

DUDLEY METROPOLITAN BOROUGH

**NORTH DUDLEY AREA COMMITTEE
29 JUNE 2005**

REPORT OF THE DIRECTOR OF SOCIAL SERVICES

**PROGRESS OF ELECTED MEMBER VISITS TO SOCIAL SERVICES
ESTABLISHMENTS NOVEMBER 2004 – APRIL 2005**

1.0 PURPOSE

- 1.1 To provide the Committee with information about the progress of visits to Social Services establishments undertaken by Members.
- 1.2 To inform Committee about actions taken in response to Member visits and their comments.
- 1.3 To identify issues arising from the rota visits and seek Members views.

2.0 BACKGROUND

- 2.1 Each Area Committee nominates pairs of Members who are willing to undertake visits to Social Services residential and day care establishments. A list of residential and day care establishments for adults and children is attached as Appendix 1.
- 2.2 The purpose of the visits is to assist Members in reviewing the residential and day care service delivery to adults and children in establishments managed by the Directorate of Social Services.
- 2.3 The visits also assist Members in fulfilling their role as Corporate Parents of Looked After Children.
- 2.4 All Members participating in the rota of visits must have received training in the role and satisfactory Criminal Records Bureau clearance.
- 2.5 Training to assist the process will be provided; the dates are to be confirmed.
- 2.6 The rota process and the delivery of training is managed within the Policy & Performance Unit of the Directorate of Social Services. Over a period of time Members have made suggestions to improve the process and these have been incorporated into the protocol determining the responsibilities of Members and officers. (Attached Appendix 2)

- 2.7 Staff of the Policy & Performance Unit provide Members with
- a copy of the protocol for Members and officers
 - a schedule of visits to be undertaken during the period
 - a reminder of scheduled visits to children's establishments
 - a proforma for completion at each visit
 - background information about each establishment, in terms of purpose and staffing
 - a copy of the comments made by Members on the previous visits.
- 2.8 Members completed proformas are sent to the relevant Assistant Director for comment and response. A summary of Members comments and responses or actions taken is attached (Appendix 3).
- 2.9 Staff of the Policy & Performance Unit pass information following Members comments to the Quality & Complaints Manager and the Directorate's Asset Management Team, as appropriate.

3 0 PROPOSALS

- 3.1 That Members note and comment on the information contained in this report and attachments.
- 3.2 That Members make further nominations from Committee for participation in the rota of visits for the year 2005–2006.

4.0 FINANCE

- 4.1 There are no immediate financial implications from this report. The programme of Member Visits can continue to be provided from within existing resource allocation.
- 4.2 On occasion, Member comments and recommendations will have additional cost implications. These are forwarded to the Asset Management group of the Directorate of Social Services for consideration.

5.0 LAW

- 5.1 Members' visits to Social Services establishments assist in meeting some of the relevant requirements of the Children Act 1989 and the 1948 National Assistance Act.

6.0 EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES

- 6.1 The visits to establishments are intended to assist officers in ensuring that services are delivered in a fair and service user focused manner.

7.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

- 7.1 That Members consider and comment on the information contained in this report.
- 7.2 That Members make further nominations from Committee for participation in the rota for the year 2005-2006.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Linda Sanders". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, looping initial 'L'.

Linda Sanders
Director of Social Services

Contact Officer
Steve Rice (x4723)
Quality & Complaints Manager
Policy & Performance Unit
Stephen.Rice@dudley.gov.uk