.

BEHAVIOUR SUPPORT ACTION PLAN MONITORING REPORT (REF: 8.2)

4. Progress in behaviour support locally since April 2004 was outlined. A Member requested that the Committee be kept up-to-date on the situation with the health partnership. Members expressed their appreciation for the progress that had been made and requested the Behaviour and Tuition Manager to forward the Committee's congratulations to the Avenue Centre on their OfSTED inspection which assessed the service as 'outstanding'.

EDUCATIONAL ACHIEVEMENT ACTION PLAN (REF: 8.4)

5. The Committee received a report on Education Achievement Action Plan (Ref: 8.4) and updated the Committee on actions taken in respect of their recommendations on Educational Achievement. The Committee noted its disappointment over no tangible evidence of improved Leadership as a result of the Leadership Incentive Grant.
6. The Head of School Improvement was instructed to:
 - i) Convey the Children and Young People Scrutiny Committee's disappointment to Head Teachers of Secondary Schools.
 - ii) Carry out a review of the Leadership Incentive Grant and report his finding back to the Committee

KEY STAGE RESULTS – SUMMER 2006 (REF: 8.5)

7. The Head of School Improvement informed the committee that Black African pupils consistently outperformed other groups in English, maths and science in respect of the difference between Local Authority performance in 2006 and national performance for 2005.

TIMED AGENDAS

8. A timed agenda for future meetings of the Children and Young People Scrutiny Committee was agreed.

DIRECTORS'S PRESENTATION

9. The Director of the newly constituted Children and Learning Directorate gave an elaborate presentation setting the scene and sharing his vision for the committees work.

BUILDING SCHOOLS FOR THE FUTURE - UPDATE

10. Regular updates are received and further updates will continue next year in order to keep track of the progress
11. **Children and young people scrutiny committee work programme was regularly updated throughout the year**

