

## **Education Scrutiny Committee Annual Report 2006/2007**

### **Extended Schools Review**

The Education Scrutiny Committee at their meetings in June and July finalised their scrutiny of the topic on Extended Schools which had the following remit:

- To establish if school in York are providing extended services beyond the school day.
- To consider if this provision is meeting the needs of pupils, parents and the wider community
- To investigate example of good practice from within this Authority and beyond
- To make recommendations as to how the Council can work with partners across the City and how schools can work together so that children and communities can receive the best possible service

After many months of work during which a wide range of evidence was gathered through visits to a great many of our primary schools, the review found that the need for extended schools in York is growing and the final report confirmed that the city is performing well in this vital area.

The final report made a number of recommendations and supported the LEA's plans to achieve a situation where every school in York would be an extended school. This was presented to the Scrutiny Management Committee on 24<sup>th</sup> July 2006 and subsequently to the Executive on 12<sup>th</sup> September where it was accepted.

### **Home to School Transport Review**

The Education Scrutiny Committee have recently completed a review of Home to School Transport. The agreed remit for this topic was as follows:

- To investigate if improvements can be made to the safety of buses transporting school pupils to primary schools.
- To consider the contract that is negotiated by the council for the provision of school transport services.
- To make enquiries as to the school transport that is provided in other local authorities including the use of dedicated 'yellow buses'.
- To investigate the implications of installing seat belts in all buses contracted to carry primary school pupils.

Throughout the scrutiny of this topic all the participants operated in a frank, positive and focussed way as a result of having a clear remit for their investigation. All the transport contractors were very open regarding the

contracts and the financial implications of varying the type of vehicles provided. All participating members were motivated to ensure that their recommendations were based on sound evidence obtained from the scrutiny process.

There has been a marked variation in the type and quality of vehicles used for transporting primary school children to and from school in the past and the recommendations if implemented would ensure that all pupils receive the same provision.

The final report attempted to make recommendations that will in the long term improve the quality of the buses used for home to school transport, improve the safety of the pupils being transported, improve behaviour, reduce traffic congestion and environmental pollution and encourage the uptake of places on school buses.

A detailed analysis of the evidence collected was included in the Final Report submitted to the Scrutiny Management Committee on 26 March 2007 and the approved report will be considered by the Executive on 24 April 2007.

Cllr Charles Hall