
EAST OF ENGLAND CHILDREN'S SERVICES MEMBER NETWORK

1 SUMMARY

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to seek Members' views as to whether or not to become involved in the above network.

2 BACKGROUND

- 2.1 Following the inquiry into the death of Victoria Climbié, the Government issued a consultation paper "Every Child Matters". This contained far reaching proposals to ensure that all public bodies that are involved with children's services work in a more integrated way in order to ensure the issues emanating from the death of Victoria Climbié were not repeated. This was followed by the passing of the Children Act 2004.
- 2.2 The District Council involvement with children is at the periphery, but nevertheless covers the important areas of Housing and Leisure.
- 2.3 Luton Borough Council and the Improvement and Development Agency are proposing the creation of an East of England Children's Services Member Network. The rationale and detail are outlined in the letter outlined at Appendix 1 of this report.

3 DISCUSSION

- 3.1 Although District Councils have limited involvement, children's services have a very high priority in the national agenda. As may be seen from the letter, there are issues which would impact on District Council Members. It is likely too, that the children's agenda will form a growing part of future CPA assessments.

4 RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1 Should the Council wish to be represented, it should be an approved duty for which travelling and subsistence allowances are payable. These can be met from the current budget.

5 RECOMMENDATION

- 5.1 It is proposed that the Committee **RESOLVES**
- (1) Whether or not to participate in the Network
 - (2) If it is decided to participate, to nominate up to two Members to attend.

Roger Crofts

Corporate Director (Finance & External Services)

Background Papers:-

None

For further information please contact Roger Crofts on:-

Tel:- 01702 546366 extn. 3006

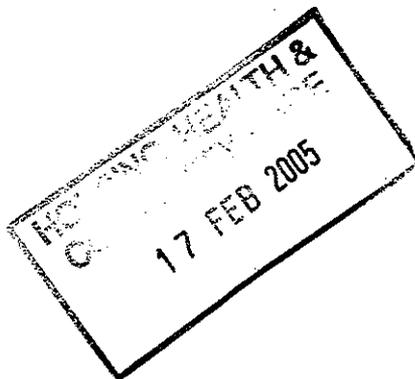
E-Mail:- roger.crofts@rochford.gov.uk

LUTON

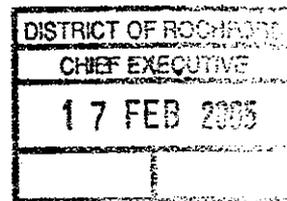


11th February 2005

Mr Paul Warren
Chief Executive
Rochford District Council
Council Offices
South Street
Rochford Essex
SS4 1BW



APPENDIX
I&DeA
improvement and development agency



Dear Paul,

East of England Children's Services Member Network

We are writing to invite you to nominate an elected member or up to 2 members from your authority who are likely to have responsibility for Children's Services to the first meeting of the East of England Children's Services Member Network.

The meeting will take place on:

18th May 2005 from 10.30 am to 12.30 pm , Spencer Bull Suite, Thistle Hotel, Luton, LU1 2TR (map attached).

This meeting will be an opportunity for elected members in the East of England to define their own support needs for developing Children's Services and to create the programme and agree ways of working to meet those needs.

The Network will only be of real and lasting value if it is led and owned by elected members and Councillor Lawrence Patterson from Luton Council has agreed to host the first meeting.

Vic Sandel – IDeA National Adviser for Education and Children's Services will also be supporting the Network and will also be at this meeting.

We hope that your authority will be represented at this crucial first meeting.

We would be grateful if you could pass on the contents of this letter to the relevant member(s) and let Brenda Joyce (Telephone 0191 261 3927 or e-mail: Brenda@rane.gov.uk) have their details by the end of February.

This meeting has been set up in response to feedback from the IDeA Regional Forum – Improving Services for Children held last year and from the experience of a member network set up by authorities in the south west. During this forum elected members and Chief Officers with responsibility for Children's Services were asked what the Agency could do to assist local authorities in the leadership of this important service area.

continued.....

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The IDeA have already created specific modules for elected members on Children's Services for both the Leadership Academy and the Modern Members Programme.

However, there was a clear message in a number of regions that members would also welcome more local and bespoke support which gave opportunities for elected members with responsibility for Children's Services to meet together to support mutual improvement across the region.

It was suggested by members that this support might take a variety of forms including:

- Peer to peer member support.
- Focus groups of councils to share journeys on the development of Children's Services and help solve problems.
- Networking of members with responsibility for Children's Services to look at specific issues such as Partnership Working, Culture Change, Accountability and Governance, Engaging with Schools, Commissioning, Children's Trusts.
- The role of elected members as school governors.
- The role and relationship with District Councils.
- A stocktake of progress by individual authorities.

Underpinning all these suggestions was a belief that improvement comes from within and that authorities in the East of England were willing to share their expertise and experiences for the benefit of children, young people and their families and communities in the region as a whole.

Yours sincerely,



Councillor Lawrence Patterson
Executive Member (Children and Young People)
Luton Borough Council



Dennis Skinner
Regional Associate, East of England
The Improvement & Development Agency

16.4

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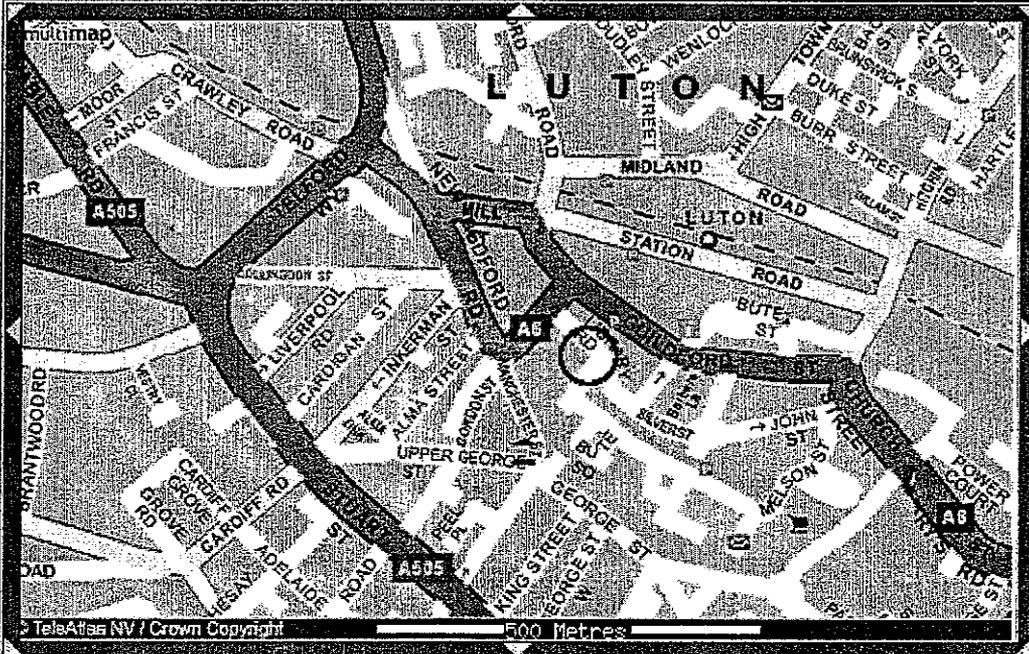
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MAP INFORMATION

Location: LU12TR United Kingdom
 Grid ref: TL090214 Postcode district: LU1 2xx (map centre)
 X: 509100m Y: 221500m
 Lat: 51:52:52N (51.881) Lon: 0:24:59W (-0.4165)
 Web Address: www.multimap.com/map/browse.cgi?lat=51.881&lon=-0.4165&scale=10000&icon=x

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LOCAL WEATHER

Cloudy, 6°C, 21mph NW. [Five day forecast](#) **TEXT WEATHER SERVICE**

NEAREST TRANSPORT LINKS

Railway Station	Luton Railway Station	0.1 miles (0.2 km)
Motorway Junction	M1 Jnct 10a	1.5 miles (2.4 km)
Airport	Luton	2.1 miles (3.4 km)

These locations are nearest as the crow flies, but may not be nearest by road.