

**RHONDDA CYNON TAF COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL**

**MUNICIPAL YEAR 2015/16**

**CHILDREN & YOUNG PEOPLE  
SCRUTINY COMMITTEE**

<b>AGENDA ITEM 6</b>
----------------------

**19<sup>TH</sup> OCTOBER 2015**

<b>PROPOSED SCRUTINY WORK PROGRAMME</b>
---

**REPORT OF THE DIRECTOR OF LEGAL AND DEMOCRATIC SERVICES**

**1. PURPOSE OF THE REPORT**

To provide Members with a draft 2015/16 work programme for the Children & Young People Scrutiny Committee.

**2. RECOMMENDATIONS**

It is recommended that Members of the Children & Young People Scrutiny Committee:

- 2.1 Agree a work programme (a draft work programme being set out at Appendix 2) and where applicable the scope/approach for scrutinising each agreed topic; and
- 2.2 Agree that the work programme be amended as necessary during the year to reflect the demands of the work.

**3. BACKGROUND**

- 3.1 There is a requirement to devise and publish a Work Programme for each of the Council's Scrutiny Committees as set out in Part 4 of the Constitution, (Overview and Scrutiny Procedure Rules). Each Committee is responsible for setting and agreeing its own Work Programme; however, the Overview and Scrutiny Committee has a role in co-ordinating the work of the four thematic Scrutiny Committees and ensuring that the work of each of these committees is effective.
- 3.2 The Committee is required to undertake the overview and scrutiny role in connection with the public facing services for children and young people within the County Borough.
- 3.3 As part of the new scrutiny arrangements, a more rationalised approach has been taken to the development of this year's work programme and during the July and September meetings of the Committee, Members have considered the

benefits of scrutinising a range of topics which come within the scope of this committee.

#### **4. PROPOSED WORK PROGRAMME**

4.1 Following consideration of the high level scopes of potential issues considered at the last meeting, the following issues were put forward by Members for inclusion on the work programme, as follows:

- Governor Support
- Safeguarding
- Early Intervention & Protection/TAF
- Educational Outcomes for Vulnerable Groups of Children
- Additional Learning Needs Fund
- Special Educational Needs

Members were advised at the last meeting that they would have the opportunity to put forward their views in relation to the prioritisation of the agreed areas for work. Members will have the opportunity to discuss this at the meeting. Alternatively, Members if they wish, can contact the Scrutiny Support Officer in advance of the meeting to put forward their views.

4.2 In line with the above, **Appendix 1** sets out draft scopes for some of the agreed areas for Members' consideration and Members are also requested to consider their preferred method or approach to scrutinising each.

4.3 To help inform the preferred method(s), examples of different approaches that can be used when undertaking scrutiny reviews were included in the report presented to the Children and Young People Scrutiny Committee of 13<sup>th</sup> July 2015 (paragraph 5.7). A copy of this report can be accessed by clicking on the attached [Link](#). In summary, examples included in this report were:

- Reviews - these are detailed reviews that can be conducted by the full scrutiny committee or a smaller group or panel of members and will meet over several meetings that focus on an issue of concern;
- Short reviews - these follow the same principles as above but are completed over one or two meetings. They will have a briefer scope and project plan. This is suitable for a very specific topic or when the issue is time critical; and
- Light touch scrutiny reviews – these usually involve 2 / 3 members and generally involve a smaller piece of scrutiny. Members work independently to meet with service areas and recommend a way forward on the issue.

4.4 At the last meeting it was also agreed that the governance agreement signed by all 5 authorities should be brought back to the Scrutiny Committee for consideration and this is included on today's agenda.

- 4.5 The Group Director Community & Children's Services also pointed to the success which had been achieved by the Council's own Adoption Service and advised on the need to ensure that the performance of the new Regional Adoption Service was on a par. This concern was echoed by the Looked After Children Scrutiny Working Group who recommended that the Committee should monitor the impact of the introduction of the new Regional Adoption Service. It is therefore proposed that the Committee is kept abreast of the performance of the new Regional Adoption Service at regular intervals.
- 4.6 As pointed out by the Chairman at the last meeting, the Committee is unlikely to achieve all that it would wish by the end of the municipal year and it is therefore proposed to move toward developing a two year programme of work.
- 4.7 Attached at **Appendix 2** is a proposed timetable for the delivery of the Work Programme for consideration to enable agreed activities to be undertaken in a co-ordinated way.
- 4.8 Given the size of the task ahead of the Committee it should be noted that there will need to be an element of flexibility with regard to the work programme and it will no doubt need to be re-visited in the coming months as the Committee gains a better understanding of the issues.
- 4.9 In addition to the above considerations, during the year the Committee could also receive requests from the Executive or other committees e.g. Council, Audit Committee, Finance & Performance and Overview & Scrutiny, to consider a particular issue.

**5. CONCLUSIONS**

- 5.1 The revised approach has been used to formulate a work programme that aims to demonstrate the rationale for topic selection together with the intended outcome(s) from the Committee's work.
- 5.2 The Committee is asked to consider and agree the approaches/scopes to be undertaken in relation to the chosen topics and the timetable of work as attached at Appendix 2 subject to Members' comments.

\*\*\*\*\*

**LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 1972**

**as amended by**

**LOCAL GOVERNMENT (ACCESS TO INFORMATION) ACT 1985**

**RHONDDA CYNON TAF COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL**

**LIST OF BACKGROUND PAPERS**

**CHILDREN & YOUNG PEOPLE SCRUTINY COMMITTEE**

**19<sup>TH</sup> OCTOBER 2015**

**REPORT OF THE DIRECTOR OF LEGAL AND DEMOCRATIC SERVICES**

**PROPOSED SCRUTINY WORK PROGRAMME**

(Officer to Contact: Ann Edwards, Scrutiny Support Officer – Telephone No. 01443 424102)

## CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

## APPENDIX 1

## AGREED TOPIC AREAS

TOPIC AREA	DRAFT SCOPE	REASON(S) FOR REVIEWING	PREFERRED METHOD OF SCRUTINY (TO BE EXPRESSED BY MEMBERS OF THE COMMITTEE)
<b><u>Governor Support</u></b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Review the adequacy of the Service Level Agreement (SLA) in place between Schools and the Council for Governor Support;</li> <li>- Review the training arrangements in place for governors and assess their effectiveness;</li> <li>- Understand the reasons why governors leave their roles, identify opportunities to improve retention rates and identify opportunities to raise awareness of the role of a school governor to increase applications for such roles</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Recognition of the key role that Governors play in providing leadership to the strategic management of schools and driving school improvement;</li> <li>• Better understanding needed around the Governor Support SLA arrangements in place in order to form a view on its adequacy and potential areas for improvement; and</li> <li>• Concern around the number of governors that leave their positions and identify opportunities to support better retention of governors.</li> </ul>	

## CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

## APPENDIX 1

## AGREED TOPIC AREAS

TOPIC AREA	DRAFT SCOPE	REASON(S) FOR REVIEWING	PREFERRED METHOD OF SCRUTINY (TO BE EXPRESSED BY MEMBERS OF THE COMMITTEE)
<b><u>Safeguarding</u></b>	- To monitor implementation of recommendations made by the Wales Audit Office (WAO) in its review of the Council's arrangements for the safeguarding of children in 2014/15	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The importance of ensuring the continued robustness of the Council's Safeguarding arrangements is one of the Council's highest priorities; and</li> <li>• Specific monitoring and scrutiny around how the Council is implementing the recommendations made by the WAO will be one means of gauging the adequacy of the Council's arrangements in this area (to also link to the Health and Wellbeing Scrutiny Committee).</li> </ul>	
<b><u>Early intervention and prevention / Team Around the Family (TAF)</u></b>	- Evaluate the impact of the TAF service in preventing the need for escalation of referrals to Children's Services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Council continues to experience high numbers of referrals, initial assessments, children being looked after and children on the child protection register compared to other councils in Wales;</li> <li>• It is recognised that a programme of work is on-going to address this very challenging position; and</li> <li>• The high numbers / demand referred to above adversely impacts on a number of performance indicators within Children's Services.</li> </ul>	

**CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE SCRUTINY COMMITTEE**

**APPENDIX 1**

**AGREED TOPIC AREAS**

TOPIC AREA	DRAFT SCOPE	REASON(S) FOR REVIEWING	PREFERRED METHOD OF SCRUTINY (TO BE EXPRESSED BY MEMBERS OF THE COMMITTEE)
<u><b>Educational Outcomes for Vulnerable Groups of Children</b></u>		Further work required to compile draft project scopes	
<u><b>Special Educational Needs</b></u>			
<u><b>Additional Learning Needs Fund</b></u>			

\*\*\*\*\*





## APPENDIX 2

**CHILDREN & YOUNG PEOPLE SCRUTINY COMMITTEE  
WORK PROGRAMME 2015/16**

Mon 13 <sup>th</sup> July 15 5 pm	Mon 21 <sup>st</sup> Sept 15 5 pm	Mon 19 <sup>th</sup> Oct 15 5 pm	Mon 16 <sup>th</sup> Nov 15 5 pm	Mon 21 <sup>st</sup> Dec 15 5 pm	Mon 18 <sup>th</sup> Jan 16 5 pm	Mon 29 <sup>th</sup> Feb 16 5 pm	Mon 21 <sup>st</sup> March 16 5 pm	Ongoing into 2016/17
Half Termly School Attendance figures  Developing a work programme	Central South Consortium – Hannah Woodhouse and Cllr Chris Elmore – chair - business plans for Consortium - provisional exam results  Reports of the LAC Scrutiny Working Groups (placements and attainment)  Director of SS Report  Work Programme	CSC - agreement  <u>Attainment</u> Key Stage Performance Report  Social Services Complaints  Work Programme	<u>Governor</u> <u>Support</u> - Information report on Governor Support  School Attendance Performance Figures  Report on Fixed Penalty Notices	<u>Safeguarding</u> - WAO report & recs. - Cwm Taf Annual Children's Safeguarding Report  <b>Performance – Children seen by Social Worker</b>  CSSIW Report	<u>Early</u> <u>Intervention/</u> <u>Prevention/</u> <u>TAF</u> Overview – consider areas for targeted scrutiny  <u>Attainment</u> Key Stage 4 Results  Half Termly School Attendance figures	Dependent on Ctte decisions re: - Governor Support - Early Intervention & Prevention  Overview of Youth Offending Service?	LA Education Services Self Evaluation report  School Exclusion Data  Additional Learning Needs Fund – update report  Scrutiny Annual Report	Educational Outcomes for Vulnerable Groups of Children  Special Education Needs  Seren Programme update – Autumn 2016

Plus Regional Adoption Service update when appropriate

