



Agenda item:

**Overview and Scrutiny Committee                      on 6 October 2008**

Report Title: <b>Scrutiny Review on Children’s Centres</b>	
Report of: <b>Chair of Review Panel</b>	
Wards(s) affected: <b>ALL</b>	
<p><b>1. Purpose</b>            1.1 To approve the final report of the Review Panel</p>	
<p><b>2. Recommendations</b>            That Members approve the conclusions and recommendations of the Review, as outlined in the Scrutiny Review report.</p>	
<p><b>Contact Officer:</b> Carolyn Banks Principal Scrutiny Support Officer, Tel 0208 489 2965</p>	
<p><b>3. Executive Summary</b>            3.1 As set out in the attached report</p>	
<p><b>4. Reasons for any change in policy or for new policy development (if applicable)</b>            4.1 N/A</p>	
<p><b>5. Local Government (Access to Information) Act 1985</b>             5.1 The background papers relating to this report are :   <i>Please refer to the Scrutiny Review report (attached).</i>             These can be obtained from Carolyn Banks – Principal Scrutiny Support Officer on 020 8489 2965, 7<sup>th</sup>. Floor, River Park House , e-mail: <a href="mailto:carolyn.banks@haringey.gov.uk">carolyn.banks@haringey.gov.uk</a></p>	

**5. Description**

5.1 *Please refer to the Scrutiny Review report (attached).*

## **6. Consultation**

6.1 The Review report has been submitted to relevant departments for consideration of technical accuracy and feasibility of the recommendations.

## **7. Summary and Conclusions**

7.1 *Please refer to the Scrutiny Review report (attached).*

## **8. Recommendations**

8.1 *Please refer to the Scrutiny Review report (attached).*

## **9. Chief Financial Officer Comments**

9.1 The Chief Financial Officer has been consulted on the contents of this report and his comments are included in the report.

## **10. Head of Legal Services Comments**

10.1 The Childcare Act 2006 places a general duty upon the local authority in relation to well-being of young children and Section 1 provides that the local authority must—

- (a) improve the well-being of young children in their area, and
- (b) reduce inequalities between young children in their area ..

10.2 In furtherance of this duty Section 3 provides for specific duties whereby the authority must make arrangements to secure that the early childhood services in their area are provided in an integrated manner which is calculated to—

- (a) facilitate access to those services, and
- (b) maximise the benefit of those services to parents, prospective parents and young children.

10.3 'Early childhood services' means early years provision and the social services functions of the local authority, so far as relating to young children, parents or prospective parents as specified under the Local Authority Social Services Act 1970.

10.4 The authority must take steps—

- (a) to identify parents or prospective parents in the authority's area who would otherwise be unlikely to take advantage of early childhood services that may be of benefit to them and their young children, and

- (b) to encourage those parents or prospective parents to take advantage of those services.
  
- 10.5 In discharging their duties under this section, the authority must have regard to such information about the views of young children as is available to the local authority and appears to them to be relevant to the discharge of those duties.
  
- 10.6 Section 11 CA 2006 places a duty upon the Authority to assess childcare provision and assess the sufficiency of the provision of childcare .The assessment must be kept under review until the childcare assessment is superseded by a further childcare assessment.
  
- 10.7 The recommendations of the review panel support and reflect those duties.

## **11 Equalities Implications**

- 11.1 A key aim of Children's Centres is to try to ensure that all children under five have access to good quality, early childhood services. An emphasis is placed on ensuring that services reach the most vulnerable and disadvantaged children through the targeting of services and service delivery.