



RHONDDA CYNON TAF COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL

CHILDREN & YOUNG PEOPLE SCRUTINY COMMITTEE 20TH NOVEMBER 2019

SCRUTINY FORWARD WORK PROGRAMMES

**REPORT OF THE SERVICE DIRECTOR OF DEMOCRATIC SERVICES &
COMMUNICATIONS**

1 PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

- 1.1 The purpose of the report is to develop a forward work programme, which includes matters for future consideration by the Children & Young People Scrutiny Committee. Members are asked to consider the draft forward work programme (attached as Appendix 1) and determine whether the items included (particularly from January 2020 –April 2020) are relevant and in line with the terms of reference of the Children & Young People Scrutiny Committee.

2 RECOMMENDATIONS

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

- 2.1 Review and agree the draft Children & Young People Scrutiny Committee Work Programme for the Municipal Year 2019/20 (which now includes work programme topics from January to April 2020);
- 2.2 Identify any additional items Members wish to consider including in the forward work programme
- 2.3 Consider any additional training requirements that Members consider would assist them in their role.
- 2.4 Consider providing the necessary flexibility to accommodate pre- scrutiny opportunities and early engagement in policy development; Members should also consider providing the opportunity the opportunity for consideration of items generated through future public engagement.

3 BACKGROUND INFORMATION

- 3.1 Members will recall that at the previous meeting of the Children & Young People Scrutiny Committee, held on the 9th July 2019, a report was presented by the Service Director of Democratic Services & Communications, which outlined a number of changes to the Scrutiny arrangements in Rhondda Cynon Taf.
- 3.2 One of the improvements included the development of a more streamlined forward work programme which contained less items for consideration at each committee meeting to allow for more in depth review of topics and potential referrals from Council, Audit Committee and other sources.
- 3.3 Initially, the scrutiny work programmes were developed on a six monthly basis (up until December 2019) so as to give each individual scrutiny committee the opportunity to take stock and review their respective programmes going forward. The attached draft work programme contains items for consideration for the remaining Municipal Year, from January 2020 to April 2020.
- 3.4 The attached draft work programme has been compiled from a number of sources such as notices of motions and topics in line with the Council's Corporate priorities as well as incorporating matters previously identified by Scrutiny members such as:-
- 21st Century Schools Programme
 - Adoption Services
 - School Attendance Strategy
- 3.5 A series of Cabinet/Scrutiny engagement sessions is currently underway between the Scrutiny Chairs, Vice Chairs, respective Cabinet Members and Senior Leadership Officers, which are supporting the Scrutiny arrangements going forward and are informing the respective forward work programmes.
- 3.6 In addition, the Forward Work Programmes have also aligned themselves to the Council's Corporate Performance themes and priorities as well as acknowledging the Well-being of Future Generations goals.

4. TRAINING

- 4.1 To assist Scrutiny Members in fulfilling their role a training session was arranged for all RCT scrutiny members and co-opted members on Friday, 25th October 2019 (9.30am-12.30pm). The session was facilitated by Dr Dave McKenna, a dedicated scrutiny practitioner with ten years' experience including as Manager of Swansea Council scrutiny team. He has presented at national conferences in Wales and hosted workshops at three Centre for Public Scrutiny annual conferences.

- 4.2 The scrutiny training session was solution focussed and asked Members to consider what works well in their own local authority and what Members are looking to improve by using good practice ideas. One of the key aims of the session was to explore how scrutiny in RCT can have more impact through improved questioning.
- 4.3 Further to the Scrutiny training session, ongoing training requirements are a key consideration and therefore Members are asked to identify any other gaps in their development particularly in relation to undertaking scrutiny of the items listed on the forward work programme.
- 4.4 It is important for all members of scrutiny to engage in the training opportunities provided to support their role.

5. PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT

- 5.1 The Council continues to progress opportunities for the public to engage in the scrutiny process. Further enhancements are underway to provide better access to the business of scrutiny online. This includes providing more user-friendly information to support the public engaging in this important element of the Council's democratic processes and overall governance functions.
- 5.2 Members are asked to consider the Council's Scrutiny Public Engagement Protocol, agreed by the Overview & Scrutiny Committee on the [13th December 2018](#).
- 5.3 The Overview & Scrutiny Committee will shortly consider subject areas to be promoted through social media, for the public, to select as matters for scrutiny to explore and consider. Members are asked to provide flexibility in their work programmes to allow sufficient opportunity for scrutiny of these areas, where they fall within the remit of the committee.

6. CONCLUSION

- 6.1 Determining its own work programme and deciding on what evidence to seek to fulfil its scrutiny role; asking relevant and timely questions at meetings and participating in activities that the Committee has agreed to pursue outside of its formal meetings are all key to good scrutiny.
- 6.2 The Council is continuing its work to strengthen its scrutiny arrangements and these enhancements support the council in responding to the findings arising from the recent WAO report and will further strengthen governance and accountability arrangements.

7 EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY IMPLICATIONS

- 7.1 There are no Equality and Diversity implications arising from this report and no Equality Impact Assessment is deemed necessary for the purposes of this report.

8 CONSULTATION

- 8.1 The considerations and comments of Scrutiny Chairs and Vice-Chairs have been sought in respect of the report and it will be for the Members of the Children & Young People Scrutiny Committee to agree these developments at its meeting held on the 21st October 2019.

9 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 9.1 There are no financial implications as a result of the recommendations set out in the report.

10 LEGAL IMPLICATIONS OR LEGISLATION CONSIDERED

- 10.1 There are no legal implications as a result of the recommendations set out in the report, although amendments to the Councils constitution will need to be taken forward as appropriate.

11 LINKS TO CORPORATE AND NATIONAL PRIORITIES AND THE WELL-BEING OF FUTURE GENERATIONS ACT

- 11.1 The proposals to address the WAO report proposals includes arrangements to strengthen the Council's consideration and scrutiny of its work, through 'the lens of the requirements of the Well-being of Future Generations

Act'. These arrangements will be embedded into the business of the Council as set out in the Policy Statement agreed by Cabinet on [2 November 2016](#).

- 11.2 The proposals outlined within the report will work to ensure a sustainable and robust scrutiny structure is in place, which will effectively challenge policy decisions taken forward.

SCRUTINY WORK PROGRAMMES

Children & Young People Scrutiny Committee

'Holding the Executive to account in respect of all three priorities within the Council's Corporate Plan....Economy (Building a strong economy), People (Promoting independence and positive lives for everyone), Place (Creating neighbourhoods where people are proud to live and work).'

Each of the Council's Scrutiny Committees is responsible for setting and agreeing its own work programme by identifying a list of themes and topics which fall under the remit of each individual Scrutiny Committee. Following discussion with the Chair, Vice Chair and Scrutiny Members a practical, realistic and timetabled programme can then be developed.

The scrutiny forward work programmes should provide a clear rationale as to why particular issues have been selected; be outcome focussed; ensure that the method of scrutiny is best suited to the topic area and the outcome desired; align scrutiny programmes with the council's performance management, self-evaluation and improvement arrangements.

Throughout the year, there are a number of ways in which additional issues can be considered for inclusion in the Scrutiny Work Programme and ideas for inclusion may come from a number of sources such as:-

- Individual Councillors;
- Performance or budget monitoring information;
- Inspection reports;
- Referrals from Council (such as Notices of Motion), Cabinet/Audit or other scrutiny committees;
- Service users;
- Monitoring the implementation of recommendations previously made by the Committee; and
- Local Residents

The Cabinet is also required to produce forward work programmes and the Overview & Scrutiny Committee keeps abreast of forthcoming items or topics which may enable scrutiny to be involved in the development of Council policy prior to its formal consideration by Cabinet. It is important to bear in mind that an element of flexibility is applied to each individual work programme that provides Committees with the capacity to scrutinise new / urgent issues that arise during the year. For this reason the Scrutiny Work Programmes will be published for a 6 month period and reviewed every quarter.

CHILDREN & YOUNG PEOPLE SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

Date/Time	Overarching Item	Officer	Cabinet Member	Invited/ In attendance	Scrutiny Focus
<p>10th July 2019, 5pm Committee Room 1, Clydach Vale (Joint Education & Children's Services Meeting)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Children & Young People Scrutiny Work Programme 	<p>Director of Education & Inclusion Services</p> <p>Director of Children's Services</p> <p>Service Director of Democratic Services & Communications</p>			<p>Scrutiny & Challenge – For Members of the CH&YP Scrutiny Committee to consider the work programme for 2019/2020.</p>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Pre-Scrutiny of the Director of Social Services Annual Report 	<p>Group Director – Community & Children's Services</p>			<p>Scrutiny & Challenge – To undertake pre scrutiny of the Annual report to ascertain whether it represents a true evaluation of the Local Authority's performance.</p>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Training Needs 	<p>Director of Education & Inclusion Services</p> <p>Director of Children's Services</p> <p>Service Director of Democratic Services & Communications</p>			<p>To consider and develop a schedule of training requirements for members of the CH&YP Committee.</p>
<p>11th September 2019, 5pm</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> How data will be reported to the Children & Young 	<p>Director of Education & Inclusion Services</p>			<p>To receive the Data Team, Central South Consortium who will outline the changes</p>

Committee Room 1, Clydach Vale (Joint Education & Children's Services)	People Scrutiny Committee (or July depending on availability of Data team) CSC overview on what it provides for RCT	Senior Management CSC			to future data reporting mechanisms. To provide Members with information on what contribution CSC has in raising standard in RCT.
	Placement Commissioning Strategy Report	Service Director Children's Services Service Development Officer, Children's Services			To Scrutiny & Challenge Consider the Placement Commissioning Strategy and provide any comments.
25th September 2019, 5pm Committee Room 1, Clydach Vale (Education)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Cabinet & Scrutiny Engagement Session 	Director of Education & Inclusion Services	Cabinet Member for Education & Inclusion Services	√	Scrutiny & Challenge – Consider the progress made In advancing the portfolio responsibilities of the Cabinet Member for Education & Inclusion.
9th October 2019, 5pm Committee Room 1, Clydach Vale (Children's Services Meeting)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Cabinet & Scrutiny Engagement Session 	Director of Children's Services	Cabinet Member for Children & Young People	√	Scrutiny & Challenge – Consider the progress made In advancing the portfolio responsibilities of the Cabinet Member for Children & Young People.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Quarterly Review of the O&S Scrutiny Work Programme 	<p>Director of Education & Inclusion Services</p> <p>Service Director of Democratic Services & Communications</p>			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Is the Work Programme suitable and relevant to the Terms of Reference? Members of the Committee to provide comment in relation to the Work Programme going forward.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Your Voice Survey Report long with an update in respect of the Bright Spot Survey. 	<p>Director of Social Services Service Development Officer</p> <p>Head of Community Wellbeing and Resilience</p>			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Scrutiny & Challenge For Members to compare findings and make any improvements
	Report in respect of Private Care Homes(within RCT	<p>Director of Children Services</p> <p>Regional Manager for 4Cs (Karen Benjamin)</p>			<ul style="list-style-type: none">
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Social Services Annual Complaints Report (Information only) Annual Safeguarding Report (Information only) 				<ul style="list-style-type: none">
<p>16th October 2019, 5pm Committee Room 1, Clydach Vale (Education)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> School Attendance Strategy 	<p>Director of Education & Inclusion Services</p> <p>Head of Attendance and Wellbeing</p>			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Scrutiny & Challenge – To assess the effectiveness of the School Attendance Strategy with particular reference to the impact of the Truancy Free Zones initiative

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Quarterly Review of the O&S Scrutiny Work Programme 	<p>Director of Education & Inclusion Services</p> <p>Service Director of Democratic Services & Communications</p>			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Is the Work Programme suitable and relevant to the Terms of Reference? Members of the Committee to provide comment in relation to the Work Programme going forward.
	Update from Director of Democratic Services in respect of the way forward with CSC	<p>Director of Education & Inclusion Services</p> <p>Service Director of Democratic Services & Communications</p>			To discuss and agree what is needed in future Reports from the Central South Consortium.
<p>6th November 2019, 5pm Committee Room 1, Clydach Vale (Children's Services)</p>	<p>CAMHS UPDATE REPORT (to include primary mental health support)</p>	<p>Director of Children's Services</p> <p>Officers from Cwm Taf Mental Health Services</p>			<p>Scrutiny & Challenge – To assess the support provided by the Cwm Taf Morgannwg Health Board in respect of the mental Health of the children and young people within RCT</p>
<p>20th November 2019, 5pm</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Overview of the Music Service within Schools in RCT 	<p>Director of Education & Inclusion Services</p>			<p>Scrutiny & Challenge – To assess the effectiveness of the</p>

Committee Room 1, Clydach Vale (Education)		Head of RCT Music Service			
	Update on the Sanitary Provisions	Director of Education & Inclusion Services			Scrutiny & Challenge – For Members to review and challenge the progress of tackling period poverty within schools across Rhondda Cynon Taf following the Notice of Motion that was approved by Cabinet in July 2017.
4th December 2019, 5pm Committee Room 1, Clydach Vale (Children's Services)	CLA Update (Reduction of CLA within the County Borough)	Director of Children's Services			Scrutiny & Challenge – To assess the way the Authority is working towards reducing the Children Looked After within the Authority (as directed by Welsh Government.)
	Update on the Disabled Children's Team Review	Director of Children Services Service Development Officer, Children's Services			Scrutiny & Challenge – To receive an update on the review of the Disable Children's Team Service and consider the findings
	Adoption Service Annual Report	Director of Children's Services Regional Adoption Manager , Valleys and Vale Adoption Service			To consider the report of the Adoption Service Manager
18th December 2019, 5pm	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Fixed Penalty Notice (FPN) Scrutiny Recommendations 	Director of Education & Inclusion Services			For Scrutiny Members to receive the recommendations

Committee Room 1, Clydach Vale (Education)		Head of Attendance & Wellbeing Service			proposed by the Scrutiny Working Group.
	21 st Century Schools (Evaluation of Feedback on Band A Schools)	Director of Education & Inclusion Services Head of 21 st Century Schools			Scrutiny & Challenge – Scrutinise the evaluation of feedback on Band A Schools
Council Chamber 22nd January2020 (Joint)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Training Session – 'Understanding the Council's Budget' 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Service Director Democratic Services & Communications Service Director - Finance & Improvement Services			To provide Members with the Council's medium term financial plan (and future consideration for Members
	Performance Data Report	Director of Education & Inclusion Services Head of Access & Inclusion Services			Scrutiny & Challenge – Review the Performance Data and Consider whether the appropriate support is in place for schools.
	<i>School Exclusions and LA Wellbeing Plan</i>	<i>Head of Access & Inclusion Services</i>			Scrutiny & Challenge – To consider the report of the Head of Access & Inclusion Services

	16+ Accommodation Strategy.	Director of Children's Services Service Development Officer, Children's Services			Scrutiny & Challenge – To consider the work done to date with regards to the 16+ Accommodation Strategy and consider further actions taking in to account the Future Generation and Wellbeing Act
Information Report	Seren	Stephen Parry Jones			
12 FEBRUARY 2020 (Children Services)	Early Years Services Report	Director of Children's Services Head Of Community Wellbeing And Resilience			To receive a report in respect of the early years provision
26th FEBRUARY 2020 (Education)	CSC Performance Report	Managing Director Central South Consortium Director of Education and Inclusion Services			To Receive a report from the Central South Consortium that highlighted points raised within the Meeting held in September 2019
(Information Report)	School Admissions	Catrin Edwards,			
	WESP	Steffan Gealy			To scrutiny & Challenge – To consider the WESP Report and agree the next steps.

11th March 2020 (Children's Services)	YOS Update	Head of the Youth Offending Service Director of Children's Services			To Scrutiny Challenge – To consider the work done by the Youth Offending Service over the last 12 months
25th March 2020 (Education)	Childcare Offer	Denise Humphries Senior 21st Century Schools Project Manager (Childcare & Special Projects)			
	School Governance	Non Morgan			

Other Areas for exploration:-

Training Requirements:-

To be considered at the first Scrutiny Committee in July

Current Scrutiny Working Groups:-

Fixed Penalty Notices (FPN's)