



CHILDREN AND FAMILIES OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

Tuesday, 17 March 2020

REPORT TITLE:	CHILDREN & FAMILIES OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE – WORK PROGRAMME UPDATE
REPORT OF:	HEAD OF INTELLIGENCE (STATUTORY SCRUTINY OFFICER)

REPORT SUMMARY

The Children and Families Overview & Scrutiny Committee, in co-operation with the other three Overview & Scrutiny Committees, is responsible for proposing and delivering an annual scrutiny work programme. This work programme should align with the corporate priorities of the Council. It is envisaged that the work programme will be formed from a combination of scrutiny reviews, standing items and requested officer reports. This report provides the Committee with an opportunity to plan and regularly review its work across the municipal year. The work programme for the Children and Families Overview & Scrutiny Committee is attached as Appendix 1 to this report.

RECOMMENDATION/S

The Children and Families Overview & Scrutiny Committee is requested to;

1. Approve the proposed Children and Families Overview & Scrutiny Committee work programme for 2019/20, making any required amendments

SUPPORTING INFORMATION

1.0 REASON/S FOR RECOMMENDATION/S

- 1.1 To ensure members of the Children and Families Overview & Scrutiny Committee have the opportunity to contribute to the delivery of the annual work programme

2.0 OTHER OPTIONS CONSIDERED

- 2.1 Not applicable

3.0 BACKGROUND INFORMATION

3.1 THE SCRUTINY WORK PROGRAMME AND STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES

The work programme should align with the priorities of the Council and its partners. The programme will be informed by:

- The Wirral Plan pledges
- The Council Plan
- The Council's transformation programme
- The Council's Forward Plan
- Service performance information
- Risk management information
- Public or service user feedback
- Referrals from Cabinet / Council

3.2 Delivering the Work programme

It is anticipated that the work programme will be delivered through a combination of:

- Scrutiny reviews undertaken by task & finish groups
- Evidence days and workshops
- Committee reports provided by officers
- Standing committee agenda items, for example, performance monitoring and financial monitoring
- Spotlight sessions
- Standing panels or working groups (where deemed necessary)

As some of the selected topics may well cut across the Wirral Plan themes and Council Plan priorities, it is anticipated that some of the scrutiny topics may be of interest to members of more than one committee. In these circumstances, opportunities for members of more than one committee to work jointly on an item of scrutiny work will be explored. Regular work programme update reports will provide the Committee with an opportunity to plan and regularly review its work across the municipal year.

4.0 UPDATE ON CURRENT SCRUTINY ACTIVITY

- 4.1 Healthy Lives Working Group Two reports on obesity in the borough were brought to Committee in January and February 2019 to look at the Obesity statistics in the

borough. It was agreed at committee in February 2020 to put together a working group to further understand the issues and make recommendations. All the sessions have now concluded, and a report is attached as a separate agenda item

4.2 Reality Check Visit

Further to the Children and Families Overview and Scrutiny Committees program of Reality Check Visits, The chair and party spokespersons of the Children & Families Overview and Scrutiny Committee elected to pay a visit to Wirral's Virtual School Service which is now based within the Children and Families Departments in Cheshire Lines.

The Virtual School plays a vital role in the promotion of educational progress and attainments of Children in Care and is central to the role of Corporate Parenting with the aim to make education transformative in the lives of the most vulnerable young People.

Previous scrutiny reviews and reality check visits had highlighted the importance on Personal Education Plans (PEPs) within care planning and had also noted concerns that they did not meet the needs of the young person, schools or social services.

Personal Education Plans (PEPs)

- PEPs are a statutory requirement and a key document in a Care Plan, they should be completed each term, uploaded via a portal and with an annual meeting at the start of the Autumn term
- PEPS should contain information on targets, progress and interventions. It should also show how Pupil Premium Plus will be used to increase attainment, attendance and behaviour
- Education Progress Officers are there to guide and encourage schools to complete the PEPs, and then quality assure them, providing feedback to schools to ensure the PEPs are to a high standard.

Members were aware there had been significant changes to the service area since September 2018 and were keen to meet with staff to find out more. The Chair of the Committee attended alongside scrutiny support and were introduced to the Virtual Schools Team.

The Chair received an update on the service area from the Head of Virtual Schools and met the team of Educational Progress Officers. Scrutiny were advised that they are almost at full capacity staffing wish, but still have an unfilled post for early years.

The Chair was shown a good example of the PEP form, as well as how Liquid Logic and PowerBI help to streamline systems, information and data gathering. Scrutiny also got the opportunity to sit with the teams and go through the systems to see how it works in practice.

Overall, it was pleasing to see how Communication between the team, social services and Schools is improving and the notable emphasis on raising attainment, and enrichment by ensuring the PEP forms are of a high quality.

A full report will be shared with Members of the Children and Families Overview and Scrutiny Committee in due course and will be shared with the Cabinet Member for Children, Families and Education. It will then be sent to the Children, Families and Education Committee for ratification in the next Municipal Year.

5.0 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

This report is for Members information and there are no direct financial implication

6.0 LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

This report is for Members information and there are no direct legal implications

7.0 RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS: STAFFING, ICT AND ASSETS

The delivery of the scrutiny work programme will be met from within existing resources

8.0 RELEVANT RISKS

This report if for Members information and all relevant risks in delivering the work programme have been considered.

9.0 ENGAGEMENT/CONSULTATION

Items on the agenda and work programme have been subject to engagement and consultation where applicable.

10.0 EQUALITY IMPLICATIONS

Individual Items on the agenda and work programme have been assessed and reviewed in regard to equality, however this report has been produced for information to Members and has no direct equality implications.

10.0 ENVIRONMENT AND CLIMATE IMPLICATIONS

The content and or/recommendations contained in this report are expected to have no impact on emissions of GHG

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APPENDICES

Appendix 1 – Work programme

BACKGROUND PAPERS

SUBJECT HISTORY (last 3 years)

Council Meeting	Date
Children and Families Overview & Scrutiny Committee	28th January 2020
Children and Families Overview & Scrutiny Committee	11th November 2019
Children and Families Overview & Scrutiny Committee	25th September 2019
Children and Families Overview & Scrutiny Committee	3rd July 2019