

EDUCATION & CHILDREN'S SERVICES POLICY OVERVIEW COMMITTEE MAJOR REVIEW:

HOW THE COUNCIL WORKS WITH PARTNER AGENCIES TO PROVIDE SAFEGUARDING FOR CHILDREN AT HEATHROW AIRPORT AS A PORT OF ENTRY

Cabinet Member	Councillor David Simmonds
Cabinet Portfolio	Education and Children's Services
Officer Contact	Natasha Dogra, Democratic Services
Papers with report	Major Review: Final Report

HEADLINE INFORMATION

Purpose of report	To receive the Education and Children's Services Policy Overview Committee's report providing recommendations which seek to build upon the Borough's approach, current arrangements and future plans for safeguarding children at Heathrow Airport.
Contribution to our plans and strategies	This report contributes to the Council's priorities for safeguarding children and young people throughout the Borough.
Financial Cost	There are no additional financial implications arising from this report.
Relevant Policy Overview Committee	Education and Children's Services Policy Overview Committee
Ward(s) affected	All.

RECOMMENDATIONS

That Cabinet:

1. Note that the Committee has commended the service and its performance.
2. Welcome the report from the Education and Children's Services Policy Overview Committee and note the general consensus it found in favour of improving the current arrangements and future plans for safeguarding children at Heathrow Airport; and
3. Endorses the following recommendations of the Policy Overview Committee report as ways to enhance current arrangements and future plans for safeguarding children at Heathrow Airport, as set out below:

POC Recommendations:

The Committee recommend that:

- a.) A specialised training programme be developed for foster carers and residential staff who provide care for this group of vulnerable children; carers must be made aware of the dangers of those children who go missing after being placed in their care. Safeguarding issues must be explained clearly and carers should be made fully aware of the issue of traffickers who contact children after they have been placed in their care.
- b.) Officer inspections take place at the foster homes of trafficked children – this can be performed through supervising social worker visits to foster carers to review the safeguarding arrangements.
- c.) The communication link between partner agencies and inter agency working be developed further through the work of the Trafficking Sub Group of the Hillingdon Safeguarding Children's Board and that national and international links be further developed and strengthened.
- d.) Cabinet invite the Education and Children's Services Policy Overview Committee to review the council's approach to safeguarding trafficked children, should national policy and/or legislation be modified, so that Cabinet are kept fully aware of national policy changes that could impact on our policies and resources and therefore compromise the Council's safeguarding arrangements.
- e.) Information of missing children to be regularly monitored by the Education and Children's Services Policy Overview Committee and that all instances of missing children reported to the Hillingdon's Safeguarding Children Board will be used to form part of future Safeguarding reporting arrangements to the Education and Children's Services policy Overview Committee.

INFORMATION

Reasons for recommendation

The recommendations are aimed at building upon Hillingdon's approach current arrangements and future plans for safeguarding children at Heathrow Airport.

Alternative options considered / risk management

The Cabinet could decide to reject or amend the Committee's recommendations.

Supporting Information

1. The Committee chose to review the current arrangements and future plans for safeguarding children at Heathrow Airport as a port of entry as a review topic in 2009/10 to enable the Council to build on its successes so far.
2. The aim of this review was to look at ways to improve the service and the arrangements for encouraging communication between all partner agencies involved in the battle against child trafficking and the safeguarding of trafficked children. The reasons behind why the Council

needs to develop its safeguarding arrangement were identified, including the potential benefits and drawbacks. Opportunities to enhance the services were investigated and were considered when producing the recommendations.

3. The review took place between January 2010 and April 2010.
4. The Committee's report (attached) gives full details of the review.

Officer Comments:

Education and Children's Services Officers were fully involved in this review and support the work of the Committee and the recommendations which can be implemented within existing resources. Officers provided the Committee with the following comments regarding the progression of each recommendation:

- **Recommendation A** - A training workshop has been commissioned and will be in place by October 2010.
- **Recommendation B** – Supervised social worker visits to the foster homes of children who may be vulnerable to exploitation will ensure that foster carers are fully aware of issues relating to safeguarding children and are appropriately supported.
- **Recommendation C** - Communication is a regular item on the Trafficking Sub Group of the Hillingdon Safeguarding Children's Board. Agencies represented on the sub group aim to ensure that national and international links are further developed.
- **Recommendation D** - Officers will provide the Education and Children's Services Overview Committee with regular update reports. Regular updates will ensure the Committee are informed of all relevant legislative and policy changes that could have an impact on policies and resources in order to assure the Council's safeguarding arrangements.
- **Recommendation E** - The Safeguarding information that is reported to Education and Children's Services policy Overview Committee will in future include instances of children missing as reported to Hillingdon's Safeguarding Children Board.

Financial Implications

There are no direct financial implications arising from this report. The recommendations can be implemented using existing resources.

EFFECT ON RESIDENTS, SERVICE USERS & COMMUNITIES

What will be the effect of the recommendation?

The Committee's recommendations will provide a springboard for the Council to take those steps necessary to improve services used to safeguard children and young people.

Consultation Carried Out or Required

The Committee took evidence from residents, officers and experts as described in the attached report.

CORPORATE IMPLICATIONS

Corporate Finance

Corporate Finance has reviewed this report and is satisfied that there are no direct financial implications arising from the report and that the recommendations can be implemented within existing budgets.

Legal

The Council has child protection duties under part III Children Act 1989 (amended) and Part 2 & 5 Children Act 2004 to safeguard protect and promote the welfare of all children within the area of the local authority. The report reviews the arrangements made by the Council to fulfil its safeguarding duties to children and young people at Heathrow Airport.

BACKGROUND PAPERS

NIL