

PLEASE NOTE VENUE

CHILDREN'S SERVICES SCRUTINY FORUM AGENDA



Monday 5 November 2007

at 4.30 pm

**in the Baltic Suite, Hartlepool Maritime Experience,
Maritime Avenue, Hartlepool**

MEMBERS: CHILDREN'S SERVICES SCRUTINY FORUM:

Councillors S Cook, Coward, Fleet, Griffin, A E Lilley, London, Plant, Preece, Shaw, Simmons and Worthy

Co-opted Members:

Elizabeth Barraclough and David Relton

Leigh Bradley, Jonathan Simpson, Chris Lund, Kelly Goulding, Cassie Jeffries and Gillian Pounder

Resident Representatives:

John Cambridge, Evelyn Leck and Michael Ward

- 1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**
- 2. TO RECEIVE ANY DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST BY MEMBERS**
- 3. MINUTES**
 - 3.1 To confirm the minutes of the meeting held on 1 October 2007.
- 4. SHORT ICE BREAKER EXERCISE**
- 5. RESPONSES FROM THE COUNCIL, THE EXECUTIVE OR COMMITTEES OF THE COUNCIL TO FINAL REPORTS OF THIS FORUM**

No items.

PLEASE NOTE VENUE

6. CONSIDERATION OF REQUEST FOR SCRUTINY REVIEWS REFERRED VIA SCRUTINY CO-ORDINATING COMMITTEE

No items.

7. FORWARD PLAN

No items.

8. CONSIDERATION OF PROGRESS REPORTS / BUDGET AND POLICY FRAMEWORK DOCUMENTS

No items.

9. ITEMS FOR DISCUSSION

Scrutiny Investigation into 'Access to Recreation Activities for Children and Young People in Hartlepool'

9.1 Evidence from the West View Project:-

(a) Covering Report - *Scrutiny Support Officer*; and

(b) Evidence from Rebecca Wise (Participation and Outreach Worker) and eight service users from the West View Project.

9.2 Evidence from a Selection of Providers of Organised Recreation Activities in Hartlepool:-

(a) Covering Report - *Scrutiny Support Officer*; and

(b) Verbal Evidence from a Selection of Providers of Organised Recreation Activities in Hartlepool (Subject to Response from Written Invitations).

Sustainability of Externally Funded Community Initiatives in Schools

9.3 Scoping Report – *Scrutiny Support Officer*

10. ANY OTHER ITEMS WHICH THE CHAIRMAN CONSIDERS ARE URGENT

ITEMS FOR INFORMATION

Date of Next Meeting Monday, 19 November 2007 commencing at 5.00pm in the Red Room, Avondale Centre, Dyke House, Raby Road, Hartlepool

CHILDREN'S SERVICES SCRUTINY FORUM

MINUTES

1 October 2007

The meeting commenced at 4.30 pm at Owton Manor Community Centre,
Wynyard Road, Hartlepool

Present:

Councillor: Jane Shaw (In the Chair)

Councillors: Shaun Cook, Mary Fleet, Sheila Griffin, Frances
London, Arthur Preece and Chris Simmons

Co-opted Members:

David Relton and Liz Barraclough

Resident Representatives:

John Cambridge and Evelyn Leck

Young People Representatives:

Leigh Bradley, Kelly Goulding, Hannah Shaw, Chris Lund and
Judith Kelsey.

Officers:

Sue Johnson, Assistant Director, Children's Services
Department
Geraldine Chapman, KS3 Strategy Co-ordinator
Ruth Chalkey, Secondary AFL and Literacy Co-ordinator
Andrew Pearson, Parks and Countryside Manager
Peter Davies, Principal Youth Officer
Tracey Liveras, Young People and Play Co-ordinator
Dawn Gilderoy, Out of School Learning and Extended Schools
Co-ordinator
Charlotte Burnham, Scrutiny Manager
Joan Wilkins, Scrutiny Support Officer
Angela Hunter, Principal Democratic Services Officer

Also Present:

Beth Hawkrige, Barnardos
Alex Sedgewick, Belle Vue Community, Sports and Youth Centre
Nikki Pearson, Barnardos/Hartlepool Young Voices
Jill Bousfield, Barnardos/Hartlepool Young Voices
Dave Wise, West View Project
Rebecca Wise, West View Project

27. Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were submitted on behalf of Councillors Alison Lilley and Michelle Plant.

28. Declarations of interest by Members

None.

29. Minutes of the meeting held on 20 August 2007

Confirmed subject to the addition of co-opted member Elizabeth Barraclough and resident representative Michael Ward's apologies.

30. Responses from the Council, the Executive or Committees of the Council to Final Reports of this Forum

None.

31. Scrutiny Investigation into 'Access to Recreation Activities for Children and Young People in Hartlepool' - Results of Existing Consultations and Research *(Senior Children's Services Officer/Scrutiny Support Officer)*

The Scrutiny Support Officer presented a report which provided information on the results of existing consultations and research and sought further consideration of the value of refining the remit of the Forum's investigation from the categories listed below:

- (i) sport;
- (ii) arts and culture (eg museums);
- (iii) organised activities (eg scouts guides etc);
- (iv) free play (eg meeting friends); and
- (v) other interests (eg stamp collecting, politics, craft/model making).

Included within the report were the results of existing consultations and research including a National Youth Agency survey as well as local consultation on the provision of recreational activities within Hartlepool. As part of Hartlepool's Play Strategy and Action Plan, consultation had been undertaken with children, young people, parents and carers, and local communities to ascertain what children and young people feel were the barriers to accessing recreation activities in the town and how these barriers could be removed and this was detailed in the report.

As requested by the Forum details of the take up of organised activities in Hartlepool was provided in the report. This reflected that there was a downward trend in the take up of these activities but members of the Forum

were asked to note that this was a national trend.

A discussion ensued in which the following issues were raised.

- (i) Clarification was sought on the comparison statistics provided in the report in relation to the provision of some activities within the Mill House Leisure Centre. The Parks and Countryside Manager informed Members that the comparative figures were for two different periods of time hence the lower figures for the second period.
- (ii) There was concern expressed about the risk of exclusion of children with disabilities by not being able to access the same facilities as everyone else. The Parks and Countryside Officer indicated that the Local Authority had a Disability Sports Officer to ensure activities were available and that the Authority had recently received the 'Count Me In' accreditation for advocating inclusiveness.

Members were advised that this report included baseline information to enable consideration to be given to which categories should be examined in more detail.

Recommendation

Members noted the report and delayed consideration of the value of refining the remit of the Forum's investigation, in terms of categories of recreation to be explored, until the end of the meeting.

32. Scrutiny Investigation into 'Access to Recreation Activities for Children and Young People in Hartlepool' – Evidence from Young People's Representatives Co-opted onto the Forum *(Scrutiny Support Officer/Young People's Representatives)*

The Scrutiny Support Officer presented a report which informed Members that the young people representatives co-opted onto the Forum had undertaken a 'Mind Mapping' exercise in relation to the Forum's on-going investigation. The young people representatives in attendance presented the results of this exercise after the undertaking of an ice-breaking exercise.

The 'Mind Mapping' exercise had identified that from the areas proposed for consideration, the areas the young people would wish the investigation to concentrate on were free play, organised activities and other interests. Whilst undertaking this exercise the merits of splitting the investigations across the suggested age groups were discussed and the young people felt that this would not add any value to the investigation. The exercise had also looked at the barriers to accessing recreational activities and had found that transport, location, costs and the weather and dark nights were some of the barriers faced by young people wishing to access recreation activities. Although the

young people recognised that sport was well served in Hartlepool for young people, it was felt that there would be some cross-over in the areas suggested for consideration in relation to sport and arts and culture.

The young people representatives expressed caution that the investigation could be sidetracked by the issue of anti-social behaviour and suggested that members of the Forum were mindful of this.

There was some concern among members of the Forum that sporting activities were not as well served as the young people perceived. However, it was acknowledged that there was some cross-over among all categories.

The young people representatives were thanked for their informative presentation.

Recommendation

Members noted the presentation.

33. Scrutiny Investigation into 'Access to Recreation Activities for Children and Young People in Hartlepool' – Evidence from Hartlepool's Member of Parliament *(Scrutiny Support Officer/Hartlepool's Member of Parliament)*

The Scrutiny Support Officer introduced Hartlepool's Member of Parliament (MP) who had been invited to attend this meeting to provide evidence in relation to the Forum's investigation. The MP stated that he felt that Hartlepool was very well served in relation to recreational activities and that the Forum should not lose sight of this. However, the key issue for members of the Forum to consider was to identify and provide locations for young people to meet in a safe, clean and warm environment. One example of this was the proposed smoothy bar at one of the secondary schools in the town, although whether this would prove cost effective in all areas was questioned. It was noted that consideration needed to be given to the hard to reach groups and the barriers that prevent them accessing recreational activities. The MP challenged the local authority to be innovative and urged the mainstreaming of no strings attached funding for all recreational activities therefore removing the reliance on short term funding arrangements.

A discussion ensued in which the following issues were raised.

- (i) Would the investment in youth clubs be a way forward? The MP responded that he felt that the level of recreational activity in relation to sport and culture was relatively high in the town, but that there were a lot of community facilities many people in the town were unaware of. Promotion of this kind of facility was key to its success.
- (ii) Clarification was sought on the status of Café 177 a facility provided for young people within the town centre. The MP suggested that

- members of the Forum would benefit from a site visit to this facility as part of this investigation.
- (iii) It had been noted that some forms of funding required accreditation of the young people as part of the package. The MP felt that this was an area that the Government could be challenged on and added that it was important that consideration was given to the provision of 'down-time' for young people also.
 - (iv) It was noted that there were many recreational activities provided at the Belle Vue Community, Sports and Youth Centre but that the take-up of sporting activities of children from working-class backgrounds was low. The MP fully supported this view and suggested that the facility provided at the Belle Vue Centre should be replicated in other areas of the town. It was recognised that barriers to the take-up of recreational activities would form an important part of this investigation.
 - (v) It was noted that young people needed appropriate levels of support when undertaking recreational activities and that a national survey had highlighted that one of the biggest factors taken into account by young people when deciding whether to undertake any recreational activity was the support offered to them.

Following the discussions, it was proposed that the young people's representatives' suggestions should be supported and the following areas examined in detail as part of this investigation:

- Organised Activities (eg Scouts and Guides);
- Free play (eg meeting friends); and
- Other interests (eg stamp collecting, politics, craft/model making)

The MP added that the town had a huge opportunity and challenges ahead in view of the Building Schools for the Future Programme to bring the level of education for children in the town into the 21st century. In conclusion, the MP stated that the local authority had the responsibility to determine the provision of recreational activities within the Children and Young People's Plan and determine if this provision was a strategic priority whilst ensuring appropriate resources were made available for this.

Hartlepool's MP was thanked for his attendance and for answering questions.

Recommendation

As part of the scrutiny investigation into 'Access to Recreation Activities for Children and Young People in Hartlepool, it was agreed to concentrate on the following categories for 5-19 year olds:

- Organised Activities (eg Scouts and Guides);
- Free play (eg meeting friends); and
- Other interests (eg stamp collecting, politics, craft/model making)

DUE TO SEVERAL MEMBERS HAVING TO LEAVE THE MEETING, THE REAMINDER OF THE MEETING WAS INQUORATE.

34. Consideration of request for scrutiny reviews referred via Scrutiny Co-ordinating Committee – Scrutiny Topic Referral from the South Neighbourhood Consultative Forum – ‘Sustainability of Externally Funded Community Initiatives in Schools’ *(Scrutiny Support Officer)*

The Scrutiny Support Officer presented a report which informed Members of the redirection by the Scrutiny Co-ordinating Committee of a referral from the South Neighbourhood Consultative Forum relating to the ‘Sustainability of Externally Funded Community Initiatives in Schools’.

Due to the very recent receipt of confirmation of the redirection of the referral, insufficient time was available to scope the investigation before this meeting. However, the Chair had given approval for the scoping report to be considered at the next meeting of the forum on 5 November 2007.

Recommendation

That the referral and timetable or submission of the investigation's scoping report be noted.

35. Forward Plan

No items.

36. Consideration of progress reports/budget and policy framework documents – Six Monthly Progress Report – Scrutiny Investigation into Raising Boys' Achievement – Bridging the Gender Gap – Action Plan *(Director of Children's Services)*

A representative from the Children's Services Department presented a report which provided Members with an update on the progress made in relation to the Raising Boys' Achievement Bridging the Gender Gap investigation six months after the Children's Services Scrutiny Forum made its recommendations. The action plan for this investigation was attached at Appendix A.

Recommendation

That the progress to date be noted.

37. Consideration of progress reports/budget and policy framework documents – Scrutiny of the Progress of the Children and Young People's Plan (*Director of Children's Services*)

The Assistant Director, Children's Services presented a report which informed members of the Forum of the outcome of the review of the first year of the Children and Young People's Plan (CYPP). A copy of the presentation was distributed to all members of the Forum for their information.

Recommendation

The presentation was noted.

38. Any Other Business

Members of the Forum were informed that Hartlepool Young Voices and the Children's Services Scrutiny Forum had been nominated for a Children's Services award and were through to the finalist stage for Council of the Year Award. Congratulations were passed onto all involved in this process.

JANE SHAW

CHAIRMAN

CHILDREN'S SERVICES SCRUTINY FORUM

5 November 2007



Report of: Scrutiny Support Officer

Subject: SCRUTINY INVESTIGATION INTO 'ACCESS TO RECREATION ACTIVITIES FOR CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE IN HARTLEPOOL' - EVIDENCE FROM THE WEST VIEW PROJECT – COVERING REPORT

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

1.1 To inform Members of the Forum that representatives from the West View Project have been invited to attend this meeting to provide evidence in relation to the ongoing investigation into 'Access to Recreation Activities for Children and Young People in Hartlepool'.

2. BACKGROUND INFORMATION

2.1 Members will recall that the Forum, at its meeting on the 16 July 2007, approved the Terms of Reference and Potential Areas of Inquiry/Sources of Evidence for its investigation into access to recreation activities for children and young people in Hartlepool. The categories of recreation activities to be explored during the investigation were further defined by the Forum on the 1 October 2007 as being:-

- (i) Organised activities (e.g. Scouts and Guides, etc.);
- (ii) Free play (e.g. meeting friends); and
- (iii) Other Interests (e.g. stamp collecting, politics, craft/model making).

2.2 Each of these categories of recreation activities will be looked at in greater detail over the coming months, with emphasis today to be placed upon the provision of organised activities. Members have over recent meetings received detailed information on the types of organised activities provided in Hartlepool. The results of existing local consultations / surveys in relation to young people's needs in terms of recreation, the barriers they experience in accessing them and overall usage have also been provided. Members may find the information previously provided useful in contributing to today's discussions.

- 2.3 As part of its investigation into 'Access to Recreation Activities for Children and Young People in Hartlepool' the Children's Services Scrutiny Forum is keen to hear the views of those groups who provide organised recreation activities and the children and young people who take part in these activities. To assist in obtaining these views a Participation and Outreach Worker, and eight service users, from the West View Project have been invited to attend this meeting to provide evidence on:-
- (i) The services / activities they provide and who they are aimed at;
 - (ii) Who takes advantage of the services / activities;
 - (iii) What the future holds for the group;
 - (iv) What their service users feel are the barriers to accessing your services / activities; and
 - (v) What has been done to make their services / activities more accessible.
- 2.4 During this evidence gathering session it is suggested that responses should be sought to the following key questions:-
- (a) What are your views on the level, and standard, of provision of organised recreation activities for children and young people in Hartlepool?
 - (b) What would you like to see done to improve the provision of organised recreation services / activities in Hartlepool?
 - (c) Do you have any views in relation to 'Free Play' which could be fed into the Forums discussions on the issue at the meeting on the 21 January 2008?
 - (d) Do you have any other views / information, which you feel, may be useful to Members in forming their recommendations to Cabinet?

3. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 3.1 That Members note the presentation and consider the information provided during the formulation of the Forums final report.

Contact Officers:- Joan Wilkins – Scrutiny Support Officer
Chief Executive's Department - Corporate Strategy
Hartlepool Borough Council
Tel: 01429 523339
Email: joan.wilkins@hartlepool.gov.uk

BACKGROUND PAPERS

The following background paper was used in the preparation of this report:-

- (i) Scoping Report – Access to Recreation Facilities for Young People in Hartlepool (Children's Services Scrutiny Forum – 16 July 2007);
- (ii) Setting the Scene Report – Access to Recreation Facilities for Young People in Hartlepool (Children's Services Scrutiny Forum – 20 August 2007); and
- (iii) Results of Existing Consultations and Research - Access to Recreation Activities for Children and Young People in Hartlepool (Children's Services Scrutiny Forum – 1 October 2007).

CHILDREN'S SERVICES SCRUTINY FORUM

5 November 2007



Report of: Scrutiny Support Officer

Subject: SCRUTINY INVESTIGATION INTO 'ACCESS TO RECREATION ACTIVITIES FOR CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE IN HARTLEPOOL' - EVIDENCE FROM A SELECTION OF PROVIDERS OF ORGANISED RECREATION ACTIVITIES IN HARTLEPOOL (SUBJECT TO RESPONSE FROM PRESS RELEASE AND WRITTEN INVITATION) – COVERING REPORT

1. PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

- 1.1 To inform Members of the Forum that representatives groups providing organised recreation activities, including uniformed organisations, in Hartlepool have been invited to attend this meeting to provide evidence in relation to the ongoing investigation into 'Access to Recreation Activities for Children and Young People in Hartlepool'.

2. BACKGROUND INFORMATION

- 2.1 As part of its investigation into 'Access to Recreation Activities for Children and Young People in Hartlepool' the Children's Services Scrutiny Forum is keen to hear the views of those groups who provide organised recreation activities and the children and young people who take part in these activities. To assist in obtaining these views written invitations have been extended to groups identified by the Forum during its scoping of the investigation. In addition to this, a wider invitation has also been extended to groups in Hartlepool through a recent press release.
- 2.2 During this evidence gathering session it is suggested that responses should be sought to the following key questions:-

- (a) What are your views on the level, and standard, of provision of organised recreation activities for children and young people in Hartlepool?
- (b) What services / activities do you provide and who they are aimed at?
- (c) What do your service users feel are the barriers to accessing organised recreation services / activities?
- (d) What have you done to try and make your recreation services / activities more accessible?
- (e) What would you like to see done to improve the provision of organised recreation services / activities in Hartlepool?
- (f) What does the future hold for your group?
- (g) Do you have any views in relation to 'Free Play' which could be fed into the Forums discussions on the issue at the meeting on the 21 January 2008?
- (h) Do you have any other views / information, which you feel, may be useful to Members in forming their recommendations to Cabinet?

3. RECOMMENDATION

- 3.1 That the Forum considers the views of those in attendance at this meeting in relation to the questions outlined in Section 2.2 of this report.

Contact Officer: - Joan Wilkins – Scrutiny Support Officer
Chief Executive's Department - Corporate Strategy
Hartlepool Borough Council
Tel: 01429 523339

Email: joan.wilkins@hartlepool.gov.uk

BACKGROUND PAPERS

The following background paper was used in the preparation of this report:-

- (i) Scoping Report – Access to Recreation Facilities for Young People in Hartlepool (Children's Services Scrutiny Forum – 16 July 2007);
- (ii) Setting the Scene Report – Access to Recreation Facilities for Young People in Hartlepool (Children's Services Scrutiny Forum – 20 August 2007);

- (iii) Results of Existing Consultations and Research - Access to Recreation Activities for Children and Young People in Hartlepool (Children's Services Scrutiny Forum – 1 October 2007).

CHILDREN'S SERVICES SCRUTINY FORUM

5 November 2007



Report of: Scrutiny Support Officer

Subject: SCRUTINY INVESTIGATION INTO SUSTAINABILITY OF EXTERNALLY FUNDED COMMUNITY INITIATIVES IN SCHOOLS – SCOPING REPORT

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 To make proposals to Members of the Children's Services Scrutiny Forum for their forthcoming investigation into 'Sustainability of Externally Funded Community Initiatives in Schools'.

2. BACKGROUND INFORMATION

- 2.1 At the meeting of the South Neighbourhood Consultative Forum on 30 March 2007 the issue of 'Space for Sport and Art Funding' was discussed. Six of Hartlepool's Primary Schools had applied for funding of this nature (through Sport England) and four (Owton Manor, West View, Stranton and Brougham) were successful in receiving funding to go ahead with the scheme. These schemes were geared predominantly towards school usage but also included some community usage as part of the objectives of the funding.
- 2.2 Members of the South Neighbourhood Consultative Forum discussed the use of the funding at Owton Manor Primary School, in particular, which was spent on extending the gym, an art gallery and a community craft room. Works took place in 2003/04 and it was opened to the public in 2004. With no revenue funds linked to the grant it was the responsibility of the school to ensure the resource was managed and marketed effectively. Consequently, the school appointed a sports and arts development officer on a fixed term contract. In addition to the capital funds a small amount of revenue funding had been identified. However, funding for the scheme had now run out and the manager had left the centre and the school decided it had no alternative but to temporarily close the facilities.

- 2.3 During further discussions of the issue it was considered in the context of the development of Children's Centres and Extended Schools. Consequently, the South Neighbourhood Consultative Forum agreed the following referral to Scrutiny:-

Scrutiny should examine in detail the role of schools and the meaning of extended schools and the implications for sustainability and accountability of community usage.

- 2.4 The referral was considered by Scrutiny Co-ordinating Committee at its meeting on 18 May 2007. It was agreed that it should be accepted for inclusion in the 'wish list' of items from which the Children's Services Scrutiny Forum would choose its 2007/8 Work Programme. Subsequently, Members of this Forum considered the above referral from the South Neighbourhood Consultative Forum during discussions of the Forum's topic selection under the 'Determining the Work Programme 2007/08' process at its meeting on 11 June 2007. In considering this referral, the Forum was of the view that it was inappropriate to undertake such an investigation at this time as a new Extended Schools Strategy had recently been implemented in April 2007. Members argued that there would be greater value in undertaking a review of the effectiveness of the new strategy next year and agreed that the issue would be included in the Forum's list of possible Work Programme items for consideration in 2008/09.
- 2.5 At the meeting of the South Neighbourhood Forum on 10 August 2007 Members discussed the Children's Services Scrutiny Forum's decision in relation to this issue. Consequently, a discussion followed in which it was argued that community spaces in schools are drawing funding from external funding streams and that once the initial capital investment has been used, revenue costs are difficult to sustain, which results in limited availability / use of new community resources / spaces. This was cited as an example of a general problem that has emerged in localities and the South Neighbourhood Consultative Forum's concern was that this becomes a town-wide issue as future projects arise that are not part of mainstream funding provision and in time cease to continue.
- 2.6 Whilst, it was agreed that there is a distinction between projects initiated by local (external) service providers and those initiated by the local authority, it was suggested that Scrutiny can potentially 'add value' by exploring the issue in detail and examining what good practice currently exists for managing and sustaining grant maintained projects together with how the Council's community leadership role should be interpreted in relation to these types of projects. Consequently, the following revised wording for the referral to Scrutiny was put forward:-

Scrutiny should investigate the sustainability of externally funded community initiatives in schools.

- 2.7 The revised referral was considered by Scrutiny Co-ordinating Committee on 14 September 2007. It was agreed that an investigation into the referral should be led by the Children's Services Scrutiny Forum with invitations extended to Members of the Neighbourhood Services Scrutiny Forum where felt appropriate. Subsequently, at the meeting of the Children's Services Scrutiny Forum on 1 October 2007 Members noted a report on the referral, which also indicated a Scoping Report would be brought to this meeting.

3. OVERALL AIM OF THE SCRUTINY INVESTIGATION/ENQUIRY

- 3.1 To gain an understanding of the key issues involved in sustaining externally funded community initiatives in schools and suggest areas for improvement.

4. PROPOSED TERMS OF REFERENCE FOR THE SCRUTINY INVESTIGATION/ENQUIRY

- 4.1 The following Terms of Reference for the investigation are proposed:-

- (a) To gain an understanding of the role of the local authority in relation to sustaining externally funded community initiatives in schools;
- (b) To gain an understanding of the role of schools in relation to sustaining externally funded community initiatives in schools;
- (c) To consider, what good practice / guidance, if any, exists for sustaining externally funded community initiatives;
- (d) To explore the role of Sport England as the funding body for community initiatives in schools;
- (e) To consider how the Authority's community leadership role should be interpreted in terms of the sustainability of community initiatives in schools; and
- (f) To identify suggestions for improvement / future management processes geared to enhancing the sustainability of community funded initiatives, in schools.

5. POTENTIAL AREAS OF ENQUIRY/SOURCES OF EVIDENCE

- 5.1 Members of the Forum can request a range of evidential and comparative information throughout the Scrutiny review.

- 5.2 The Forum can invite a variety of people to attend to assist in the forming of a balanced and focused range of recommendations as follows:-

- (a) Portfolio Holder for Children's Services;

- (b) Officers from the Children's Services Department;
- (c) Independent Advice / guidance from consultant;
- (d) Head Teachers from Brougham, Owton Manor, Stranton and West View Primary Schools;
- (e) Ward Councillors; and
- (f) Resident Representatives.

6. COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT/DIVERSITY AND EQUALITY

- 6.1 Community engagement plays a crucial role in the Scrutiny process and paragraph 5.2 details who the Forum could involve. However, thought will need to be given to the structure in the way that the Forum wishes to encourage those views.
- 6.2 In addition, diversity issues have been considered in the background research for this enquiry under the Equality Standards for Local Government. As such the views of local diversity groups will be sought throughout the inquiry where felt appropriate and time allows. Consequently, consideration has been given as to how the views of people from minority communities of interest or heritage (for example, people with disabilities, people with learning disabilities, people with mental health problems, black and minority ethnic people, and Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender people), which may not be gathered through the usual community engagement routes, can be included over the course of the inquiry.

7. REQUEST FOR FUNDING FROM THE DEDICATED OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY BUDGET

- 7.1 Consideration has been given, through the background research for this scoping report, to the need to request funding from the dedicated Overview and Scrutiny budget to aid Members in their enquiry. At this stage a small amount of additional funding has been identified as being necessary to support Members in their investigation. Members may wish to consider the information provided in the pro forma attached at **Appendix A**, which outlines the criteria, and the reasons for seeking additional funding, on which a request to Scrutiny Co-ordinating Committee will be judged.

8. PROPOSED TIMETABLE OF THE SCRUTINY INVESTIGATION

- 8.1 Detailed below is the proposed timetable for the review to be undertaken, which may be changed at any stage:-

5 November 2007 – ‘Scoping Session’ - To formalise the process for the Forum’s investigation.

Early February 2008 (schedule an additional meeting for this item) – Formal meeting of the Forum to receive:-

- (i) Evidence from Portfolio Holder for Children’s Services;
- (ii) Evidence from Children’s Services Department
- (iii) Evidence from Head Teachers from Brougham, Owton Manor, Stranton and West View Primary Schools; and
- (iv) Evidence from External Consultant.

20 February 2008 – Consideration of Draft Final Report

14 March 2008 – Consideration of Final Report by the Scrutiny Co-ordinating Committee

14 April 2008 - Consideration of Final Report by the Cabinet

9. RECOMMENDATION

9.1 Members are recommended to agree the Children’s Services Scrutiny Forum’s remit of the Scrutiny investigation as outlined in the report.

Contact Officer: - Joan Wilkins – Scrutiny Support Officer
Chief Executive’s Department - Corporate Strategy
Hartlepool Borough Council
Tel: 01429 523 339
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BACKGROUND PAPERS

The following background papers were used in the preparation of this report:-

- (i) Minutes from the South Neighbourhood Consultative Forum from 30 March 2007 and 10 August 2007
- (ii) Children’s Services Scrutiny Forum Report – Determination of Work Programme 2007/8 (11 June 2007).
- (iii) Minutes from Children’s Services Scrutiny Forum from 11 June 2007.

- (iv) Scrutiny Co-ordinating Committee Report – Scrutiny Topic Referral from the South Neighbourhood Consultative Forum – ‘Sustainability of Externally Funded Schools’ from 14 September 2007.
- (v) Minutes from Scrutiny Co-ordinating Committee from 18 May and 14 September 2007.

APPENDIX A

**PRO-FORMA TO REQUEST FUNDING TO SUPPORT
CURRENT SCRUTINY INVESTIGATION**

<p>Title of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee:</p> <p>Children's Services Scrutiny Forum.</p>
<p>Title of the current scrutiny investigation for which funding is requested:</p> <p>Sustainability of Externally Funded Community Initiatives in Schools.</p>
<p>To clearly identify the purpose for which additional support is required:</p> <p>Given the congested work programme of this Forum and the tight timescales for completing this review, the use of an independent / external witness should enable the Forum to complete its evidence gathering for this investigation within one meeting.</p>
<p>To outline indicative costs to be incurred as a result of the additional support:</p> <p>Approx £300</p>
<p>To outline any associated timescale implications:</p> <p>February 2008</p>
<p>To outline the 'added value' that may be achieved by utilising the additional support as part of the undertaking of the Scrutiny Investigation:</p> <p>Enables Forum to complete the investigation within tight timescales and provide independent advice and information to the Forum. In addition, the external witness that has been identified has experience of both working for Sport England and also of the locality itself.</p>

To outline any requirements / processes to be adhered to in accordance with the Council's Financial Procedure Rules / Standing Orders:

Meets the requirements set out in the Council's Financial Procedure Rules, Part 4 of the Constitution, Section 2.7.1, p105-6.

To outline the possible disadvantages of not utilising the additional support during the undertaking of the Scrutiny Investigation:

The 'added value' (highlighted above) that the independent advice provided through the additional support brings to the Forum, in terms of aiding Members to complete a fairly complex review within tight timescales, would not be lost.

To outline any possible alternative means of additional support outside of this proposal:

None have been identified at this stage.