CHILDRENS SERVICES AND LIFELONG LEARNING   **Agenda**
SCRUTINY AND PERFORMANCE PANEL   **Item No.**

DATE: 20TH OCTOBER, 2005   **6b**

SOCIAL INCLUSION WORKING GROUP
SCOPING OF THE WORK PROGRAMME

Ward(s)   All

Portfolios: Cllr E Hughes - Children's Services
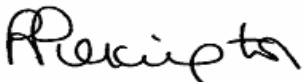
Summary of report:

- This report gives a brief overview of the Social Inclusion agenda and highlights the key areas for Members consideration.

Background papers:

- Children Act (Every Child Matters)
- SENDA
- All plans previously presented by SERCO
- Children's Services Plan
- Equalities plan (in construction)
- Multi-agency disability plan
- Corporate Parenting Strategy Action Plan 2004-6

Reason for scrutiny:

- For Members to consider the key areas of the Social Inclusion agenda and agree a remit and work programmes for the Social Inclusion Working Group.

Signed:

Director: **Pauline Pilkington**

Date: 20 October 2005

Resource and legal considerations:

- In accordance with the constitution the panel may ask persons to attend to address them on matters under consideration and may pay to any advisors, assessors and other persons a reasonable fee and expenses for doing so.

Citizen impact:

- All citizens with a relevant interest in a matter will have the ability to contribute to the deliberations of a scrutiny and performance panel.

Environmental impact:

- None directly associated with this report.

Performance management:

- Scrutiny is an important and integral part of the council's performance management framework and can challenge review and advise on service delivery, council activity and policy and improvements.

Equality Implications:

- All citizens with a relevant interest in a matter will have the ability to contribute to the deliberations of a scrutiny and performance panel.

Consultation:

- Children and young people's strategic partnership
- Senior managers in social care education and health services
- Headteacher representatives
- Youth Forum
- Parents/Carers forum

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1.   **Purpose of the Report**

1.1   The purpose of the report is to give Members a brief overview of the Social Inclusion agenda and highlight key areas for their consideration.

2.   **Background**

2.1   Presentations and information relating to Looked After Children, development of 'Every Child Matters' and the outcomes framework have culminated in the setting up of a working group in spring 2005.

2.2   The membership of the working group was agreed by the panel as set out below:

Membership: Councillor Arif, Councillor Khan and Councillor Cassidy.

Senior management representation from: Social Care and Supported Housing
Education Walsall
Leisure and Culture
Crime and Disorder Partnership
Health Partnership

2.3   The working group has not yet held its first meeting and Councillor Arif has since asked to be removed from the membership due to other commitments; however, officers have met to gather information towards the scoping of the group as outlined in this report.

3.   **Social Inclusion Agenda**

3.1   The outcomes framework published with the Government Green Paper 'Every Child Matters: Change for Children' can be used as the key indicator in identifying where social inclusion needs to be improved for children and young people in the borough i.e.: -

- be healthy
- stay safe
- enjoy and achieve
- make a positive contribution
- achieve economic well-being

In order to achieve these outcomes it is necessary to identify and evaluate organisations, services and issues which can aid the satisfactory delivery of each outcome.

Outcomes	Strategies to aid outcomes
Be healthy	• Healthy lifestyles (physical activity, nutrition/diet). • Health support for disabled children, those with medical or mental health needs. • Multi agency agreement/protocols for specific vulnerable groups. • Access to youth friendly health services i.e.: - (contraception, smoking, drugs advice etc).

Outcomes	Strategies to aid outcomes
Be healthy (cont.)	• Health care for traveller children and asylum seekers. All of the above will involve the establishment of equitable health care standard e.g. for CAMHS linked to healthy schools and extended schools.
Stay safe	• Protect children from harm and abuse • Look at young people as victims of crime. • Look at law on anti-social behaviour (i.e. low level ball games against wall) including the use of ASBOs – behaviour prior to ASBOs – intervening early to prevent ASBOs and potential exclusions. • Safer school initiatives. • Access to health and other services for children experiencing domestic violence. • Consider the tension between Local Authority responding to concerns raised and behaviour of children and young people and their role as corporate parents; e.g. perception of youth crime verses reality.

Enjoy and achieve	• Building capacity in schools to facilitate full inclusion.
	• Providing the following services: -
	  ▪ open spaces
	  ▪ anti-social behaviour activities
	  ▪ street sports
	• Look at: -
	  ▪ inequalities; values; pledges and impact of current services.
	• Providing better leisure facilities for young people.
	
	All of the above may necessitate: -
	• Developing additional resources in schools;
	• Developing high impact projects through: -
	  ▪ inclusive classrooms
	  ▪ success for all
	  ▪ mosques
	  ▪ health services
	• Developing strategies and position statements for achieving a reduction in anti-social behaviour.
	
	It will be necessary to examine the services already provided to ascertain the appropriations of the volume and quality of services such as: -
	  ▪ Sports
	  ▪ Coaching development
	  ▪ Ready steady summer
	  ▪ Play schemes
	  ▪ IT techno bus
	  ▪ Sure Start – extended schools/children's centres
	  ▪ New children's director

Outcomes	Strategies to aid outcomes

Make a positive contribution	• Empowerment awareness raising and extending real consultation with young people
	• Listen to young people/encourage participation
	• Support for early years childcare and extended schools
	• Assess services for looked after children and children in need
	• Look at inequalities, its impact and lack of joined up services and corporate parenting
	
	All of the above will involve services being evaluated for their involvement in achieving this outcome: - services such as:
	    ▪ Youth opinions unite
	    ▪ Children's fund
	    ▪ Framework for gathering views
	    ▪ Ethical standards of corporate parenting
	Are we listening sufficiently to children and young people e.g. schools undertaking self evaluation to include views of children and young people and parents. Are CYP involved sufficiently in decision making and ethical standards for the local authority as corporate parents?

Achieving economic well-being	Look at the following to ensure adequacy of provision to meet a range of health, social and emotional needs of CWP. • Employment • Work experience • Preparation for qualifications • Transitions • Uptake of free school meals • Housing adaptations • Grants/financial support The above will necessitate looking at the multi agency Transition Group; the value and preparation for working life of work experience; the broader definitions of qualifications.

3.2 From the above, it is possible to group and highlight issues which have a significant impact on the Borough.

3.3 Consultations with officers have highlighted the following issues as the most pressing not already being addressed by Scrutiny:

3.3.1 Multi-agency working

The green paper *Every Child Matters* published in September 2003 laid out the Government's vision for the integration of key services in a single child-focused organisation. The consultation responses endorsed the view that better outcomes would be secured by services working together more effectively on the front line to meet the needs of children, young people

and their families. The Children Act 2004 created the statutory basis for this vision to be made reality, and *Every Child Matters: Change for Children*, published in December 2004, set out details of the necessary changes which will need to be made in order to promote children's trust arrangements in local areas.

Recent research about the benefits of multi-agency working highlights the following areas of benefits:

- Improving outcomes for children and families

- Benefits for staff and services

- Providing what children, young people and families say they want

3.3.2   Antisocial Behaviour

Anti-social behaviour (ASB) is the term given to a number of unacceptable behaviours for which a small minority of people are responsible, which adversely affect the quality of life of residents in our communities. Problems include; graffiti, littering and youth nuisance.

The Government has attached great importance to tackling ASB, and has introduced a range of new measures to deal with it, including Anti-Social Behaviour Orders (ASBOs) and Acceptable Behaviour Contracts (ABCs). However, they also recognise that early intervention strategies are vital in order to effectively tackle the issue.

3.3.3   Consultation with children and young people

The Government strongly supports the effective involvement of children, young people and their families or carers in the development and running of all children's trusts. Increasingly acceptance of the principle of children's involvement is being turned into practice through a variety of participation activities across a range of organisations.

However, sometimes it is difficult to translate commitment into practice that is meaningful for children and young people, effective in bringing about change and which becomes embedded within the organisational ethos.

4.   **Recommendations**

4.1   That the Children's Services and Lifelong Learning Scrutiny and Performance Panel:

a) Receive the information regarding the Social Inclusion agenda.
b) Re-establish the Social Inclusion working group for the municipal year 2005/6.
c) Set a work programme the Social Inclusion working group for the municipal year 2005/6, based on the 3 groupings identified above.