

Wiltshire Council

Children's Services Select Committee

17 March 2011

Task Group updates

1. Further Education in the Salisbury Area Task Group

Membership: Cllr Mary Douglas
Cllr Jon Hubbard
Cllr Bill Moss
Cllr Pip Ridout
Cllr Jacqui Lay
Dr Mike Thompson (Chairman)

The task group's second meeting is scheduled for 10th March. An update on this will be provided at the Committee meeting.

2. Major Contracts Task Group

Membership: Cllr Peter Colmer
Cllr Jon Hubbard
Cllr Jacqui Lay
Cllr Bill Moss (Chairman)
Cllr Carole Soden

The Task Group met on the 4th March 2011 to review Sure Start Children's Centres and the progress to retendering the current contracts. Councillors were supportive of the work undertaken in letting the contracts and acknowledged the work to keep centres open in a challenging financial situation. In addition the Task Group wished to acknowledge the performance of staff during a period of difficult circumstances.

The next meeting of the Task Group will be in September to review the performance of Quarriers.

3. Placements for Looked After Children (LAC) Task Group

Membership: Cllr Peter Colmer
Cllr Andrew Davis
Cllr Jon Hubbard (Chairman)
Rev Alice Kemp
Cllr Bill Moss
Cllr Helen Osborn

A separate report on the work of the Task Group and proposals for its continuation is attached at Agenda Item 11.

The Task Group held its fourth meeting on 18 February. This included a tour of the new Fostering and Adoption Centre on the Whitehorse Business Park. Here, members had an opportunity to ask questions of officers involved in the adoption and fostering process.

Members were also shown a DVD produced by the Council describing the real life experiences of Wiltshire children in the adoptions/fostering process. The Task Group were extremely impressed by the film and have made a recommendation that it is shown to all members before the next meeting of Full Council.

Members also received a briefing on the Council's responsibility regarding 'private fostering' (i.e. young people living long-term with friends or family) and considered the latest KPI figures for looked after children.

4. Special School and Post-16 SEN Task Group

Membership: Cllr Carole Soden
Rev Alice Kemp
Cllr Graham Payne
Cllr Anthony Trotman

After some initial difficulty, membership has now been finalised for this Task Group and the date of its first meeting will be confirmed shortly.

5. Rapid Scrutiny Exercise: Green Paper – Children & Young People with SEN and Disabilities

Membership (TBC): Cllr Paul Darby
Cllr Jon Hubbard
Rev Alice Kemp
Cllr Jacqui Lay
Cllr Helen Osborn
Cllr Carole Soden

In September, the Committee agreed to undertake a rapid scrutiny exercise to respond to the Government's Green Paper on Children & Young People with SEN and Disabilities. The Green Paper is yet to be released.

Paul Kelly – Designated Scrutiny Officer and Scrutiny Manager

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