

CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE – Terms of reference

In support of Objective 4 of the Corporate Plan, which is:

to raise the aspirations of young people, and in particular to:

- ***raise overall educational attainment, particularly that of lower achieving young people and***
- ***safely reduce the number of looked-after children,***

the Overview and Scrutiny Committee will

(i) review and/or scrutinise decisions made or actions taken in connection with the discharge of the Council's functions;

(ii) make reports and/or recommendations to the Council and/or the Cabinet and/or any joint or area committee in connection with any policy or the discharge of any functions;

(iii) consider any matter affecting the area or its inhabitants; and

(iv) exercise the right to call in, for reconsideration, decisions made but not yet implemented by the Executive;

within the following terms of reference of the Cabinet portfolio(s) indicated:

Children's Services and Lifelong Learning

(1) The powers and duties set out in

- the Children Act, 1989
- the Education Act, 1996
- the School Standards and Framework Act, 1998
- the Education Act, 2002,
- the Children Act, 2004
- the Education Act 2005
- the Education and Inspection Act 2006 and
- any other legislation relevant to the functions defined below.

(2) The promotion of improvement in the outcomes for children and young people in terms of their health, their education and training, their ability to make a positive contribution, and their social and economic well-being.

(3) Ensuring that children and young people in Wirral are safe from harm and neglect, and that their welfare is promoted.

(4) The provision of services for children and young people including services for children and young people in care to the Council, provision for early years childcare and education, primary and secondary education, adult education, and youth and play activities.

(5) The promotion of effective partnership working between all the statutory and non-statutory agencies which provide services for children and young people and, where feasible, to promote the integration of services.

- (6) Ensure that systems are in place to manage and scrutinise the performance of all the services for children and young people.
- (7) Ensure that resources are efficiently and effectively targeted towards the improvement of outcomes.
- (8) Liaison with the Strategic Health Authority and health trusts serving Wirral on matters relating to children and young people.
- (9) Liaison with the Learning and Skills Council on matters relating to further education and training, ensuring, in consultation with the Cabinet member for Regeneration and Planning Strategy, that the training needs of employers, employees and prospective employees are met.
- (10) Liaison with the Greater Merseyside Connexions Partnership on matters relating to young people's preparation for working life and specifically to have responsibility for the regulation of the employment of young people.
- (11) Liaison with the Police Authority, the Probation Service and the Youth Offending Service on matters relating to youth crime and disorder.

All portfolios

- (12) Those parts of the Corporate Plan within the remit of this Committee,
- (13) To seek to achieve continuing and improving performance, better value for money and customer satisfaction in respect of those services provided through these areas.
- (14) To support the Council's equal opportunity policies by promoting and monitoring initiatives to encourage equality of opportunity amongst disadvantaged groups including: the disabled, ethnic minorities, the long-term unemployed, the poor, and women;
- (15) To scrutinise Local Area Agreements that fall within the areas set out above and to hold partners to account.

OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEES – General terms of reference

The specific terms of reference for each overview and scrutiny committee are set out below. Their general functions are as follows:

(a) Policy development and review - Overview and Scrutiny committees may:

- (i) assist the Council and the Cabinet in the development of the budget and policy framework by in-depth analysis of policy issues;
- (ii) conduct research, community and other consultation in the analysis of policy issues and possible options;
- (iii) consider and implement mechanisms to encourage and enhance community participation in the development of policy options;
- (iv) question members of the Cabinet and committees and chief officers about their views on issues and proposals affecting the area; and
- (v) liaise with other external organisations operating in the area (whether national, regional or local) to ensure that the interests of local people are enhanced by collaborative working.

(b) Scrutiny - Overview and Scrutiny committees may:

- (i) review and scrutinise the decisions made by and performance of the Cabinet and committees and Council officers, both in relation to individual decisions and over periods of time;
- (ii) review and scrutinise the performance of the Council in relation to its policy objectives, performance targets and/or particular service areas;
- (iii) question members of the Cabinet and committees, and chief officers, about their decisions and performance, whether generally or in comparison with service plans and targets over a period of time, or in relation to particular decisions, initiatives or projects;
- (iv) make recommendations to the Cabinet or appropriate committees of the Council arising from the outcome of the scrutiny process;
- (v) review and scrutinise the performance of other public bodies in the area and invite reports from them by requesting them to address the overview and scrutiny committee and local people about their activities and performance; and,
- (vi) question and gather evidence from any person (with their consent).

(c) Best Value - Overview and Scrutiny Committees will:

- (i) recommend the terms of reference for best value reviews to the Cabinet;
- (ii) receive progress reports on best value reviews;
- (iii) recommend the final report and improvement plans to Cabinet.

- (d) **Finance** - Overview and Scrutiny Committees may exercise overall responsibility for any finance made available to them.
- (e) **Annual Report** - Overview and Scrutiny Committees may report annually to the Council on their workings and make recommendations for future work programmes and amend working methods if appropriate.
- (f) **Officers** - Overview and Scrutiny Committees may exercise overall responsibility for the work programme of any officers employed to support their work.

SCRUTINY PROGRAMME BOARD

The Scrutiny Programme Board will:

- (i) approve and co-ordinate the work programme for the five themed overview and scrutiny committees including resolving any conflict between such committees;
- (ii) allocate work to (or remove work from) any of the five overview and scrutiny committees
- (iii) review or scrutinise decisions made or other actions taken in relation to any executive functions, particularly (but not exclusively) in relation to cross-cutting issues or matters not within the terms of reference of any of the five themed overview and scrutiny committees.
- (iv) consider any call-in notices in relation to any executive functions and determine such notices or allocate them to one or more of the five themed overview and scrutiny committees as it considers most appropriate.
- (v) be responsible for the development and monitoring of an annual scrutiny work programme;
- (vi) undertake scrutiny in its own right with regard to cross-cutting or strategic issues not covered by other overview and scrutiny committees;
- (vii) identify and share good scrutiny practice across all overview and scrutiny committees.