

By: Head of Democratic Services

To: Specialist Children's Services Policy Overview and Scrutiny Committee – 22 March 2012

Subject: **UPDATE ON SELECT COMMITTEE WORK**

Classification: Unrestricted

Summary: This report updates Members on current Select Committee review work and monitoring of the outcomes of past work and invites suggestions for future Select Committee Topic Reviews.

Current Select Committee Review Work

1. The following reviews are in their closing stages:-

The Student Journey - The Select Committee, under the Chairmanship of Mr K Smith, agreed its final report on 28 February. The final report and recommendations will be shared with the relevant Cabinet Members on 27 March and will be considered by Cabinet and County Council in May 2012.

The contacts for this Select Committee are: Research Officer Gaetano Romagnuolo (01622 694292) and Democratic Services Officer Theresa Grayell (01622 694277).

Educational Attainment at Key Stage 2 - The Select Committee, under the Chairmanship of Mr C T Wells, agreed its final report on 5 March. The report will be shared with the Cabinet Member and Director on 2 April and will be considered by Cabinet in May and County Council in July 2012.

The contacts for this Select Committee are: Research Officer Pippa Cracknell (01622 694178) and Assistant Democratic Services Manager Denise Fitch (01622 694269).

2. A Select Committee on **Domestic Abuse** has just started work. The Membership is: Mrs A D Allen, Mr H J Craske, Mrs T Dean, Mr J D Kirby, Mr S Manion, Mrs E M Tweed, Mrs C Waters and Mr A T Willicombe. At its first meeting on 23 February, the Committee elected Mr Kirby as its Chairman and agreed its Terms of Reference and scope, work programme and list of potential witnesses. In April, Members will receive background briefings and training from the Kent Domestic Violence Co-ordinator, with professionals involved in domestic abuse work. They will then make a series of visits, including to specialist domestic abuse courts and multi-agency domestic abuse one-stop-shops around the county and the new multi-agency central referral unit. They will also have the opportunity, in small groups, to visit refuges and meet survivors of domestic abuse. A visit will also be organised to observe a perpetrator course session run by the Probation Service. Evidence-gathering hearings will take place in June and July.

The review will link closely with the Kent and Medway Domestic Abuse Strategy Group, District Forums and a task-and-finish sub-group appointed by the Community Safety Partnership (which is looking at funding for Independent Domestic Violence Advisors (IDVAs)). The Select Committee is expected to submit its final report to County Council in December 2012.

The contacts for this Select Committee are: Research Officer Sue Frampton (01622 694993) and Democratic Services Officer Christine Singh (01622 694334).

Monitoring of the outcomes of past work

3. Two Select Committees which published their final reports about one year ago have recently re-convened for their 'one year on' monitoring meetings.

The **Renewable Energy** Select Committee met on 24 January 2012 and noted progress against its recommendations, proposed that a conference be organised to demonstrate the potential savings around renewable energy and agreed that Select Committee Members should act as 'champions' of renewable energy issues.

The **Extended Services** Select Committee met on 15 February 2012 and agreed that, because of the number of work streams which are still evolving, it would meet again in autumn 2012, with the Cabinet Members, to receive a further update report on activity which is currently ongoing but has not yet been able to proceed as far as the Committee would have liked. Members also agreed that, when a new document, '*The Impact of Extended Services in Kent*', becomes final (expected to be in May or June), an informal briefing be arranged, to which all KCC Members will be invited.

Suggestions for future Select Committee work

4. If Members have any suggestions of topics they would like to put forward for consideration for inclusion in the future topic review work programme, they should contact the Democratic Services Officer for this Committee.

Recommendation:-

5. Members are asked to note the review work currently coming to fruition, new work starting and monitoring of the outcomes of past work, and advise the Democratic Services Officer of any topics which they would like to put forward for consideration for inclusion in the future Select Committee Topic Review Work Programme.

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Background Information: *Nil*

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