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COMMITTEE'S WORK PROGRAMME 2017 - 18

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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 the July Committee meeting 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.
3. Members may also wish to approve the commissioning of any or all of the proposed Task & Finish Inquiries, as listed in **paragraph 10**.

**Background**

4. 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.

5. The Committee at its meeting on 19 July 2017 considered a report setting out the potential items that could be considered during the municipal year. Each item was reviewed by the Members and prioritised using a list of items developed from a number of specific areas:

- i) Prior Year Committee agendas
- ii) Requests from previous Committee meeting letters
- iii) Governance items
- iv) Cabinet Forward Plan
- v) Suggestions from Committee Members
- vi) Suggestions from Council Directors
- vii) Suggestions from external stakeholders (eg C3SC / Youth Council / Looked After Children)
- viii) Items carried forward from last year's work programme.

6. The Committee at its meeting on 19 July 2017 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 27 July 2017, prioritise the consideration of various performance reports, potential policy development work and potential scrutiny inquiries, for the year.

7. 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 issues would be scrutinised in the future to include:

- 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.

- Budget monitoring reports to be scrutinised by a Committee Panel, meeting throughout the year. The Panel would regularly report back to Committee with their comments, concerns or requests for further investigation at full Committee, to enable Cabinet Members and Officers to respond.

8. To enable the work programme to reflect this more focused approach the Members identified those issues which they had jointly prioritised and further determined whether it would be most appropriate to scrutinise each item either at:

- i) Full Committee
- ii) Briefing report to Committee Members, prior to Committee
- iii) Task & Finish Investigation
- iv) Informal Member Panel, meeting through the year.

9. The resultant list of items was then added to a work programme calendar, copy attached at **Appendix A** to form a work programme for the full year. The schedule of items detailed below 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

10. 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 as detailed below:

### Corporate Plan and Budgetary development and delivery

- Draft Budget / Corporate Plan – at Committee in February 2018.
- The Children's Service element of the Social Services Delivery Plan 2018/19 in April 2018
- The Education Delivery Plan in April 2018
- Children's Services Budgeted Savings – at a quarterly Committee panel– to review the work undertaken to achieve the identified saving in the 2017/18 budget, based on financial data, including the impact of the savings on services.
- Education Budgeted Savings – at a quarterly Committee panel – to review the work being undertaken to achieve the identified saving in the 2017/18 budget, based on financial data including the impact of the savings on services.

### Performance and Improvement - information and monitoring reports

#### Education

- Cardiff 2020 – to review of progress in implementing and performance monitoring, at full Committee in September 2017, December 2017, March 2018 and June 2018.

- Performance of Cardiff Schools –, Annual statutory performance report with consortium, at Committee in January 2017.
- Quarterly Performance monitoring reports, at Committee, September 2017, December 2017, March 2018 and June 2018.
- Consortium update, at Committee in January 2018.
- Update on the implementation of the Committee's Governor's Reports recommendations, at Committee, May 2018.

## **Children's Services**

- Children Services Quarterly performance reports at Committee, September 2017, December 2017, March 2018 and June 2018.
- Social Care Director's Statement. This will be a joint Committee meeting with Community and Adult Service Scrutiny Committee, in July 2018.
- Progress report on the implementation of the CHAD report recommendations, at Committee in March 2018.
- Progress report on the implementation of the Child Sexual Exploitation recommendations, at Committee in March 2018.
- Progress report on the implementation of the Child & Adolescent Mental Health recommendations, at Committee in July 2018.

## **Progress and briefing reports**

- Social Services Signs of Safety, at Committee in September 2017.
- Summer holiday enrichment programme, at Committee in September 2017
- School Estates and Special Schools maintenance, at Committee in October 2017
- Youth Service and Youth Engagements at Committee in April 2018
- Youth Offending Service progress at Committee in April 2018
- Fostering Service update briefing direct to Members in December 2017
- Adolescent Resource Centre update briefing to Members in April 2018
- Community focused schools briefing paper to Members in May 2018

## Reports from external bodies monitoring

- South Central Consortium annual report, at full Committee in January 2017.
- Families' First progress report with comments from the Youth Council, at full Committee in October 2017.
- Adoption Service annual report, paper to Members October 2017.

## Inquiries– to be undertaken by Task & Finish Groups

The Committee Members, at the Forum meeting, suggested a number of issues that the Committee could include as scrutiny Inquiries. The Members identified five potential Inquiries and requested scrutiny officers discuss benefits of each with the service area and provide an inquiry scope for the Members to consider. The items are:

### ▪ **Children's Services Out of County Placements**

The inquiry was requested by three Cabinet Members, the Committee Chairman and Members. The proposal was to inquiry into the current types of Children's Services provision and which of the gaps in provision could be provided in the local area. The Committee may wish to consider and agree whether or not to:

- a. Hold a Task & Finish Inquiry into the gaps in local provision, for children's services that have an impact the Council not being able to place all children within the local area.;
- b. Receive evidence from the Welsh Government, other local authorities, third sector organisations and council officers to identify key issues that impact on placing looked after children out of county.
- c. To identify gaps in provision, which could be provided with in the local area. To report the inquiries finding to the Cabinet Member and Welsh Government where appropriate.
- d. Report the inquiries findings and recommendations to the Cabinet

### ▪ **Special Educational Needs and Additional Learning Needs Provision**

The inquiry was requested by a Cabinet Member and supported by the Committee. The proposal is to review and appraise the current Special Educational Needs and Additional Learning Needs provision in Cardiff, to determine how best to provide the

services and support to pupils with special needs, any gaps in provision and its impact on out of County Spend.

During discussions on the work programme the Director of Education agreed to provide the Committee with a briefing and progress report on Additional Learning Planning together with the resultant out of county spend at the Committee's December meeting.

It is therefore proposed that the Committee may wish to postpone the consideration of this inquiry until Committee has received the ALN Planning report at the December meeting, following which Members may wish to decide to undertake an inquiry.

To consider and agree whether to:

- a. Receive a report, in December, on Additional Learning Needs & Special Educational Needs Planning and following that meeting agree whether to consider undertaking a Task & Finish Inquiry.

#### ▪ **Young People and Drug Taking**

The inquiry was requested by a Cabinet Member and supported by the Committee. The proposal is to review and appraise the current processes in place across all stakeholders in respect of young people's involvement in drug dealing across the City, and the impact of the reduction in youth services may have in precipitating this. The Inquiry could also help develop a Council and partnership wide approach, to addressing incidences of Drug dealing across the City. Two non-scrutiny Councillors have also indicated their interest in being part of this inquiry.

This area falls within the Terms of Reference of the Community and Adult Services Scrutiny Committee which is also the Crime and Disorder Scrutiny Committee, it may therefore be more appropriate for this to be a Joint inquiry between the two committee's.

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

- a. Hold a Joint Task & Finish Inquiry into the levels of drug taking across the City and the reasons for young people's involvement;
- b. The Task & Finish group to include non-scrutiny members;
- c. Receive evidence from the Welsh Government, Members of the Safer and Cohesive Communities Board, South Wales Police other local authorities, Third

Sector organisations, communities and council officers to identify key issues, policies and protocols that can address young people taking and dealing with drugs.

d. Report the inquiries findings and recommendations to the Cabinet

▪ **Father engagement with Social Services**

The inquiry was requested by a Committee member and supported by the Committee. The proposal is to review and appraise the current level of complaints from Fathers to identify any themes across the complaints that could highlight areas of support which need reviewing.

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

- a. Hold a Joint Task & Finish Inquiry into Fathers engagement with Social Services;
- b. Receive an analysis of complaints from Fathers to identify and themes which can be addressed.
- c. To undertake further investigations into any areas identified from the complaints and determine what actions can be undertaken to address any issues identified.
- d. Report the inquiries findings and recommendations to the Cabinet

▪ **Asylum Seeker & Refugee Young People.**

The inquiry was requested by the Advocacy Service and supported by the Committee. The proposal is to review and appraise the services and support for young people who arrive in Cardiff as refugees. The Council currently receives asylum seekers and refugees through three separate mechanisms, Dublin 11, Dubs and unexpected arrivals.

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

- a. Hold a Task & Finish Inquiry into the services and support for asylum seekers and refugee young people arriving in Cardiff;
- b. Receive evidence on the present numbers of asylum seekers and refugees young people arriving in Cardiff, the services and support provided and to identify any gaps in provision.
- c. To consider undertaking research into the impact of being a refugee in Cardiff.
- d. Report the inquiries findings and recommendations to the Cabinet



## **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. Items already identified on the Cabinet Forward plan include:

- i) School Organisation Plan proposals, at various times throughout the year.
- ii) 21st Century Schools Programme Band B Schools at full Committee in October 2017
- iii) Housing and support services for young people - recommissioning of accommodation for all young people aged 16 – 25 in October 2017
- iv) Schools Admissions Policy and sufficiency of places, at full Committee prior to Cabinet. In November 2017

## **Education Consortium Joint Scrutiny Panel**

The Chairman recently met with the Managing Director of the South Central Education Consortium together with the Chairs and officers from the five Local Authority's Scrutiny Committees (Bridgend, Cardiff, Rhondda Cynon Taff, Merthyr Tydfil and the Valle of Glamorgan) to discuss the potential for a joint scrutiny panel to meet termly to scrutinise the work of the Consortium.

The statutory responsibility for the performance of schools resides in individual Local Authorities together with the associated Consortium's performance, with Consortium staff in attendance, however the scrutiny of the Consortium itself, is also essential and an appropriate scrutiny structure needs to be put in place to consider the performance of the region, share best practice and information across all five Scrutiny Committees'.

At the meeting the group agreed that, subject to the approval of the Consortiums Joint Committee, a Joint Panel of Scrutiny Chairs and Scrutiny Officers would be established to scrutinise the work of the Consortium. The panel would consist of the Chairmen of the Education Scrutiny Committees in each of the Local Authorities (or a nominated

representative of the Scrutiny Committee) supported by a nominated Scrutiny Officer. That the Working Group will meet three times a year with meetings scheduled shortly after each meeting of the Consortium's Joint Committee.

It was proposed that the Working Group's terms of reference would consider standing items such as:

- The Consortium's progress against its three-year Business Plan on a regional basis;
- Regional performance trends;
- The sharing of best scrutiny practice across the region;
- The Group to also report annually to the relevant Scrutiny Committee in each Local Authority and/or feedback to the next meeting of the relevant Scrutiny Committee in each Local Authority;
- To share a note of its meetings with the Joint Committee and to receive a response to these from the Joint Committee.

## **WAY FORWARD**

11. It is suggested that the Committee considers agreeing the task & finish and scrutiny topics as proposed in **paragraph 10** of this report, and further agrees the draft timetable of issues for the Committee as set out in **paragraph 9** above and summarised in **Appendix A**. Members may also wish to agree to set up Member Panel to monitor and review departmental budgets together with the membership of the Joint Consortium Scrutiny Panel.

## **LEGAL 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 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**

13. 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.

## **RECOMMENDATION**

The Committee is recommended:

- To consider the information set out in **Paragraph 9** of the report and agree the proposed Work Plan Timetable for 2017/18 as set out in **Appendix A**.
- To agree to set up a Budget Monitoring Member Panel, and to be part of the Education Consortium Joint Scrutiny Panel accordance with Part 1 of the Scrutiny procedure rules.
- To agree to undertake the Task & Finish Group Inquiries as set out in **Paragraph 10**, in accordance with Part 1 of the Scrutiny procedure rules, and to seek nominations for the first inquiry that the Committee agrees to undertake.
- To seek nominations for the membership of the Budget Monitoring Panel as set out in **paragraph 7** and Task & Finish Groups selected from those in **Paragraph 10**.

**Davina Fiore**

**Director Governance and Legal Services**

**6 September 2017**