

CABINET REPORT

COUNCILLOR	COMMITTEE	DATE
Ian Moncur	Cabinet Member for Children, Schools & Families	December 2010

Inspections Update

Springwell Park - Good School
Crosby High - Outstanding

St. Wilfrid's Consultation

St . Wilfrid's consultation closed on the 10th December. The Officers are now collating all the information into a coherent package together with a summary report, which will be presented to me to consider at the Cabinet Member Meeting on the 18th January 2011. The options I will consider will be as follows:-

- Confirm proposal
- Confirm with amendments
- Reject proposal

I know there has been very full and extensive responses to the consultation, and all these will be given due consideration as I consider this important proposal.

Schools White Paper

The Schools White Paper 'The Importance of Teaching', was published at the end of November 2010. As expected the White Paper promotes more devolution to the school community in terms of developing education provision. It also signals national changes in terms of the curriculum, inspection and standards of attainment in schools. Further details on the range of proposals contained in the White Paper will emerge in the New Year, but for LAs the White Paper sets out the following vision for their future role;

"A strong strategic role as champions for parents, families and vulnerable pupils; promote educational excellence, through ensuring a good supply of school places, co-ordinating fair admissions and developing their own school improvement strategies to support local schools".

Like the schools community we await further information on how these responsibilities should be met within the principles set out in the White Paper.

Youth Offending Team

Members will recall that in July 2009, an inspection of the Youth Offending Service led to Sefton receiving the poorest ratings in the Country in relation to its provision. Our 2010 inspection reflected a very substantial journey of improvement which has meant Sefton's performance is no longer bottom of the table of inspection ratings, but is now comfortably in the top half of the table.

Alan MacDonald, Assistant Chief Inspector, of Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Probation, said:

"In the Core Case Inspection of youth offending work in Sefton in 2009 we found that there was the need for drastic or substantial improvements in seven of the eight inspection criteria. This was an extremely disappointing set of findings and we undertook to conduct a reinspection this year.

"We found that the YOT had made significant efforts to implement the improvement plan submitted to us in July 2009, and as a result, the overall performance was much stronger. The quality assurance systems now in place had ensured that in most cases, relevant assessments and reviews were undertaken, although as yet, they were too often of insufficient quality. Overall, we consider this a very encouraging set of findings, and believe that the foundations for sustained improvement are in place".

I would like to express my thanks to the staff and to the YOS Board for securing this improvement in our performance over the last year. Well Done.

Children's Services Assessment 2010

The Annual Children's Services Assessment from Ofsted was published in late December 2010. Sefton's Children's Services, including all partners, were assessed as performing well with Ofsted stating that 'the very large majority of services, settings and institutions inspected by Ofsted are good or better'. I am sure you will join me in expressing my appreciation of the services provided by colleagues from all the partner agencies including the Borough's foster carers.

Award of M.B.E's

You will share my delight about the awards of M.B.E.'s in the New Years Honours List to Peter and Gaye Jones. Peter and Gaye have fostered more than 40 children over the past 36 years and this award is testament to the hard work and dedication that they have shown in caring for children and young people. Being a foster carer can be a hugely rewarding experience and I hope that their story will inspire other people to come forward and help young people to grow up in a caring and safe environment. Congratulations and well done to Peter and Gaye.

Child Poverty

Towards the end of 2010 the Liverpool City Region finalised its Child and Family Poverty Needs Assessment covering all the Authorities within the City Region. The next stage is to develop an Integrated Child Poverty Framework which will ensure the development and implementation of programmes and projects across the Liverpool City Region to counter child poverty by improving life chances of young people, families and communities. To drive this forward a Child Poverty and Life Chances Commission has been established for the City Region which is being chaired by Frank Field MP. I recently attended the inaugural meeting of the Commission and I am sure you will join with me in wishing its success as it seeks to address this national regional and local priority. I will be reporting the proceedings and outcomes from the inaugural meeting to the Children's Trust Board.