

Agenda item:

[No.]

Cabinet

21 July 2009

Report Title. APPOINTMENT OF CABINET ADVISORY COMMITTEES

Report of Assistant Chief Executive (People and Organisational Development)

Signed :

Contact Officer : Richard Burbidge
Telephone: 020 8489 2923

Wards(s) affected: **Not applicable**

Report for: **Non Key Decision**

1. Purpose of the report

1.1 To establish the Corporate Parenting Advisory Committee and the Children's Safeguarding Committee with the membership, quorum and terms of reference as outlined in the report.

2. Introduction by Cabinet Member (Required)

2.1 It is vital that as a Council we have in place the necessary arrangements for ensuring we discharge our corporate parenting and child safeguarding arrangements. This report sets out in detail how will ensure that this is the case. The arrangements respond clearly to the issues which were raised in the JAR inspection at the end of 2008 in relation to our governance arrangements for corporate parenting and child safeguarding. I am sure all members who are nominated to these committees will recognise the importance of their participation to ensure our arrangements are as robust as they possibly can be.

3. State link(s) with Council Plan Priorities and actions and/or other Strategies:

3.1 Section 2 (Committees of the Cabinet) of Part Three Section D of the Council's Constitution provides that -

The Cabinet may delegate any of its functions to a Committee of the Cabinet. Committees of the Cabinet shall report to the Cabinet. The Cabinet may establish decision-making Committees, which may only include Cabinet Members. The Cabinet may establish advisory Committees, the membership of which need not be limited to Cabinet Members. The Cabinet may change them, abolish them, or create further ones, at its own discretion.

Committees established by the Cabinet shall be empowered to perform their functions with immediate effect unless the Cabinet imposes any express restriction when they are established. Unless stated otherwise, all Decision-Making Committees will continue in operation until expressly abolished by the Cabinet and all Advisory or Consultative Committees will continue in operation only until the first meeting of the Cabinet in the next municipal year following their establishment when they must be expressly renewed or they cease to exist.

The establishment, abolition or cessation of Committees and the amendment of their terms of reference will be reported to full Council in due course for noting in the Council's Constitution.

- 3.2 The Joint Area Review report into Haringey's Children Services identified the need to improve governance of children safeguarding arrangements. This report sets out proposals for the creation of two Advisory Panels to help strengthen the commitment and focus on the needs of children and the 5 outcomes within Every Child Matters.

4. Recommendations

- 4.1 That the Cabinet approve the proposals for the establishment of a Corporate Parenting Advisory Committee and a Children Safeguarding Policy and Practice Advisory Committee, their membership, quorum and terms of reference as detailed in paragraph 7.3 below.

5. Reason for recommendation(s)

- 5.1 To respond to the recommendations within the JAR Action in relation to improved governance of children safeguarding arrangements.

6. Other options considered

- 6.1 None considered

7. Summary

- 7.1 Provision exists for the Cabinet to establish advisory or consultative bodies the membership of which is not limited to Cabinet Members. The Joint Area Review report into Haringey's Children Services identified the need to improve governance of safeguarding arrangements for children and to this end it is proposed to establish two Cabinet Advisory Committees as detailed below.

Corporate Parenting Advisory Committee

Proposed Membership

Councillors Reith (Chair)
 Adamou
 Alexander
 Allison
 Engert
 C. Harris
 Patel

The Advisory Committee will also be supported by officer representatives from:

- Strategic and Community Housing Service
- Health Service
- Children and Young People Service

Quorum

The quorum will be 2 members.

Proposed Terms of Reference

- a. To be responsible for the Council's role as Corporate parent for those children and young people who are in care.
- b. To ensure the views of children in care are heard.
- c. To seek to ensure that the life chances of children in care are maximized in terms of health, educational attainment and access to training and employment to aid the transition to a secure and fulfilling adulthood.
- d. To ensure that the voice and needs of disabled children are identified and provided for.
- e. To provide an advocacy function within the Children's Trust and the Council on behalf of children in care.
- f. To monitor the quality of care provided by the Council to Children in Care
- g. To ensure that children leaving care have sustainable arrangements for their future wellbeing.

(These terms of reference will be subject to a review in April 2010).

The Advisory Committee will report to the Cabinet on a twice yearly basis and to the Council annually.

Children Safeguarding Policy and Practice Advisory Committee

Proposed Membership

Councillors: Jones (Chair)

Davies

Lister

Mallett

Oatway

Hilary Corrick (Non-Councillor Member - appointed by the Panel)

Quorum

The quorum will be three members.

Proposed Terms of Reference

The terms of reference are set out below:

- a. To examine and consider the effectiveness of the Council's policies and practice, including policies and practices in schools, children's homes and children's centres, relating to the safeguarding of children.
- b. To examine and consider the effectiveness of the arrangements for co-operation on child protection matters between partner agencies.
- c. To consider the Council's policies and performance relating to safeguarding through observing practice in Haringey and obtaining the views of key stakeholders (staff, families and children /young people) to attain a qualitative understanding of safeguarding practice.
- d. To make recommendations on these matters to the Cabinet or Cabinet Member for Children and Young People and Director of Children and Young People's Service in taking forward improvements to safeguarding of children.

The Chair will determine the Committee's procedures and the means for conveying the Committee's views to the Cabinet but, in the event of any dispute, the outcome will be determined by the majority vote of the Committee's membership with the Chair having a casting vote.

The terms of reference for the Committee will be reviewed by the Cabinet Member for Children and Young People following the Council Elections in 2010.

8. Chief Financial Officer Comments

- 8.1. The service manager confirms that these two new advisory committees can be serviced from within existing business unit resources. The report notes that both committees will be reviewed in the new municipal year which will allow a further review of resourcing to be undertaken following a years activity.
- 8.2. Members should note that these two committees are **advisory** only and as such have no formal decision making powers thus will not have the authority to incur expenditure or make budgetary decisions.

9. Head of Legal Services Comments

- 9.1. The Council's Constitution sets out the relevant Cabinet arrangements at Part Three, Section D and confirms that the Cabinet may establish decision making committees, which may only include Cabinet Members. The Cabinet may establish advisory Committees, the membership of which need not be limited to Cabinet Members. The Cabinet may change them, abolish them, or create further ones, at its own discretion. Unless changed or abolished, the two decision-making Committees continue in operation without the need for formal renewal each year.
- 9.2. The Access to Information Rules (Part 5A of the Local Government Act 1972) about public rights of access to meetings and Committee papers will apply to these two Advisory Committees. The public can be excluded and papers kept confidential where information within the "exempt" categories is to be considered and the Monitoring Officer advises that the balance of the public interest justifies maintaining confidentiality.

10. Head of Procurement Comments – [Required for Procurement Committee]

- 10.1. Not applicable

11. Equalities & Community Cohesion Comments

- 11.1. The recommendations of Members to serve on the Procurement Committee and the Voluntary Sector Committee reflect Members' roles and specialisms because of the diversity of members the suggestions are balanced in terms of gender and ethnicity.

12. Consultation

12.1. There has been consultation on the proposals for the two Advisory Committees within the Majority and Minority Political Groups.

13. Service Financial Comments

13.1. It is not envisaged that the establishment of these Committees will of itself have any direct financial implications.

14. Use of appendices /Tables and photographs

14.1. Not applicable

15. Local Government (Access to Information) Act 1985

15.1 Background Papers

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

Report to the Cabinet on 24 February 2009 entitled Action Plan in Response to the Joint Area Review of Safeguarding in Haringey.

The background paper is located at River Park House, 225 High Road, Wood Green, London N22 8HQ.

To inspect it or to discuss this report further, please contact Richard Burbidge on 020 8489 2923.