

## **CITY COUNCIL – 14 SEPTEMBER 2015**

### **REPORT OF THE LEADER**

#### **CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE SCRUTINY COMMITTEE**

##### **1 SUMMARY**

- 1.1 Councils who operate a model of executive governance have the power to establish Overview and Scrutiny Committees under the Local Government Act 2000.
- 1.2 Council is asked to establish the Children and Young People Scrutiny Committee to provide robust scrutiny of issues and services relevant to the wellbeing and safeguarding of children and young people in Nottingham.
- 1.3 The proposed terms of reference and proposed membership of the Children and Young People Scrutiny Committee are included as an appendix to this report.

##### **2 RECOMMENDATIONS**

- 2.1 To establish the Children and Young People Scrutiny Committee with the terms of reference and membership detailed in Appendix 1, with the date of the first meeting to be confirmed.

##### **3 REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS**

- 3.1 The Committee will provide robust scrutiny of issues relevant to the wellbeing and safeguarding of children and young people, following recommendations made in the Council's Ofsted Inspection in April 2014, and the Jay and Casey Reports (Child Sexual Exploitation in Rotherham).
- 3.2 The work of the Committee will aim to drive and support services to find solutions to problems, set aspirational targets and instil a sense of public confidence.

##### **4 OTHER OPTIONS CONSIDERED IN MAKING RECOMMENDATIONS**

- 4.1 To establish a sub-committee of Overview and Scrutiny Committee. This option was discounted in favour of establishing a standalone committee not restricted to those already members of Overview and Scrutiny Committee. Establishing a standalone committee provides an opportunity to open up the membership to more councillors, and therefore, wider engagement in scrutiny.
- 4.2 To include the wellbeing and safeguarding of children and young people in the work programme for Overview and Scrutiny Committee. However, the Overview and Scrutiny Committee's work programme for 2015/16 is already at capacity and a standalone committee will have the ability to schedule regular children and young people specific scrutiny whilst carrying out more focussed reviews.

##### **5 BACKGROUND (INCLUDING OUTCOMES OF CONSULTATION)**

- 5.1 The Committee will meet on a bi-monthly basis and have a responsibility in relation to children and young people to:

- (i) provide an appropriate and robust level of challenge to those in authority and hold local decision-makers, including the Council's Executive, to account for their decisions, action and performance;
- (ii) review policy and contribute to the development of new policies and strategies of the Council and other local decision-makers where they impact on Nottingham's children and young people;
- (iii) explore any matters affecting Nottingham's children and young people;
- (iv) make reports and recommendations to relevant local agencies in relation to the delivery of their functions, including the Council and its Executive, and monitor implementation of all accepted recommendations.

5.2 The Jay and Casey Reports on Child Sexual Exploitation, and how it was addressed in Rotherham, drew specific attention to the need for better local authority scrutiny to contribute to the protection of children and young people, through listening to local people, influencing policy and holding decision makers to account.

5.3 During its inspection of services for children in need of help and protection in April 2014, Ofsted noted that whilst Nottingham City Council's Overview and Scrutiny Committee receives a copy of the Nottingham City Safeguarding Children Board's (NCSCB) Annual Report, the governance arrangements were not sufficiently robust and the Committee does not hear directly from the NCSCB independent chair on safeguarding issues.

5.4 Consultation has taken place with the chair of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee who is in agreement with the recommendation at 2.1. The Committee's terms of reference dictate that the Chair of Overview and Scrutiny Committee will also chair the Children and Young People Scrutiny Committee.

## **6 FINANCE COMMENTS (INCLUDING IMPLICATIONS AND VALUE FOR MONEY)**

6.1 The proposals in this report have no significant financial implications for the Council. The terms of reference for this Committee and the servicing of this Committee can be accommodated within the existing resource of Constitutional Services.

## **7 LEGAL AND PROCUREMENT COMMENTS (INCLUDING RISK MANAGEMENT ISSUES, AND LEGAL, CRIME AND DISORDER ACT AND PROCUREMENT IMPLICATIONS)**

7.1 There are no specific legal comments in relation to these proposals.

The Independent Inquiry commissioned by Rotherham Metropolitan Borough Council (RMBC) into child sexual exploitation (CSE) conducted by Professor Alexis Jay OBE made 15 recommendations. Whilst they are specific to RMBC, they are also pertinent for all councils to benchmark their own services and responses to CSE.

In response, the Secretary of State appointed Louise Casey CB under section.10 of the Local Government Act 1999 to carry out an inspection of the compliance of RMBC with the requirements of Part 1 of that Act in relation to amongst other functions, specifically

governance and children and young people. It was a scathing report and RMBC subsequently came under central government control.

Claire Knowles  
Solicitor  
Team Leader  
Children and Adult Legal Services  
21 August 2015

**8 EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT (EIA)**

8.1 An EIA is not required as the report does not relate to new or changing services or policies.

**9 LIST OF BACKGROUND PAPERS OTHER THAN PUBLISHED WORKS OR THOSE DISCLOSING CONFIDENTIAL OR EXEMPT INFORMATION**

9.1 None.

**10 PUBLISHED DOCUMENTS REFERRED TO IN COMPILING THIS REPORT**

10.1 Nottingham City Council's Constitution

**COUNCILLOR JON COLLINS  
LEADER OF THE COUNCIL**