



meeting DRUGS EDUCATION SELECT COMMITTEE

date 24 SEPTEMBER 2007

agenda item number

Report of the Chair of the Drugs Education Select Committee

Work Programme

Purpose of the report

1. To inform Members of the work programme for this Select Committee.

Background

2. On 21 May the Overview and Scrutiny Committee commissioned a review of Drugs Education in Schools. Further to that, on 9 July, the Drugs Education Select Committee received a scene-setting presentation from departmental officers.

Information

3. As part of its evidence gathering, the Select Committee will receive information on the DARE (Drug Abuse Resistance Education) programme from Mr Dave Gilbert, Chief Executive of DARE, and from young people who have graduated from the programme.
4. DARE is a charity which was originally set up in Los Angeles in 1983 in order to allow police officers to deliver drugs education training in schools. Since 1993, the DARE programme has been delivered to around 200,000 primary school children in Nottinghamshire. The training has been paid for by Nottinghamshire Police and is given by retired police officers and school based police officers.
5. The programme aims to equip young people with the knowledge to resist pressures to use drugs, tobacco, excess alcohol and solvents by providing them with accurate information. It aims to teach decision making and resistance skills to overcome peer pressure. The programme is aimed at 9-11 year olds and consists of 11 one hour sessions. DARE works in local partnerships with police forces, Local Education Authorities, Drug & Alcohol Action Teams and Health Authorities.

6. In January 2007, Nottinghamshire Police announced that they would discontinue their £180,000 annual funding of DARE. Subsequent to this, alternative funding was secured from SportsAct (an organisation which raises funds for charities via sports themed events) and Wilkinson's the hardware retailer.
7. In recent years, DARE has been subject to some criticism regarding its effectiveness. In 2004, Home Office Minister Caroline Flint characterised the DARE programme as "ineffective" in a memo to Nottingham North MP Graham Allen. Earlier this year, Councillor John Clarke, Chair of Nottinghamshire Police Authority, questioned whether the charity was as effective as it once was.

Work Programme

8. The previously agreed work programme is attached at Appendix 1 for information (venue to be confirmed in due course).

Recommendation

9. It is recommended that

the Drug Education Select Committee continue to receive evidence, and initiate lines of questioning as necessary.

Councillor Edward Llewellyn-Jones
Chair of the Drug Education Select Committee

Background papers: nil.