



**Children and Families Overview and
Scrutiny Committee**
11th December 2007

**Report from the Director of Policy
and Regeneration**

For Action

Wards Affected:
ALL

**Tracking outcomes from the Children and Families
Overview and Scrutiny Committee**

Forward Plan Ref:

1.0 Summary

1.1 A report detailing how outcomes from this committee are monitored and followed up.

2.0 Recommendations

2.1 Members are asked to comment on the method of tracking and monitoring actions and committee recommendations arising from the Children and Families Overview and Scrutiny Committee

3.0 Detail

3.1 The role of the Children and Families Overview and Scrutiny Committee is to act as a 'critical friend' to all aspects of the work of the Children and Families Department at Brent Council. Through scrutinising the department's work and asking difficult questions, members will help to ensure that this aspect of council activity is securing the best outcomes for local residents in Brent.

3.2 To provide effective overview and scrutiny it is important that the committee sets itself a challenging work programme and that relevant officers and partners attend the meeting to respond to members questions and concerns about the topic under discussion. It is also important that the outcomes from each committee meeting are effectively monitored with required actions followed up with relevant officers.

3.3 At the 11th July committee meeting, members asked for a report on how actions arising from the committee and outcomes from committee recommendations are monitored.

- 3.4 As discussed at the meeting scrutiny and policy support for the Children and Families Committee is provided by the Policy and Regeneration Unit. It is the role of this officer to help the committee develop an effective work programme that is clear and allows opportunities for members to exercise proper scrutiny over how the council and its partners delivers services to its residents. This officer also provides policy support to task groups and is responsible for coordinating the work of the committee, ensuring that actions are followed up and work programme suggestions agreed by the committee are included.
- 3.5 A review of working arrangements between this committee and the Children and Families department has recently taken place and the following has been agreed with the Chair of the committee:
- Regular work programming meetings will be held between the Chair, Assistant Director for Strategy and Partnerships and the policy officer from PRU. This will look at the agenda and determine the specific focus of the topics for discussion, evidence required, and witnesses. The work programme will periodically be brought back to the committee for discussion and agreement. The work programme is attached at **Appendix A**
 - An action list will be produced following each meeting and sent to the C & F department for a department response. This will regularly be on the C&F and O&S Committee as an information item. This is attached at **Appendix B**
 - The policy officer in PRU will also compile a list of relevant external witnesses for each topic area on the work programme. The witnesses will then be asked to attend the committee to contribute to the discussion.
- 3.5 Members of the committee also play an important role as the eyes and ears of the community to ensure that the committee is discussing issues of concern to local people. If any significant issues regarding Children and Families are raised in their ward or local area that could have implications for all Brent residents, members should bring this to the attention of the Chair who may request that the committee look at it in more detail.

Contact Officers

Phil Newby
Director of Policy and Regeneration
Phil.newby@brent.gov.uk

Stella Akintan
Policy and Performance Officer
Stella.akintan@brent.gov.uk