

Updated Work Programme for Children and Young People Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

BEGINNING OF THE MUNICIPAL YEAR 2010 /2011

It was agreed at the Overview and Scrutiny Chairs meeting to adopt the following procedure to allow the committee members to monitor their work programme. It is felt that the work programme should be a 'living' document and as such is intended to act as a guide for the Committee throughout the year, while providing the degree of flexibility needed to respond to any emerging or pressing issues as they arise. Committee members, and particularly the Chair, should have a major role in owning and managing the work programme.

The final item on the agenda for each Scrutiny Committee will be 'Review of the Committee Work Programme'.

It is suggested that there should be four short reports. I have attached the following reports:

REPORT 1 - Lists all the issues the committee agreed to include in their Work Programme:

This report lists all items that have been selected by the Committee for inclusion on the work programme for the current year.

It also includes items, such as previous Panel Reviews, where recommendations have been made to Cabinet. It is important that the implementation of these recommendations is monitored. Otherwise there is no measure of the success of scrutiny.

For each item on the work programme, the report gives a description, an indication of how the item will be dealt with, a where possible a relative timescale for the work and brief comments on progress.

REPORT 2 - Suggestions for Additions to Work Programme

The Work Programme for the Committee should be reviewed at each meeting. This will include members having the opportunity to ask for new Items to be added to the programme. This report will list any newly suggested items. Committee will then have the opportunity to agree (or not) for them to be added to the programme.

REPORT 3 - Proposed Outline Meeting Schedule for the Municipal Year

The report lists those items which are likely to be on the meeting agenda. This will give the opportunity for Committee members to take a greater lead in organising their work programme.

REPORT 4 - Progress Report on In-Depth Panel Reviews

This report will give a very brief update on progress / timescales for in-depth panel reviews which are in the 'ownership' of the Committee.

Report 1

MONITORING REPORT FOR CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE WORK PROGRAMME 2010/2011

(UPDATES IN RED)

Date of item	Topic Description	How the topic will be dealt with	Comments on Progress	Complete
OCT 2008	Wirral Music Service	Officer Report	Committee requested a further report during a budget savings debate on the Wirral Music Service on 28.10.08. At OSC on 13.01.09 a request for further statistics was made. An annual report has been requested – March 2010. A further request for an Options report to be brought to SEPT 2010 OSC.	14 Sept 2010
JAN 2009	Safeguarding - Child protection Statutory Annual Report	Officer Report	As a result of the verbal report on 'The Impact of the Baby P Case' given by Howard Cooper (13.10.09). It was agreed that a further update report would be produced in the future.	SEPT 2010
2ND JUNE 2010	The Committee received an update on its work programme and the Chair circulated a draft work programme for 2010/11 based on an overarching theme of, 'Preparing for the Future and Protecting our Priorities'. The draft included suggestions for officers to draw up a detailed report on what the new national priorities concerning academies, free schools and pupil premiums would mean for Wirral. Resolved – That the Chair, Spokespersons and one co-opted member meet to consider the work programme for 2010/2011	Member Meeting		
2ND JUNE 2010	The Director to inform all Members of the effect of the Academies Bill once the position had become clearer.	Officer Report		

2 ND JUNE 2010	Resolved – the Review Panel on ‘Narrowing the Gap’ to continue.	Panel Review		
14 TH SEPT. 2010	<p>The Committee received an update on its work programme including the reports to be scheduled for the November meeting.</p> <p>Resolved – That the Work Programme be agreed with the addition of a report on the Governors’ support service to be considered at the January or March, 2011 meeting.</p>			
14 th SEPT. 2010	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Look at the current work of <u>the Youth Service</u> in the light of recent positive developments and investigate the impact of any potential reduction in funding either from possible cuts in specific grant like the Youth Opportunity Fund, or from general funding reductions . ▪ Consider the whole area of <u>Looked After Children</u>, the work being done now, and any likely impact of future decisions on funding. ▪ It was also suggested that the work carried out previously with looked after children should be revisited and the Director commented that he would be happy to facilitate this as there had been many changes over the past couple of years, including the establishment of the Children in Care Council. ▪ Consider the <u>whole area of Child Protection</u>, the work being done, the relationship with outside partners and investigate ways to ensure partners work together with the same priorities and inequities don’t develop because of different budget strategies in the different organisations. 	<p>Officer report back to November Meeting.</p> <p>Officer report back to November Meeting.</p> <p>Officer report back to November Meeting.</p>		<p>November Meeting.</p> <p>November Meeting.</p> <p>November Meeting.</p>
14 th SEPT. 2010	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Draw up a detailed report on what the new national priorities concerning academies, free schools and pupil premiums will mean for Wirral. 	Officer Report		After the Comprehensive Spending Review.

14 th SEPT. 2010	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Draw up a list of specific grants which will lose their ring fencing and set out which services they cover and the consequences of any potential redistribution of resources either this year or in future years and consider ways of mitigating this. 	Officer Report		After the Comprehensive Spending Review
14 th SEPT. 2010	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ A report on the Governors' support service. 	Officer Report		To report to Jan meeting
14 th SEPT. 2010	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Draw up a list of any capital resources or programmes that might be affected in the future, and consider whether there might be any knock on to Children's Services from any programmes elsewhere in the authority or with external partners that might also be under threat. 	Officer Report		After the Comprehensive Spending Review
14 th SEPT. 2010	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Look at the work carried out by Sure Start, and the relationship between Sure Start and primary schools, and later consequences between primary and secondary schools on learning age intakes, in order to have a clear rationale to present should Sure Start lose its protection in the future 	Officer Report		To January 2011 Meeting
16 TH NOV 2010	<p>The Committee received an update on its work programme including the reports to be scheduled for the January meeting.</p> <p>The Chair referred to the "Narrowing the gap" – Impact of deprivation funding' scrutiny review, she commented that this would be re-scoped with herself, Councillors P Hayes and Harney and Mrs J Kearney on the Review Panel and a progress report would be submitted to the next meeting.</p> <p>Resolved – That the Work Programme be agreed and the Committee note the re-scoping of the "Narrowing the gap" – Impact of deprivation funding' review.</p>			
16 TH NOV 2010	<u>Looked After Children</u>	Officer Report	Minutes:	At the request of the Committee, the Interim Director of Children's Services submitted a report which outlined the statutory framework and the current level of 'Looked after Children' activity in Wirral.

			<p>Simon Garner, Strategic Service Manager, Children's Resources, introduced the report and along with Julia Hassall, responded to Members' comments and elaborated on the financial challenges of the Looked after Children budget and the recruitment strategy for foster carers.</p> <p>Resolved – That the report be noted.</p>	
<p>16TH NOV 2010</p>	<p><u>Youth Service Current Work and its Reliance on Grant</u></p>	<p>Officer Report</p>	<p>Minutes:</p> <p>At the request of the Committee, the Interim Director of Children's Services submitted a report on the current work of the 'Youth Service' in the light of recent positive developments. An appendix to the report also detailed the impact on a variety of projects of any potential reduction in funding from specific grants. The Council's deployment of General Fund was currently the subject of widespread public consultation.</p> <p>Peter Edmondson, Head of Participation and Inclusion and the Interim Director responded to comments from Members and agreed to provide data for the Committee on attendance figures at the Youth Hubs, which did fluctuate with the seasons. Information was not yet available on the size of the new Early Intervention Grant. The settlement figure for the Council was due from the Government in December and also information on what ringfencing of grants might be removed and further reports on this would be brought back to future meetings.</p>	

			<p>Responding to further comments, Peter Edmondson and the Interim Director also elaborated on the success and use of the Teen Wirral website and the Rampworx Skatepark in Birkenhead. The success of the Youth Hub at Wallasey Fire Station had lead to the possibility of a similar development at Birkenhead Fire Station.</p> <p>Resolved – That the report be noted.</p>	
<p>16TH NOV 2010</p>	<p><u>Child Protection</u></p>	<p>Officer Report</p>	<p>At the request of the Committee, the Interim Director of Children’s Services submitted a report which outlined the statutory framework and the current level of child protection activity in Wirral.</p> <p>ulia Hassall, Head of Children’s Social Care, responded to comments from Members and informed the Committee that a Joint Protocol was in development between Children’s Services and Adult Social Services around the issue of child protection and mental health. She would also be happy to arrange a training session for all Members of the Council and the Chair suggested that this could be organised in the New Year with a series of events planned in advance.</p> <p>With the North West area having some of the highest numbers of children in care than any other region, Julia Hassall informed the Committee that she would be happy to research some of the best models nationally in respect of child protection activity</p>	

			<p>She stated that there was a drive nationally for Children's Centres to focus on hard to reach families.</p> <p>Resolved – That the report be noted.</p>	
26th Jan 2011	<u>“Narrowing the gap”</u>		<p>The Chair referred to the “Narrowing the gap” – Impact of deprivation funding’ scrutiny review, and that dates would be arranged for the Review Panel to meet.</p>	
26th Jan 2011	<u>Wirral’s Sure Start provision for children and their families</u>		<p>At the request of the Committee, the Interim Director of Children’s Services submitted a report which outlined the development in Wirral’s Sure Start provision for children and their families. The report informed members of the statutory duties within the Early Year developments and set out the key priorities and challenges.</p> <p>With 16 Sure Start Children’s Centres it was important that Wirral ensured they sustained a fully operational position, delivering their ‘full core offer’ within two years of designation. The full core offer included support for:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Childcare • Family support • Health services • Employment advice from Job Centre Plus • Access to the local authority’s information, advice and assistance service. <p>The key priorities and challenges included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continuing to fill the gaps between demand and supply identified in the Childcare Sufficiency Assessment to secure, as far as reasonably practicable, sufficient childcare for working parents of children up to the 	

			<p>age of 14 (18 for disabled children) supported by the delivery of a high quality information service for local families, parents and carers.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Promote the take up of formal childcare (including both the free early education entitlement and paid - for childcare supported through tax credits), in particular amongst lower income families.• Focus sharply on continuing to raise the standard of early learning and care provision by excellent delivery of the Early Years Foundation Stage, to secure a strong foundation for children's learning and development throughout other key stages.• Deliver a reduction in the achievement gap between the lowest achieving children and the rest, in the context of securing better results for all 5 year olds.• Continue to professionalise the early year's workforce by encouraging investment in, and equal access to, staff qualifications, particularly in the PVI sector and for childminders. <p>Responding to comments from Members, both the Interim Director and Mark Parkinson, Head of Learning & Achievement, informed the Committee that a number of separate grants would, in the coming financial year, be rolled into one single Early Intervention Grant. There would be a reduction in the size of the grant and it would be necessary to look at prioritising needs, though the Department would continue to deliver the key priorities, including those identified above. multi-agency working.</p> <p>The grant would be £15.1m for the coming year of which about £10m would be spent on Sure Start, although it was acknowledged that the grant would no</p>	
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			<p>longer be ring-fenced.</p> <p>They went on to outline some of the work being done to engage with hard to reach families and suggested that a further report could be brought back on</p> <p><u>Resolved – That Committee notes the scope of the Sure Start service delivery across Wirral for children and families.</u></p>	
<p>26th Jan 2011</p>	<p><u>A Report on support provided to Wirral school governors by the Council</u></p>		<p>At the request of the Committee, the Interim Director of Children's Services submitted a report on support provided to Wirral school governors by the Council.</p> <p>Currently Wirral Council maintained 124 schools, all of which had to have a single Governing Body and they had a wide range of statutory duties under law. There were currently over 2000 governors supporting Wirral schools, making it one of the biggest volunteer forces on the Wirral. All governors in maintained schools were members of the Wirral Governors' Forum which coordinated representation for Wirral Governors on a range of bodies locally, regionally and nationally, including the Wirral Schools' Forum and the Wirral Children's Trust Board. The Chair and Vice-Chair of Wirral Governors' Forum also liaised with senior colleagues in Wirral Council on the strategic development of support for Governors and also with the Governor Support Service.</p> <p>To support these volunteers, Wirral Council ran its Governor Support Service which was mainly served by three full-time Council employees with a manager and two admin supports</p> <p>It was overseen by a Strategic Service Manager, with many other staff and colleagues providing support directly and indirectly.</p>	

			<p>Members of the Committee, in particular, Jane Owens, Chair of the Governors' Forum and Richard Neale, Vice Chair of the Forum, expressed their support for the service, regarded as one of the best in the area.</p> <p>Responding to comments from Members, the Interim Director assured the Committee of the continuation of the service which, following the early voluntary retirement of the manager of the service, Margaret Dunfey, at the end of March, would be restructured. Representatives of Wirral Governors' Forum would be consulted as to the future strategic direction of Governor Support Services. The potential for shared service possibilities was also being explored with the Council's partners in the Learn Together Partnership for governor support services.</p> <p>Resolved –</p> <p>(1) That the report be noted.</p> <p>(2) That this Committee expresses its appreciation of the Governor Support Service and that the thanks of this Committee be accorded to Margaret Dunfey for all her work with the service.</p>	

Report 2

SUGGESTIONS FOR ADDITIONS TO WORK PROGRAMME FOR CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE WORK PROGRAMME 2010/2011

Topic Description	Topic suggested by	How the topic will be dealt with	Est. Completion Date
Reports on the impact of schools taking up academy status on the rest of the Authority's schools be brought to future meetings of this Committee.	Meeting 16 NOV 2010	OFFICER REPORT	

Report 3

PROPOSED OUTLINE MEETING SCHEDULE FOR THE MUNICIPAL YEAR CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE SCRUTINY COMMITTEE 2010/2011

Meeting Date	Topic Description
16 th NOVEMBER 2010	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Look at the current work of <u>the Youth Service</u> in the light of recent positive developments and investigate the impact of any potential reduction in funding either from possible cuts in specific grant like the Youth Opportunity Fund, or from general funding reductions .
16 th NOVEMBER 2010	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Consider the whole area of <u>Looked After Children</u>, the work being done now, and any likely impact of future decisions on funding. It was also suggested that the work carried out previously with looked after children should be revisited and the Director commented that he would be happy to facilitate this as there had been many changes over the past couple of years, including the establishment of the Children in Care Council.
16 th NOVEMBER 2010	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Consider the <u>whole area of Child Protection</u>, the work being done, the relationship with outside partners and investigate ways to ensure partners work together with the same priorities and inequities don't develop because of different budget strategies in the different organisations.
26 TH JANUARY 2011	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Look at the work carried out by Sure Start, and the relationship between Sure Start and primary schools, and later consequences between primary and secondary schools on learning age intakes, in order to have a clear rationale to present should Sure Start lose its protection in the future
26 TH JANUARY 2011	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ A report on the Governors' support service.

Report 4

PROGRESS REPORT ON IN-DEPTH PANEL REVIEWS CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

END OF MUNICIPAL YEAR 2009/2010 - START OF MUNICIPAL YEAR 2010/2011

Title of Review	Members of Panel	Progress to Date	Date Due to report back
<p>'Narrowing the Gap'. Impact of Deprivation Funding Review CONTINUING REVIEW</p>	<p>tba</p>	<p>Draft Scope 17.09.2009 Initial Review Panel held November 2009 First round of school meetings January 2010 Further school meetings February 2010</p>	
		<p><u>Sept Meeting</u> A Member referred to the "Narrowing the gap" – Impact of deprivation funding' scrutiny review and the need to continue this to a conclusion. The Chair suggested the need for the original members of the Scrutiny Review Panel to meet. Councillor Sheila Clarke, Cabinet Member for Children's Services and Lifelong Learning, and one of the original Panel members, indicated that she would be happy to meet, together with one of the Scrutiny Officers.</p>	
	<p>16 NOV 2010 The Chair Chris Meaden Councillors P Hayes and Harney and Mrs J Kearney should form the Review Panel</p>	<p>The Chair referred to the "Narrowing the gap" – Impact of deprivation funding' scrutiny review, she commented that this would be re-scoped with herself, Councillors P Hayes and Harney and Mrs J Kearney on the Review Panel and a progress report would be submitted to the next meeting.</p> <p>Resolved – That the Work Programme be agreed and the Committee note the re-scoping of the "Narrowing the gap" – Impact of deprivation funding' review</p>	

