Report of Children Services Bodies
Held 11th January 2007 to 25th March 2007

COUNCIL **Date 19 April 2007**

Purpose

- To report issues considered by Children Services Bodies held 11 January 2007 to 25 March 2007.

1. CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE'S PARTNERSHIP BOARD

1.1 Meeting of 25 January 2007:

a) Progress on Strategic Management Plan Milestones, Children Services Risk Register, Local Area Agreement Milestones and Children and Young People's Plan Targets
Members endorsed the format of the report and noted the progress being made. It was agreed that a further report should be submitted regarding teenage pregnancies within the Borough.

b) Progress on developing joint commissioning arrangements and co-located joint working as part of the implementation of the Children & Young People's Plan 2006-2009 and the Children Act 2004
The Board was pleased to receive short presentations from representatives of the Police, Primary Care Trust and Children Services regarding the potential links and benefits of joint working. Further information on how referrals to other support agencies were progressed was requested for the next meeting.

c) Progress on developing joint commissioning arrangements and co-located joint working through a Section 31 Agreement under the 1999 Heath Act Flexibilities
The Board endorsed and recommended to the Council that a Children's Joint Commissioning Board be established from 1 April 2007, to replace the Children's Trust Executive Management Board.

d) School Standards Report
Information was provided regarding the 2006 pupil performance data for Swindon school students, together with the head teachers' views on the report.

e) School Admission Arrangements – September 2008
The Board noted that because of the recent publication of the Code of Practice for School Admissions, it was necessary to carry out further consultation on the proposed admission arrangements for September 2008 and that a report would therefore be submitted to the Cabinet on 7 March. Members noted information on the co-ordinated admission arrangement, oversubscription criteria and admission numbers.

f) Revision to the Swindon Scheme for Financing Schools
The Board recommended the Council to revise the Swindon Scheme for Financing Schools to include the revisions directed by the Department for Education and Skills on 5 October 2006

Further information on the subject of this report can be obtained from
Sarah Lawrence, Committee and Member Services on Direct Dial No. 463603 or Email slawrence@swindon.gov.uk or Helen Harris, Committee and Member Services on Direct Dial No. 463604 or Email hharris@swindon.gov.uk

g) Future of the Board
Members were advised that following the favourable Joint Area Review Inspection, a report would be submitted to the Minister recommending an early lifting of the Direction. There would no longer be any requirement for a Partnership Board, but Councillor Garry Perkins stated that the Council was committed to continuing the Board, although with an evolving format.

1.2 Meeting of 8 March 2007

(a) Progress on Strategic Management Plan Milestones, Children Services Risk Register, Local Area Agreement Milestones and Children and Young People's Plan Targets
Members noted the progress being made.

(b) Health and Safety in Children Services – Monitoring Report
The Board noted and endorsed the actions being taken and proposed.

(c) Corporate Parenting Strategy
Members considered the first draft of the Strategy and provided comments and feedback on various aspects.

(d) Development of Integrated Service (Multi-agency Team) for Disabled Children and Young People
The Board noted the progress being made and recommended the Council to approve the strategic plan for the integrated service and the Terms of Reference for the Disabled Children and Young People's Partnership Board.

(e) Discussion on Multi-Agency Approaches to Working With Young People Using a Case Study Approach
A discussion was generated on the way integrated multi-agency services would be able to deliver a different way of working.

2 STANDING ADVISORY COUNCIL FOR RELIGIOUS EDUCATION (SACRE)

2.2 Meeting of 6th March 2007:

a) Understanding Faith
The SACRE received a presentation from Mr Paul Knight of Gorse Hill Baptist Church on his faith, and what is distinctive about the Baptist Church.

b) Community Cohesion
The Neighbourhood Renewal Manager and Director of Community gave a presentation on the definition of Community Cohesion, current activities of the Council, and ways in which the SACRE could contribute. The SACRE agreed to apply for a National Association of SACRE's grant by 31 March 2007, to support a faith and values module in the Adventure Service Challenge Scheme to be run by the Youth Service.

c) Budget Update

Catherine Coster (SACRE Advisor) presented a budget update. In particular, the SACRE noted that as the Secondary Schools Conference had been delayed until the new financial year, the funds set aside for that purpose had been redirected with the agreement of the Chair and Primary Advisor to provide each primary school with a pack of resources to support the teaching of the agreed syllabus.

d) Religious Education Examination Results

The SACRE received the A Level and GCSE examination results for 2005/06 for Religious Education. It was agreed that a breakdown in the results for Key Stage 4 and 5 by school be sent out to Members of the SACRE.

e) Using Persona Dolls in Foundation and Key Stage 1

The SACRE considered, approved and recommended to schools guidance and support materials prepared by the SACRE advisor to enable Persona Dolls to be used in schools to support the teaching of the locally agreed syllabus at Foundation and Key Stage 1.

3. SCHOOLS FORUM

3.1 Meeting of 31 January 2007

a) Aspire Update

The Forum received an update on the Aspire programme and its implications for schools.

b) Report from School Forum Sub Group

The recommendations from the Sub Group meetings on 8th and 15th December were submitted to the Forum.

c) Funding for New Schools

It was agreed that a further report should be submitted with proposals on how any financial assistance could be provided to new schools during 2007/08. Also, that the issue of continued pupil funding for new schools be considered in future years when the funding formula was reviewed.

d) School Budget Balances 2005-06

The Forum agreed that the amount allocated for Out of School Provision in the unspent balance from the schools' budget for 2005/06 should be amended, but otherwise agreed the allocation as set out in the report.

e) Schools Budget 2007-08

The Forum endorsed the overall schools budget subject to officers investigating whether it was possible to increase the central block by £35,000 to support the proper funding of specialist equipment that was required on an annual basis.

f) Schools Funding Formula for Individual Schools Budget 2007-08

Members agreed the revision to the funding formula set out in paragraph 2.5 of the report and also the proposals set out in Appendix A.

g) Standards Fund 2007-08

The Standards Fund grant allocations for 2007-08 were noted and the Forum agreed that the grant for 116b Music at Key Stage 2 should be retained and its scope broadened in accordance with the proposal in Appendix B

h) Future Meetings

The date of the next meeting was noted along with the provisional dates for the new Municipal Year.

4. SCHOOL ORGANISATION COMMITTEE

4.1 Meeting of 24 January 2007

(a) The Committee unanimously agreed to endorse the linked proposals to close Headlands School, Pinehurst Infants and Junior Schools to make way for a new 0-19 Academy to be located at Pinehurst.

4.2 Meeting of 21 March 2007

(a) The Committee unanimously agreed to endorse the amalgamation of Covingham Park Infant and Junior Schools.

(b) Members noted that this was the last meeting of the School Organisation Committee.

- Reports for all Children and Young People Committees and the related Minutes are available in full on the Committee and Member Information Pages of the Council's Intranet and Website (www.swindon.gov.uk) or on request from Committee and Member Services.