

People Overview & Scrutiny Committee
Thursday 14th July 2016

REPORT TITLE:	CHILDREN SUB-COMMITTEE
REPORT OF:	Clare Fish (Strategic Director of Families & Wellbeing)

REPORT SUMMARY

This report enables members to approve the terms of reference and nominate the membership to the Children Sub-Committee for the 2016/17 municipal year.

RECOMMENDATION/S

1. Committee approves the terms of reference for the Children Sub-Committee.
2. Committee is requested to make the appropriate nominations for members and deputies to the Children Sub-Committee.

SUPPORTING INFORMATION

1.0 REASON/S FOR RECOMMENDATION/S

The recommendations will ensure that the work of the Children Sub-Committee will continue in the forthcoming municipal year. The remit of the Committee will focus specifically on the outcomes for children, young people and families.

2.0 OTHER OPTIONS CONSIDERED

The option for this work to be undertaken by the People Overview & Scrutiny Committee has been considered but is not deemed appropriate because of the scope of activities involved.

3.0 BACKGROUND INFORMATION

3.1 The Children Sub-Committee was established for the 2015/16 municipal year as a successor to the Attainment Sub-Committee. Rather than focussing on the scrutiny of educational attainment, the Children Sub-Committee developed a remit to concentrate on the broader outcomes of children and young people.

3.2 The recent changes to Wirral's scrutiny model will lead to a greater emphasis on scrutinising the delivery of the Wirral Plan pledges. It is, therefore, proposed that the Sub-Committee should focus its priorities on scrutinising the achievement of key outcomes, as detailed in the appropriate Wirral Plan pledges and Wirral's Strategy for Children, Young People and Families. The specific Wirral Plan pledges within the remit of the Sub-Committee are:

- Children are ready for school
- Young people are ready for work and adulthood
- Vulnerable children reach their full potential

3.3 In order to reflect those outcomes, it is proposed that the work priorities for the Sub-Committee will focus on issues for children such as foundation years, school readiness, educational attainment and children's social care. The proposed terms of reference for the Sub-Committee are attached as Appendix 1 to this report.

3.4 As with the previous municipal year, it is proposed that the Children Sub-Committee will be established on a politically proportionate basis. This will mean that the membership for the 2016/17 municipal year will be Labour 4; Conservative 2; Liberal Democrat 1. The Chair and Vice Chair of the Sub-Committee for the municipal year will be nominated at the first meeting of the Sub-Committee. Deputies can be nominated as detailed in the terms of reference.

3.5 The initial intention is that a minimum of three formal meetings of the Sub-Committee will be held during the municipal year, with meetings suggested in September, December and March. Additional meetings can be arranged if required.

3.6 It is proposed that the work programme will be agreed by members at the first meeting of the Children Sub-Committee.

4.0 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

Not Applicable

5.0 LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

The terms of reference for the Sub-Committee are attached to this report.

6.0 RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS: ICT, STAFFING AND ASSETS

Officer support for the Children Sub-Committee will continue to be provided from within existing resources.

7.0 RELEVANT RISKS

Not Applicable

8.0 ENGAGEMENT/CONSULTATION

Not Applicable

9.0 EQUALITY IMPLICATIONS

There are no direct equality implications of this report.

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APPENDICES

Appendix 1: Children Sub-Committee – Terms of Reference

APPENDIX 1

CHILDREN SUB-COMMITTEE

OBJECTIVES

The objective of the Children Sub-Committee is to support the Council and its partners in delivering Wirral's Strategy for children, young people and families to ensure:

- Children are ready for school;
- Young people are ready for work and adulthood
- Vulnerable children thrive and reach their full potential
- Children and young people feel safe and are safe
- Children and young people's views and voices are evidenced in and integral to all of the above objectives.

TERMS OF REFERENCE

The Children Sub-Committee will provide oversight, support and challenge to the activities of Wirral Council and its partners in relation to the following areas:

- Children's attainment in school, focusing in particular on the attainment of the most vulnerable children, evidenced by the gap in attainment narrowing;
- The quality and performance of educational provision overall in Wirral, as judged by Ofsted;
- The quality and effectiveness of pre-birth to five year old support and provision for children and parents, leading to children having the best start in life, evidenced by their readiness for school;
- The quality and effectiveness of specialist children social care and partner provision to support the most vulnerable children, leading to children being safe and achieving their full potential;
- Targeted early help effectively supports more children to thrive and live safely in their families and communities
- Monitoring Local Authority performance against its statutory duties

PROPOSED WORKING PRACTICES OF THE CHILDREN SUB-COMMITTEE

Sub Committee meetings	
Chair	The Chair and Vice-Chair will be appointed at the first meeting of the Sub-Committee in the municipal year
Membership	The membership of the Sub-Committee will be politically proportional. (On the current political balance, this translates into 4 Labour; 2 Conservative; 1 Liberal Democrat). In addition, the 4 statutory education co-optees will be members of the Sub-Committee.
Deputies	A maximum of 8 Elected Members per political group may be nominated to sit on the Sub-Committee as Deputies. The appointment of Deputies shall take effect upon the Group Leaders of each political group notifying the Head of Legal & Member Services of their deputy nominations.
Frequency	To meet a minimum of three times per year.
Work programme	The Sub-Committee will identify a work programme for the year, to include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Task & Finish Groups • Standing Items • Specific Officer reports / presentations
Reporting Requirements	The minutes of the Sub-Committee meetings will be reported to the next available People Overview & Scrutiny Committee.
Communication & Transparency	Meetings will be held in public with agendas being published prior to the meeting and formal minutes being produced. Therefore, support from Committee services will be required.