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**COMMITTEE'S WORK PROGRAMME 2019 - 2020**

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**Purpose of the Report**

1. The Council's Constitution states (Scrutiny Procedure Rule 7) that each Scrutiny Committee will set its own work programme. The Children & Young People Scrutiny Committee's terms of reference provide the Committee with the responsibility for the scrutiny of a number of specific service areas. The Committee is also responsible for the scrutiny of a number of policies and strategies that affect children and young people in Cardiff, plus it can undertake investigations into any matters relating to the children and young people of Cardiff.
2. This report provides the Committee with the outcome of the Members' consideration of the many issues that it could scrutinise. At a forum meeting of the Committee on 9 September, Members reviewed the possible items and the resulting list has been populated into the calendar, attached at **Appendix A**, for the Committee's consideration and approval. Members may also wish to approve the commissioning of the proposed Task & Finish Inquiry, as identified in **paragraph 10**.

**Background**

3. Scrutiny plays an essential role in promoting accountability, efficiency and effectiveness in the Council's decision making process and the way in which it delivers services. The main roles of the Scrutiny Committees are:
  - Holding the Cabinet and officers as decision-makers to account.
  - Being a 'critical friend', through questioning how decisions have been made to provide a 'check and balance' to decision makers, adding legitimacy to the decision making process.
  - Undertaking reviews of Council services and policy.
  - Undertaking reviews to develop Council services and policies.

4. The Committee at its meeting on 11 June 2019 agreed to hold a meeting of the whole Committee, in forum mode, to consider items and issues for inclusion on the potential work programme for this municipal year. The Committee, at its forum meeting on 9 September, prioritise the consideration of various performance reports, potential policy development work and potential scrutiny inquiry, for the year. Each item was reviewed by the Members and prioritised using a list of items developed from a number of specific areas:
  - Prior Year Committee agendas
  - Requests from previous Committee meeting letters
  - Governance items
  - Cabinet Forward Plan
  - Suggestions from Committee Members
  - Suggestions from Council Directors
  - Suggestions from external stakeholders
  
5. The Committee also agreed that to aid in focussing the agendas more effectively and maximising the impact of the scrutiny of each item at Committee, Members would adapt the way that some issues would be scrutinised by some reports and briefings to be sent to Members prior to the Committee meeting for their consideration and comment. Should any concerns or questions be raised these would be highlighted at the Committee meeting to enable Cabinet Members and Officers to respond in a timely manner.
  
6. The resultant list of items was then added to a work plan calendar, copy attached at **Appendix A** to form a work plan for the full year. Arising from the annual programme a more detailed four monthly work programme will be published to enable interested parties to be aware of the issues being considered. As a result the work programme will be reviewed by Committee every three months and the resultant four monthly programme approved for publication.
  
7. Detailed below is a schedule of items which includes the task identified under the four work areas of the Committee, namely:

- **Corporate Plan and budget development and delivery** – This enables Members to review, challenge and analysis of the Council’s key policy documents affecting Children & Young People.
- **Performance and Improvement** – These reports enable the Committee to receive inspection reports, regularly review service area performance information, identify areas for further investigation and appraise the effectiveness of improvement actions and their implementation.
- **Progress and briefing reports** – These report provide the Members with a briefing on each key area together with a progress report setting out the achievements to date, challenges identified and future actions.
- **Reports from external bodies** – These reports enable the Committee to receive draft copies of partnership, consortium and joint working annual reports, to review objectives and outcomes and assess the impact of the partnerships’ work.

## Issues

8. The work programme for each Scrutiny Committee identifies various types of scrutiny investigations. Members of the Committee have consistently committed to regularly monitor and review corporate strategies, budget proposals and their delivery, performance and improvement reports, governance reports and reshaping services proposals. The Members agreed to continue this approach and identified a number of areas for consideration by the Committee and these subsequently agreed with Directors, as detailed below:

## Corporate Plan and Budgetary development and delivery

- Corporate Plan – February 2020
- Draft Budget 2020/21 – February 2020.
- The Children’s Service element of the Social Services Delivery Plan 2020/21 - May 2020
- The Education Delivery Plan - June 2020

## Performance and Improvement - information and monitoring reports

### Education

- Provisional School Results – October 2019
- Performance of Cardiff Schools –, Annual statutory performance report to include briefings on Closing the Gap, NEETs and EOTAS, - January 2020.
- Consortium performance update, in January 2020.

### Children's Services

- Children Services Quarterly performance reports, September 2019, December 2019 to include a briefing on Kinship (March 2020) briefing on the MASH (May 2020).
- Social Care Director's Statement, - July 2020.

## Progress and briefing reports

- Wales Audit Office safeguarding report – September 2019
- Signs of Safety progress report – September 2019
- Curriculum and skills training briefing, - October 2019.
- Consortium Review report – October 2019
- Child Friendly Cardiff progress briefing – November 2019
- Fostering review progress report – November 2019
- Early Year intervention and prevention progress report – December 2019
- Youth Offending service review briefing – December 2019
- Recruitment of welsh speaking teachers consortium briefing – January 2020
- ALN progress report – January 2020 & June 2020
- Ty Storrie update – March 2020
- Outcome focussed care progress report – March 2020
- Children's disability briefing – May 2020
- Child poverty Briefing – May 2020
- Children's services resources progress report – May 2020
- Cardiff 2030 progress report – June 2020
- Progress report on the implementation of the Out of County Placement report recommendations - July 2020.

## Reports from partnership bodies monitoring

- Safeguarding Annual report. – September 2019
- Corporate Parenting Annual Report – December 2019
- Regional Adoption Service Annual Report – December 2019
- South Central Consortium annual report - January 2020.
- Families' First Annual Report – July 2020
- Integrated Family Support Annual Report – July 2020

## Pre-decision Scrutiny of Draft Cabinet Reports

### Education

- Cardiff 2030 Vision and Strategy - October 2019
- School Organisation Plans – as and when.

### Children's Services

- Children Services Commissioning Strategy – October 2019.

## Pre-Decision Scrutiny and Call-in

The Committee may also wish to undertake an evaluation of proposals prior to their consideration by the Cabinet, or prior to their implementation. Under these circumstances the issues can require detailed scrutiny and the Chair of the Committee will identify which items the Committee can have the most impact on. As such the work programme has included sufficient flexibility to enable the Committee to undertake this work effectively. Currently there are no items identified on the Cabinet Forward plan.

9. The Committee Members, at the Forum meeting considered a number of potential inquiries, these included:
- Admission numbers, catchment areas and school capacity
  - Fostering Placements
  - Recruitment and retention of social workers

- The use of schools for sport (joint with Economy & Culture Scrutiny Committee)

Following discussions around each of the suggested inquiries the members agreed to undertake an inquiry which would help aid in the development of work force planning in respect of Children's services front line staff. This inquiry was suggested by the Director of Social Services and supported by the Committee Chairman and forum Members. The proposal is to work in partnership with the Social services Directorate to develop a plan to enable the Council to train, recruit and retain social workers thereby ensuring an appropriate establishment.

The Committee may wish to consider and agree whether or not to:

- a. Hold a Task & Finish Inquiry to develop of work force planning in respect of Children's services front line staff
- b. To work in partnership with the Social Services Directorate, and the University
- c. To receive evidence from stakeholders and young people on the key aspects of the policy.
- d. To report its findings to Cabinet.

The anticipated outcomes from the review of the workforce plan for Children's services staff has been identified as:

- To improved recruitment and retention of social workers across Children's Services;
- Reduce the reliance on agency workers;
- Ensure a stable and effective work force within Children's services.

## **WAY FORWARD**

10. It is suggested that the Committee considers agreeing the task & finish and scrutiny topics as proposed **in paragraph 9** of this report, and further agrees the draft timetable of issues for the Committee as set out in **paragraph 8** above and summarised in **Appendix A**.

## **LEGAL IMPLICATIONS**

11. The Scrutiny Committee is empowered to enquire, consider, review and recommend but not to make policy decisions. As the recommendations in this report are to consider and

review matters there are no direct legal implications. However, legal implications may arise if and when the matters under review are implemented with or without any modifications. Any report with recommendations for decision that goes to Cabinet/Council will set out any legal implications arising from those recommendations. All decisions taken by or on behalf of the Council must (a) be within the legal powers of the Council; (b) comply with any procedural requirement imposed by law; (c) be within the powers of the body or person exercising powers on behalf of the Council; (d) be undertaken in accordance with the procedural requirements imposed by the Council e.g. Scrutiny Procedure Rules; (e) be fully and properly informed; (f) be properly motivated; (g) be taken having regard to the Council's fiduciary duty to its taxpayers; and (h) be reasonable and proper in all the circumstances.

## **FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

12. The Scrutiny Committee is empowered to enquire, consider, review and recommend but not to make policy decisions. As the recommendations in this report are to consider and review matters there are no direct financial implications at this stage in relation to any of the work programme. However, financial implications may arise if and when the matters under review are implemented with or without any modifications. Any report with recommendations for decision that goes to Cabinet/Council will set out any financial implications arising from those recommendations.

## **RECOMMENDATIONS**

The Committee is recommended:

- To consider the information set out in **Paragraph 9** of the report and agree the proposed Work Plan Timetable for 2019/20 as set out in **Appendix A**.
- To agree to undertake the Task & Finish Group Inquiry as set out in **Paragraph 10**, in accordance with Part 1 of the Scrutiny procedure rules,
- To receive further work programme update to enable a four monthly work programme to be published quarterly.

**Davina Fiore**

**Director Governance and Legal Services**

**16 September 2019**