



DERBY CITY COUNCIL

**SOCIAL CARE AND HEALTH COMMISSION**  
**18 April 2005**

Report of the Director of Corporate Services

# ITEM 8

## **Review of Children Looked After Services- Terms of Reference**

### **RECOMMENDATION**

- 1.1 The Commission is asked consider and adopt the Terms of Reference for the Review of Children Looked After Services.

### **SUPPORTING INFORMATION**

- 2.1 Members resolved at the January meeting to conduct a review on children looked after services. At the February meeting Members received a presentation from the Assistant Director Children and Family Services and the Commissioning Manager for Social Services to help get a better understanding of the issues related to this topic and set the terms of reference for the review.
- 2.2 A further meeting was held with the Chair and vice chair of this Commission to identify potential areas for review. Based on these discussions, it is suggested that the review:
- examines why there are high number of looked after children in the city compared with other similar sized authorities
  - examines the processes for looking after children and consider whether the placements are effective, deliver good quality of service and outcomes for looked after children
  - considers ways of safely reducing the gap between Derby and similar sized authorities of the number of looked after children
  - Looks at the triggers for child protection register
- 2.3 Members are asked to consider and comment on the draft terms of reference and the proposed list of witnesses/ areas for information for this review.

<b>Session</b>	<b>Witness</b>	<b>Issues</b>	<b>When</b>
<b>General briefing session</b>	<b>Social Services</b>  Keith Woodthorpe Hazel Lymbery	Introduction to Children Looked After services	28 February
<b>Session 1</b>	<b>Social Services</b>  Senior managers and front line staff	To examine <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Social Care Needs Assessments Process</li> <li>• The threshold and processes for children entering the service</li> <li>• Child protection strategy</li> <li>• Strategy for reducing number of CLA</li> <li>• How best interest decisions for children are made and the length of time it takes to make suitable placements</li> <li>• Placement process - where children are placed, why and respective outcomes for children</li> <li>• How does social services support CLA and equipping them on life skills</li> </ul>	
<b>Session 2</b>	<b>Service User's</b>  Children Looked After	To determine views of the Children looked after about the service and consider the opportunities they have for personal development. To understand the effects on children to being looked after by the Council, if any	
<b>Session 3</b>	<b>Foster Carers</b>	To examine the process of recruiting and retaining foster carers To consider the views of foster carers about the service	
<b>Session 4</b>	<b>Adoption</b>	To examine the adoption process	
<b>Session 5</b>	<b>Comparable authorities</b>	Consider the processes and budgets of similar sized authorities and the respective outcomes for looked after children. This could include the 15 comparator authorities identified by the Audit Commission as well as other authorities with good children services	

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**Background papers:** None  
**List of appendices:** Appendix 1 - Implications

<b>IMPLICATIONS</b>
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**Financial**

- 1.1 Any costs incurred with conducting this review will be contain within the £8000 Research budget allocated to the Commission.

**Legal**

- 2.1 Work programmes of the overview and scrutiny commissions are subject to approval by the Scrutiny Management Commission (SMC). A report will be taken to the next meeting of the SMC asking for its approval to proceed with this review.

**Personnel**

- 3.1 None.

**Equalities Impact**

- 4.1 Looked after children are considered to be amongst the most vulnerable groups in the city.

**Corporate Objectives and Priorities**

- 5.1 The report supports the Corporate Objectives of healthy safe and independent communities and contributes to the Corporate Priority to **modernising social care**.